

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23



KIMBERLEY ABORIGINAL MEDICAL SERVICES LTD



## Warning

This report may contain images of people that have passed away.

## Terminology

The word Aboriginal has been used throughout this document. When referring to Aboriginal people, KAMS is referring to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The term 'KAMS' is used to describe our organisation (Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services) which represents both KAMS Ltd and Kimberley Renal Services Pty Ltd.

The term 'health' is used throughout this document and refers to 'health and wellbeing.'

## Organisational Information

12 Napier Terrace (PO Box 1377), Broome WA 6725

(08) 9194 3200 | [admin@kamsc.org.au](mailto:admin@kamsc.org.au)

**kams.org.au**

ABN 67 169 851 861

 [KAMS.org.au](#)

 [kimberley-aboriginal-medical-services](#)

 [kams\\_kimberley](#)

 [KAMS](#)

 [kams.org.au](http://kams.org.au)



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY, CULTURE AND COMMUNITY



Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services pays our deepest respect to all Traditional Owners across the Kimberley region of Western Australia.

We acknowledge the wisdom of our Elders, those who came before us, those that are here today and those that are emerging. We pay our deepest respects to our Elders for their leadership over generations – their wisdom and courage in caring for and protecting our ancient lands, living culture and our vibrant languages.

We also pay our respects to all Aboriginal people, and respect their knowledge systems, language, vibrant living Culture, and continued connection to Country.

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# OUR ORGANISATION

## What We Stand For

### Our Vision

All Kimberley Aboriginal people are empowered to be strong, healthy, and connected through Aboriginal community-controlled services.

### Our Purpose

To deliver holistic health and wellbeing outcomes to Kimberley Aboriginal people in partnership with Aboriginal-led organisations that centres around Aboriginal Culture and knowledge.

### Our Values

- **Aboriginal community control** – we are an organisation of Aboriginal people, for Aboriginal people, controlled by Aboriginal people.
- **Caring** – we care about our patients, our staff, and our stakeholders.
- **Respect** – we are respectful, and we treat each other, our clients, and our stakeholders with dignity.
- **Culture** – we respect the diversity of Aboriginal people and endeavour to embed the Culture of all Kimberley Aboriginal people.
- **Accountability and responsibility** – we set goals, and we hold ourselves to account.
- **Integrity** – we are transparent, honest, and we do what we say we will do.
- **Sustainability** – we are here for the long term and will leave a positive legacy for future generations.
- **Leadership** – we strive for excellence and encourage our staff to achieve great results.
- **Innovation and continuous improvement** – we seek to push the boundaries and we do not accept mediocrity.

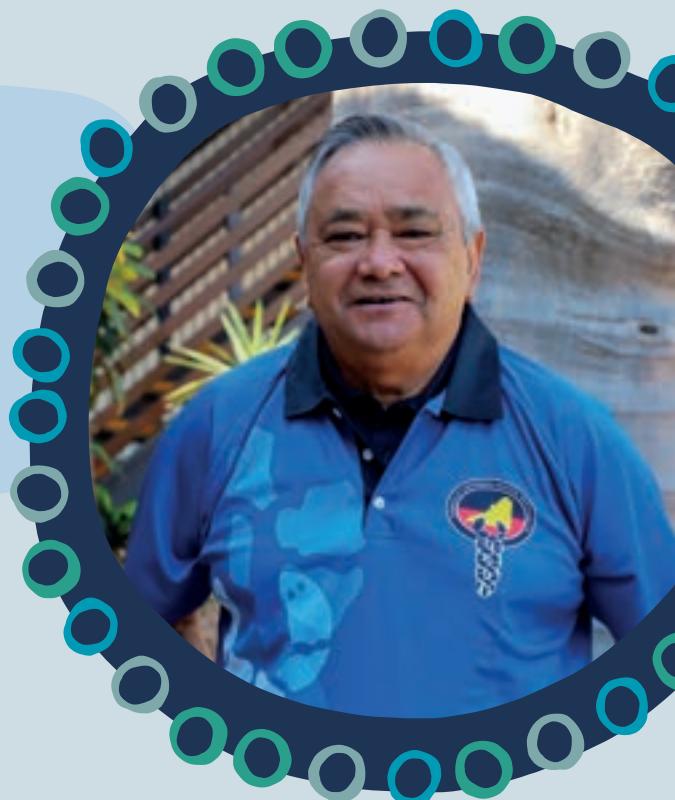
# REPORT FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON

## Raymond Christophers

I am pleased to present the Annual Report for the year 2022/23 for Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services Ltd (KAMS) and Kimberley Renal Services Pty Ltd (KRS). This report demonstrates our continued commitment to enhancing holistic health and wellbeing outcomes for Kimberley Aboriginal people through partnerships with Aboriginal-led organisations.

This report also demonstrates how our Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Vicki O'Donnell, and the Executive Management Team, have an unwavering commitment to achieving our Strategic Plan. Their focus has been to deliver high-quality health services to Kimberley Aboriginal people through the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service (ACCHS) Model of Care. The team also prioritises developing a skilled and culturally grounded workforce, fostering regional to national collaborations, and utilising shared knowledge and innovation for continuous improvement in Aboriginal health and wellbeing. Our strategic goals guide all decisions and projects, aiming for a future where communities can benefit from excellent health services.

As Chairperson, I take pride in reporting the considerable progress and achievements made by KAMS over the past year. We have remained focused on our vision: *that all Kimberley Aboriginal people are empowered to be strong, healthy, and connected through Aboriginal community-controlled services.* This vision is underpinned by our belief that better outcomes can be achieved when Aboriginal people are engaged in the design and delivery of programs and services that affect them.



I want to acknowledge the devastating West Kimberley flood event that occurred in January this year and the ongoing impact they have had on Fitzroy Crossing, the Fitzroy Valley, and the entire West Kimberley region. The strength of local people and communities coming together to move towards recovery is commendable. I thank our staff and our member services, particularly Broome Regional Aboriginal Medical Service (BRAMS), Derby Aboriginal Health Service (DAHS), and Nirrumbuk Environmental Health and Services (NEHS), for providing support to affected communities.



In December 2022, we celebrated the 20-year anniversary of the Broome Renal Health Centre with patients, families, and staff. We honoured those who built and contributed to the Centre's growth, and we reflected on the Centre's journey and what this important service means for Kimberley communities. In October 2002, the Kimberley Satellite Dialysis Centre was first established in partnership with the Royal Perth Hospital. The 10-bed unit was established after Aboriginal medical leader Dr Arnold "Puggy" Hunter advocated for Aboriginal people to receive treatment on Country. It was the first unit in Australia to be managed by an ACCHS, initially managed by BRAMS and later by KRS.

May 2023 also marked the 10-year anniversary since the opening of the Derby and Kununurra Renal Health Centres. We are planning to commemorate these milestones later in 2023.

Our commitment to cultural competency and community engagement continued to be a cornerstone of our work. We actively sought input from Elders and community members to shape our programs and services. By incorporating Aboriginal knowledge and Culture into our services and programs, we can better address the unique health challenges faced by Kimberley Aboriginal people.

I would like to express my gratitude to our dedicated staff who have worked tirelessly to provide services and programs to Kimberley Aboriginal communities, as well as support to our member services. Their commitment to our vision is commendable, and I thank them for their unwavering dedication.



I would also like to recognise the invaluable contributions of our respected Board of Directors. As representatives of our member services their guidance and strategic direction are essential in guiding our organisation, and I am grateful for their expertise, dedication, and service. Through our Board we continue to grow our relationships across the ACCHS sector, and we were pleased to have had a joint meeting with the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO), Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory, and Danila Dilba Health Service in Darwin this June.

Alongside other leading Kimberley Aboriginal community-controlled organisations (ACCOs), we have participated on the design group that is working on a model of regional governance, also referred to as a *Kimberley Aboriginal Regional Body*. For many years, KAMS and our member services have provided a strong voice to advocate for Kimberley Aboriginal people's health and wellbeing and we are looking forward to strengthening our partnerships across the region so that Kimberley Aboriginal communities can have a bigger say on policies and decisions that affect them.

Our CEO has been instrumental in the day-to-day operations and overall success of KAMS. Vicki has demonstrated exceptional leadership and commitment to Kimberley Aboriginal people, and we are fortunate to have her guidance and expertise.

On 2 July 2022, Vicki was announced as the Kullarri NAIDOC Festival 2022 Patron, in recognition of her role as a strategic leader in Aboriginal health for over 20 years. Since being appointed CEO of KAMS in 2014, Vicki has worked tirelessly to ensure that Aboriginal health and wellbeing issues are a priority at local, regional, statewide, and national levels. Vicki continues to be a driving force for change and a positive role model to our emerging leaders.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the support and recognition we have received from Kimberley Aboriginal communities. At the Kullarri NAIDOC Festival 2022, we were awarded the *Focus Organisation Award*. This recognition is not just about the collective achievements of our organisation, but a testament to the personal achievements and contributions that each staff member makes. NAIDOC has a long history of advocating for the rights, recognition, and celebration of Aboriginal people and I am proud of our recognition within this.

**RAYMOND CHRISTOPHERS**  
**Chairperson**

Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services  
and Kimberley Renal Services

# Kimberley Renal Services

(KRS) is an Aboriginal  
organisation that connects Aboriginal  
people to renal services in the Kimberley region.

subsidiary  
services



# REPORT FROM OUR CEO

**Vicki O'Donnell OAM**

In 2022/23, we continued our focus on delivering a wide range of services and programs aimed at improving access, quality, and healthcare outcomes for Kimberley Aboriginal people. Our commitment to ensuring that our impact on Aboriginal people's lives is sustained for the long term remained at the forefront of our operations.

In January this year, I felt humbled by the resilience and leadership of local Aboriginal people in response to the West Kimberley flood event. The flooding was recorded as the greatest Level 3 Disaster in the state's history. The impact on individuals, families, and communities has been phenomenal, with at least 1,000 homes inundated. The leadership and support from Fitzroy Crossing leaders and other stakeholders, including BRAMS, DAHS, NEHS, Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre, Nindilingarri Cultural Health Services, the WA Country Health Service (WACHS), and the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, were outstanding.

KAMS is fully supportive of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (National Agreement). Through this work, we must recognise the importance of an Aboriginal workforce, the need for increased investment in comprehensive primary health care, and the need to use co-design in the planning and delivery of services. There is still a need to change the culture within government agencies and departments – governments need to work closely with Aboriginal people and step aside so we can take the lead.



Our strategic goals align with the four Priority Reforms of the National Agreement, which are:

- 1. Formal partnerships and shared decision making.**
- 2. Building the community-controlled sector.**
- 3. Transforming government organisations.**
- 4. Shared access to data and information at a regional level.**

We continue to work across the community-controlled sector and in partnership with governments to implement these priority reforms, which, at the end of the day, are about accelerating improved outcomes for Aboriginal people. Drawing on the leadership, expertise, and priorities of our member services and communities, we provided extensive policy advice to a range of government stakeholders. We look forward to continuing to grow true, transparent partnerships that will really make a difference.



In May 2023, we made significant strides in the full implementation of our Strategic Plan through an organisational-wide restructure. A newly established Office of the CEO now provides greater support to both the KAMS and KRS Boards. Key positions within this structure include the Deputy CEO, the Executive Officer, and the Senior Manager of Communications. We also introduced important roles to strengthen population health, mental health, and member service support, aligning our team more closely with our strategic priorities. These changes are aimed at enhancing our governance, administrative support, and capacity for program delivery, setting us on a path to achieving our ambitious goals.

This year, we were part of the Kimberley Aboriginal Mental Health, Suicide and Self-harm Data Scoping Project, which was part of the first tranche of place-based data projects committed to under Priority Reform Four of the National Agreement. The focus is to improve the collection of, and access to, data on suicide and self-harm, and a scoping report was finalised in December 2022. While the project is behind schedule, discussions with the WA Government are ongoing regarding next steps.

For most of the year, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to shape our operations, necessitating flexibility, adaptability, and innovation. Despite a sense that things were returning “back to normal,” we continued to implement measures across our services to protect both our patients and our staff, and we observed travel restrictions as requested by communities. The pandemic reinforced the importance of Aboriginal community-led solutions, and I am proud of our ability to adapt swiftly to changing circumstances.

Our efforts to address kidney health, mental health, population health, disability care and primary health care were further enhanced. We have had a solid focus on increasing referrals from our primary health care services to Aboriginal environmental health services because we recognise the link between environmental conditions and health. Our remote health centres have also made a concerted effort to increase the number of patients receiving a ‘715 health check’ (Medicare Benefits Schedule Item 715 Aboriginal Health Assessment).

KAMS continued its investment in workforce development, ensuring that our staff and our member services receive the necessary training and support to provide the best possible services and programs to Kimberley Aboriginal communities. In 2023 we conducted an Employee Satisfaction Survey to seek feedback from our staff, to understand key issues and concerns from their perspective, and to identify opportunities for improvement. The survey results will be reported in the 2023/24 financial year.

In the past year, we've made significant progress in workforce development and community engagement across multiple sectors. Our Solid Connections Program provided invaluable training and support, starting with 15 participants, and maintaining an average engagement of 11 throughout, covering 13 complete units from personal development to First Aid. We've commenced training for our Family Support Workers in Certificate IV in Allied Health Assistance, with students showing promising progress across two training blocks.



Finally, our Elder Care Support Program is increasing workforce capability in community-controlled aged care, ensuring culturally safe care through specialised roles like the Aged Care Support Coordinator. These initiatives underscore our commitment to building a skilled, supported, and connected Kimberley Aboriginal health and wellbeing workforce.

KAMS provides advocacy and leadership across numerous forums and committees. We are recognised as a powerful and effective advocate at local, regional, state, and national levels and are frequently contacted by external stakeholders to provide comment. This year we've had a particular focus on advocating for Aboriginal people with a disability through the Kimberley Supports Consortium. We've also advocated for better responses to emergencies and disasters, and for data sovereignty. We've had a strong focus on implementing true and meaningful co-design, through forums such as the Kimberley Supports and the Aged Care Consortiums.

Through collaborative mechanisms, established under the Kimberley Aboriginal Health Research Alliance (KAHRA) and the Kimberley Aboriginal Health Planning Forum (KAHPF) Research Sub-committee, we're working slowly but surely to change the way researchers work with Kimberley Aboriginal people and communities. We are influencing statewide and national guidelines for Aboriginal health research. Placing Aboriginal people in control of research means that Aboriginal people oversee outcomes – real outcomes that will improve the lives of Aboriginal people. Collectively we have become more knowledgeable about research – we know what meaningful engagement and proper consent mean. We want to be drivers of research and we should be proud of our strong partnerships with Aboriginal people and communities, governments, and non-government organisations.

This year, we were a gold sponsor of the *Broome Pride 2023 Mardi Gras*, and we also sponsored the inaugural *Kimberley Blak Pride* event presented by Kimberley Blak Pride and Goolarri Media Enterprises in collaboration with Sydney World Pride 2023. We congratulate the team of volunteers who made these events possible. They are important events that promote and encourage the community, culture, and artistic expression of all people of diverse sexuality and gender.





We were also proud sponsors of the Aboriginal Health Council of WA's (AHCWA) State Sector Conference. We value the role that our state peak has in Aboriginal health, and it was great to be able to contribute to the theme 'our future, our way – we are leaders for our communities'.

Finally, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to our Information and Communications Technology (ICT) team for their exceptional performance over the past year. Our dedicated team has not only provided indispensable technical support across KAMS and our member services, but they also broke records in doing so – responding to an astounding 31,631 helpdesk requests. They navigated supply chain issues due to COVID-19, successfully procured nearly \$400,000 worth of new IT equipment, and covered more than 40,000km on the road to ensure timely installations.

Their focus on cybersecurity has kept us safer than ever, with substantial measures to counter phishing and fraud. Amongst all this, they've been instrumental in major projects like Starlink installations which enhanced internet speed and latency for remote areas, and the ongoing Unified Communications Migration. Our new recruits have brought fresh energy to the team, and I can't emphasise enough how integral the ICT team's work has been for our operations. Well done to every member of the team for their diligence, skill, and commitment which are invaluable to KAMS and our member services.



In summary, this past year was marked by growth, resilience, and a continued commitment to our vision. I would like to thank our dedicated staff, our member services, our valued partners, and the communities we serve for their unwavering support. It is through our collective efforts that we can make a meaningful impact on the health and wellbeing of Kimberley Aboriginal people. I thank the Chairperson and our Board of Directors for their support to me as CEO.

**VICKI O'DONNELL OAM**

**Chief Executive Officer**

**Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services  
and Kimberley Renal Services**



*Image courtesy of BRAMS*



# ABOUT KIMBERLEY ABORIGINAL MEDICAL SERVICES

## Our History

For tens of thousands of years, Kimberley Aboriginal people have cared for and provided healing to Kimberley Aboriginal people. We are building on the work of those who came before us.

In the Kimberley, BRAMS was first established in 1978, and this was followed the East Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service (now Ord Valley Aboriginal Health Service (OVAHS)) in 1984. A regional vision for a unified voice, to provide centralised resources and collective advocacy for the ACCHS sector, was achieved in 1986 with the establishment of the KAMS Council. Since our inception, we, along with our member services, have evolved immensely, and our vision and purpose have remained strong.



## Member Services

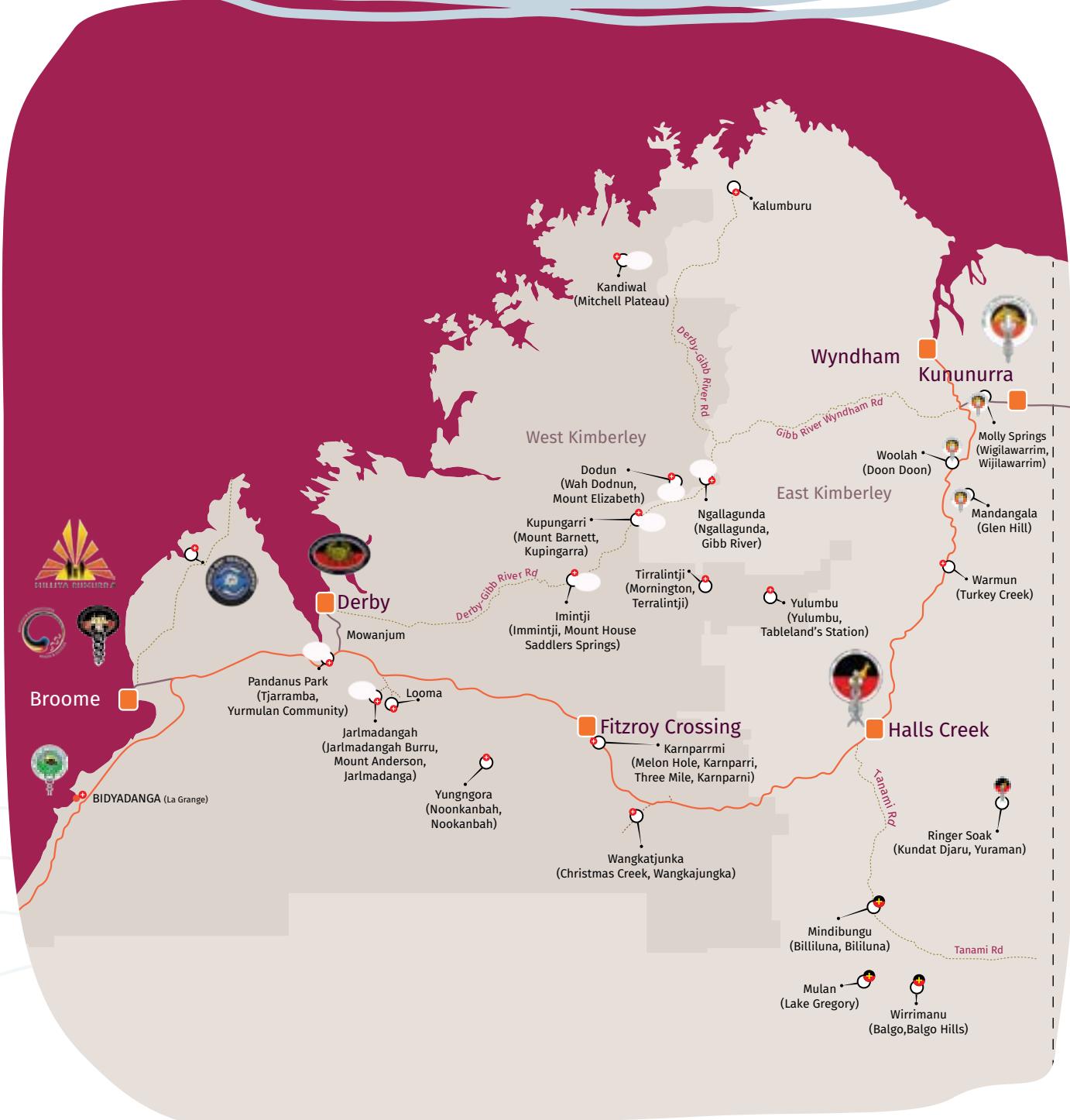
We are a member based, regional ACCHS providing support and representing the interests of independent organisations from across the Kimberley region:

- Beagle Bay Community Aboriginal Corporation
- Bidyadanga Aboriginal Community La Grange
- Broome Regional Aboriginal Medical Service
- Derby Aboriginal Health Service
- Milliya Rumurra Aboriginal Corporation
- Nirrumbuk Environmental Health and Services
- Ord Valley Aboriginal Health Service
- Yura Yungi Medical Service

As a regional service, we provide a wide range of member support services, including communications, research, clinical governance, finance and accounting, corporate services, human resources, information communications technology, and training and education.



# MAP OF KAMS AND OUR MEMBER SERVICES





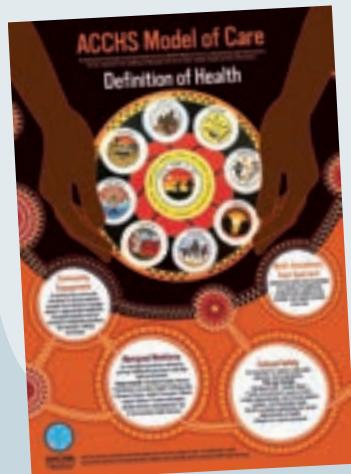
## Services and Programs

In addition to supporting our member services, we deliver:

- Comprehensive primary health care services through remote health centres in the communities of Balgo, Beagle Bay, Bidyadanga, Billiluna, and Mulan.
- Disability support and allied health services through Kimberley Supports.
- Mental health services including headspace Broome and social and emotional wellbeing (SEWB) programs.
- KRS, which is a wholly owned subsidiary, in Broome, Derby, Kununurra and Fitzroy Crossing.
- Population health programs, including smoking prevention, hearing health, foot health, men's health, sexual health, Rheumatic Heart Disease prevention and the Australian Nurse Family Partnership Program.
- Research, including auspice of the Kimberley Aboriginal Health Research Alliance (KAHRA).



KAMS has adopted the ACCHS Model of Care. This holistic model recognises that primary health care is not just about treating a patient's physical illness with medication, but rather it is about getting to the root of the issue by talking and listening; and considering patients' emotional, spiritual, and social needs in addition to what they may present with.



KAMS is a member of the Aboriginal Health Council of WA (AHCWA) and the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO).

Within the Kimberley region, we are members of Binarii-binya yarrawoo (Empowered Communities East Kimberley) and EC-West (Empowered Communities West Kimberley).

# OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services Limited

The KAMS Ltd Board comprises one delegate each from our member services. Our Directors are responsible for overseeing the overall governance, management, and strategic direction of KAMS and for delivering accountable corporate performance in accordance with our Strategic Plan.



**Raymond Christophers**  
Chairperson



**Desmond Hill**  
Deputy Chairperson  
(representing Ord Valley  
Aboriginal Health Service)



**Christopher Bin Kali**  
Treasurer (representing  
Broome Regional Aboriginal  
Medical Service)



**Tara Spry**  
Secretary (representing Derby  
Aboriginal Health Service)



**Kathleen Watson**  
Director (representing  
Milliya Rumurra Aboriginal  
Corporation)



**Mildred Hills**  
Director (representing Yura  
Yungi Medical Service)



**Louie Bin Maarus**  
Director (representing  
Nirrumbuk Environmental  
Health and Services)



**William Bangu**  
Director (representing  
Bidyadanga Aboriginal  
Community La Grange)



**Vacant**  
Director (representing Beagle  
Bay Community Aboriginal  
Corporation)

The KAMS Ltd Board convened seven times this year, and consecutive meetings of the Kimberley ACCHS CEOs Network were also held. Additionally, the 2021/22 Annual General Meeting took place on 15 December 2022.



Directors represented KAMS on various governance groups, including:

**Aboriginal Regional Governance Group**

**Dampier Peninsula Clinics Transition Working Group**

**Fitzroy Valley Health and Wellbeing Project Working Group**

**Kimberley Aboriginal Health Planning Forum**

**Kimberley Aboriginal Health Research Alliance**

**Kimberley Aboriginal Regional Body Design Group**

**Kimberley Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing Steering Committee**

**National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) Board**



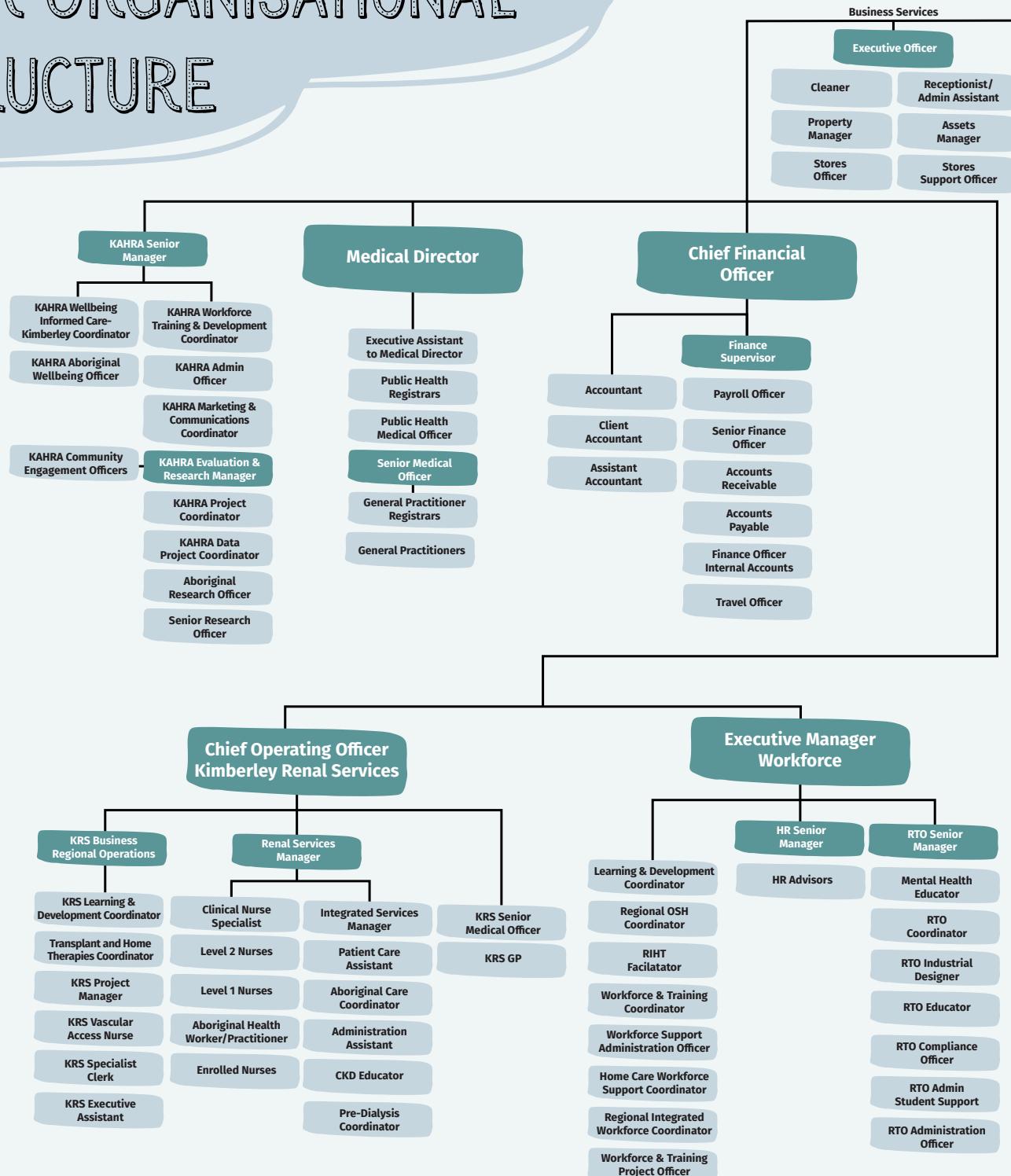
### **Kimberley Renal Services Proprietary Limited**

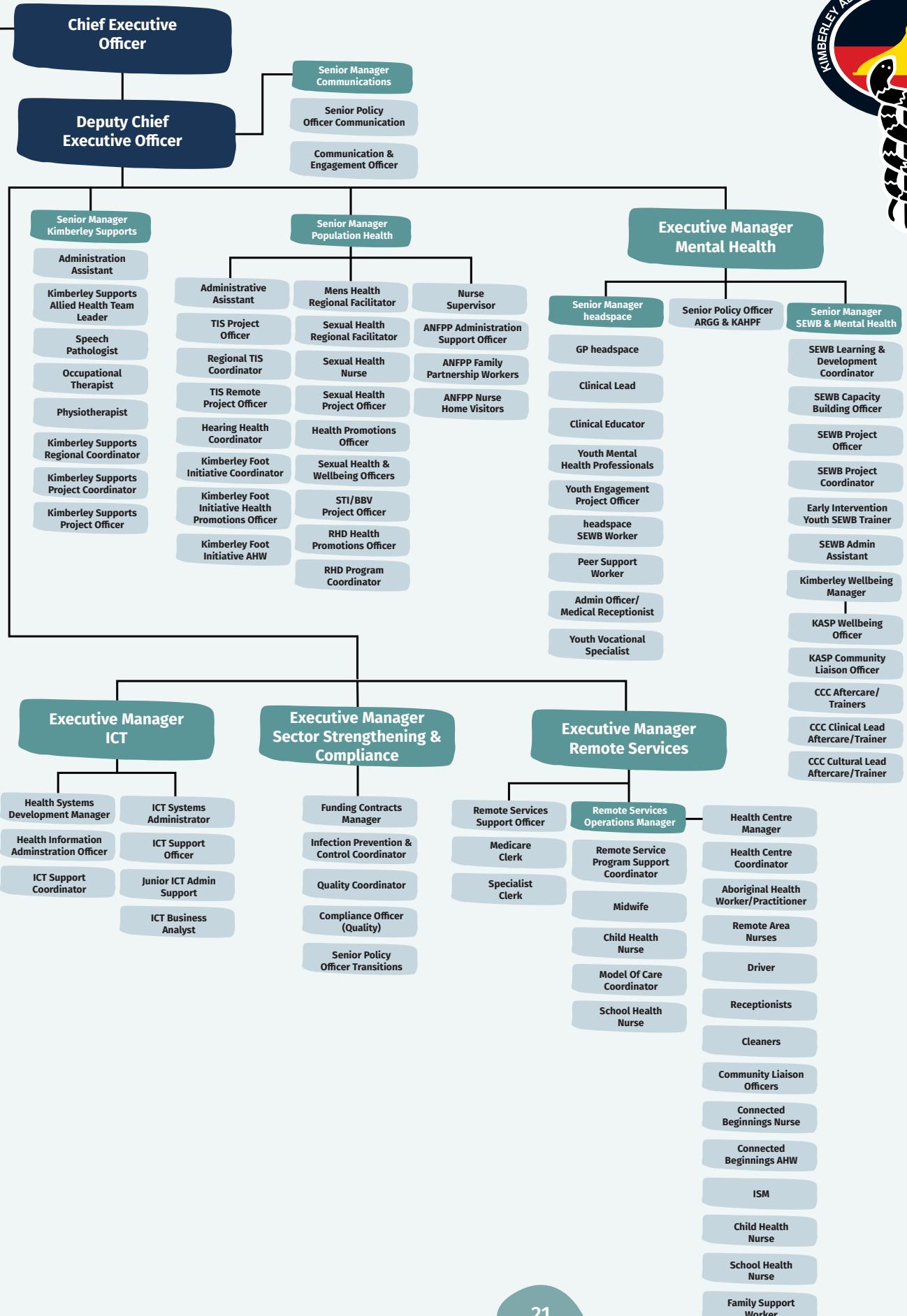
Directors of Kimberley Renal Services Pty Ltd are:

- Raymond Christophers, Chairperson
- Desmond Hill, Deputy Chairperson
- Christopher Bin Kali, Treasurer
- Tara Spry, Secretary

The KRS Pty Ltd Board convened seven times this year. Additionally, the 2021/22 Annual General Meeting took place on 15 December 2022.

# OUR ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

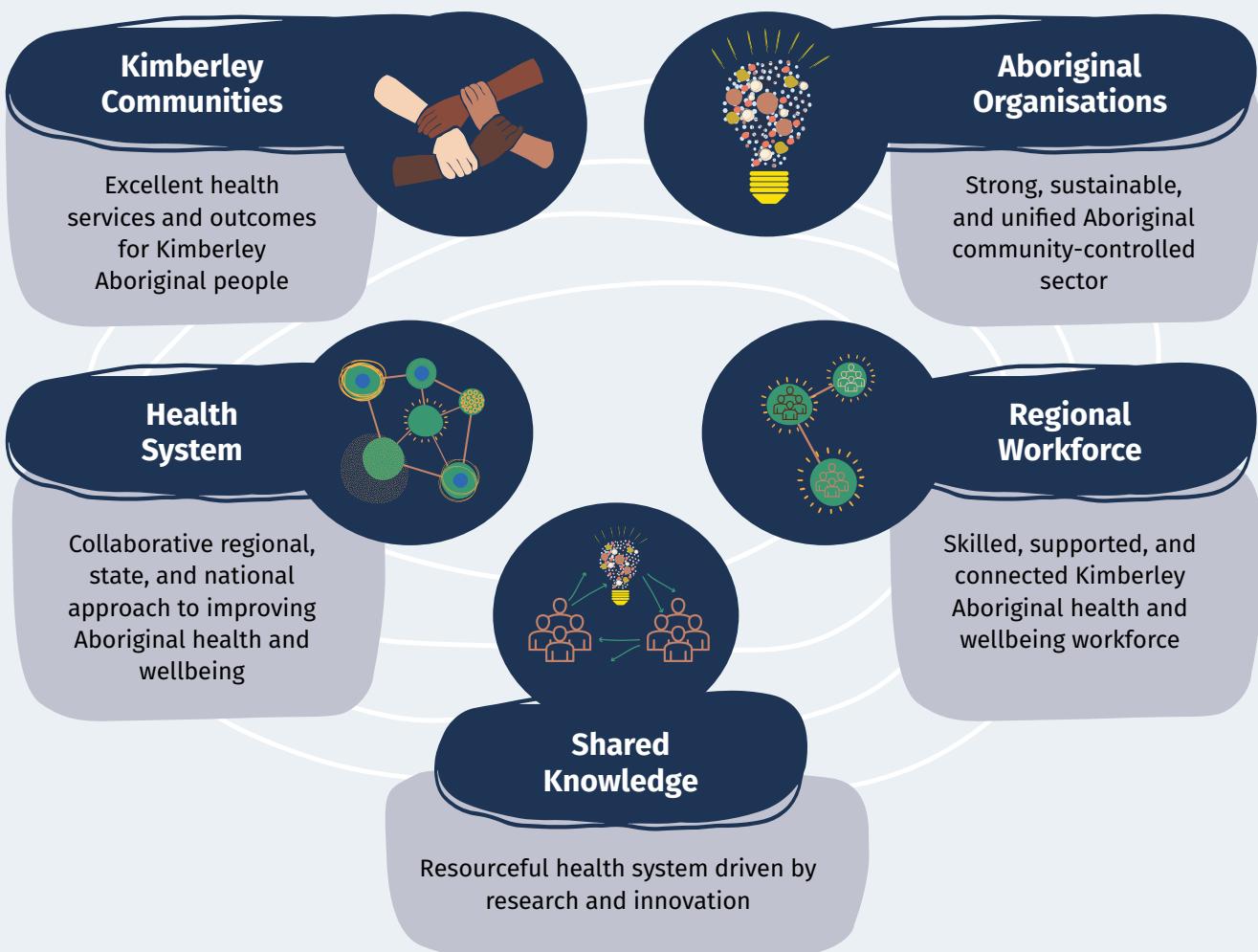




# OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

## Strategic Priorities

Our Strategic Plan has five strategic priorities for achieving our vision:



## KAMS Strategic Plan 2022-27

We are proud to present key accomplishments from 2022/23 in this annual report as they align to our Strategic Plan.







## Strategic Priority 1

### KIMBERLEY COMMUNITIES

For Aboriginal people, health encompasses all aspects of life: spiritual, emotional, physical, community, Culture, Country, and language. We believe that a community-led effort is vital to increase access to the holistic ACCHS Model of Care for all Aboriginal people in the Kimberley. This strategic priority is about achieving **excellent health services and outcomes for Kimberley Aboriginal people.**

# Remote Health Centres

We provide comprehensive primary health care services from remote health centres located in the communities of Balgo, Beagle Bay, Bidyadanga, Billiluna, and Mulan. These health centres adhere to the ACCHS Model of Care, which considers family, Culture, language, spiritual, physical, Country, emotion, and community as interconnected components that define and affect an individual's overall health and wellbeing.

**The ACCHS Model of Care is supported by the pillars of community engagement, cultural safety, Aboriginal workforce, and a multi-disciplinary team approach.**

Funding for these services is provided by the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care (DOHAC); and WACHS through Strengthening Aboriginal Health, Aboriginal Comprehensive Primary Health Care, and Healthy Country Kids.



## Community Engagement

Engaging local community members in service delivery involves including Aboriginal people in leadership positions and decision-making. Health programs and health promotion events are guided and directed by local community members, and all our events are held in suitable, culturally appropriate spaces.

In 2022/23, our remote health centres engaged communities through several preventative health programs and health promotion events, which focused on areas such as women's health, men's health, chronic conditions, school health, child health, and maternal health. We held the following number of health promotion events:

- **18 in Bidyadanga with a total attendance of 509 people.**
- **14 in Beagle Bay with a total attendance of 585 people.**
- **45 in the Kutjungka region (Balgo, Billiluna, and Mulan) with a total attendance of 854 people.**

To enhance our services, we have installed HappyOrNot® kiosks at each health centre so that patients can provide immediate feedback at the time of their visit.



We also support home visits to increase service access, and in the Kutjungka region, bush medicines are prepared with the Kimberley Pharmacy Services.

### Connected Beginnings

Connected Beginnings facilitates greater integration of services to ensure children have the best chance to reach developmental milestones before school. The program is being implemented in Bidiyadanga, and we are a partner to the program for child health services.

Through Connected Beginnings we draw upon the strength and knowledge of the local community with an aim to increase engagement of Aboriginal children and families with health and early childhood education and care. We work to improve access to existing early childhood, maternal and child health, and family support services so children are safe, healthy, and ready to thrive at school by the age of five.

Our Aboriginal Health Worker and nurse collaborate with Bidiyadanga Aboriginal Corporation La Grange and other local service providers to implement a range of community activities and service improvements. A focus this year has been on promoting the importance of child health checks, immunisations, and other follow-ups.

Connected Beginnings is funded by DOHAC.



*Image courtesy of BreastScreen WA*

### Breast Screening

In the lead-up to the arrival of the mobile breast screening service to Bidiyadanga and Djarindjin, our staff worked closely with BreastScreen WA to ensure community engagement. Outreach programs, culturally safe educational sessions, and community meetings were used to promote the significance of breast screening amongst women in these communities. Through the involvement of community members, we not only enhanced awareness but also facilitated access to the mobile screening service – contributing to increased participation rates and reinforcing the broader importance of early detection and prevention of breast cancer.

## Aboriginal Workforce

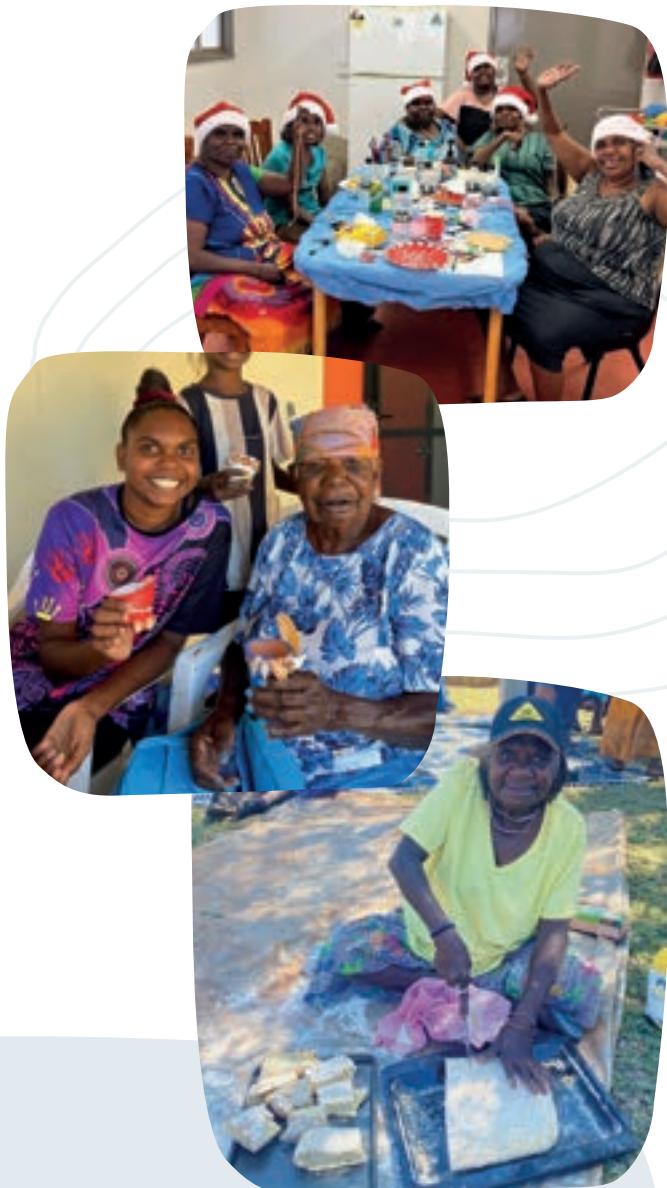
Aboriginal Health Workers and/or Aboriginal Health Practitioners are employed at each of our remote health centres. Local community members are encouraged to apply for local employment opportunities as they arise, providing both clinical and non-clinical roles. Non-clinical roles include driver, receptionist, cleaner, and maintenance positions. Community Liaison Officers are employed to provide an additional link between health centres and communities.



## Cultural Safety

Our remote health centres aim to provide an environment in which patients feel safe, welcome, and empowered. The KAMS policy of 'Aboriginal Health Worker first' is embedded at each health centre to ensure cultural safety, meaning that Aboriginal Health Workers/Practitioners are the first to see community members when they present to the centre, whenever possible.

As part of their induction, all new staff undertake cultural awareness training, and upon arrival, they have conversations with local community members regarding community-specific cultural safety. Resources are developed and available for patients in their first language whenever possible, and within each health centre, local artwork is displayed and used in the design of health promotion materials such as t-shirts.



Our staff aim to ensure continuity of care and work to build good rapport and trusting relationships with all patients. As required, we ensure that an appropriate clinician is available with respect to women's health issues, men's health issues, and patient privacy.

During community events and ceremonies (such as lore), our staff provide culturally appropriate services and attend these when requested or if required. They also collaborate and liaise with the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Cultural Centre on these events.

## Multidisciplinary Team Approach

Through a multidisciplinary team approach, we utilise the skills and knowledge of a variety of healthcare professionals allowing for complex care needs to be met.

Our health centres are comprised of Aboriginal Health Workers, Aboriginal Health Practitioners, General Practitioners (GPs), GP registrars, nurses, midwives, and support staff. Access to specialists is provided through regular visiting services such as allied health, dentists, physicians, and paediatricians, and through telehealth or Visionflex. Telehealth is used to support access to additional GP support for completion of 715 health checks. If patients need to travel to access healthcare, we support them to access transport and/or with their applications for the Patient Assisted Transport Scheme (PATS).

In addition to providing comprehensive primary health care, our health centres provide 24/7 accident and emergency services, and work with the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) to arrange evacuations as required.

Our audit schedule is in place to identify opportunities for continuous improvement. For example, we have implemented key performance indicators at each health centre, with monthly reporting and monitoring. This has led to improvements in the completion of 715 health checks, GP management plans and other key aspects of primary health care.

Our health centres continue to focus on vaccinations, including Japanese encephalitis, influenza, and COVID-19.

### KAMS Remote Health Centre Service Delivery 2022/23

	Kutjungka (Balgo Mulan Billiluna)	Bidyadanga	Beagle Bay	TOTAL
<b>Occurrences of service<sup>1</sup></b>	13,132	9,403	5,236	<b>27,771</b>
<b>Number of regular clients<sup>2</sup></b>	1,218	929	536	<b>2,683</b>
<b>Number of emergency presentations</b>	1,196	594	270	<b>2,060</b>
<b>Number of emergency evacuations</b>	125	113	21	<b>259</b>
<b>Number of 715 health checks</b>	221	129	193	<b>543</b>

<sup>1</sup> An 'occurrence of service' is a count of any service provided to a patient/client, or a group of patients/clients, on each occasion that service is provided.

<sup>2</sup> A 'regular client' denotes someone who has been seen in the clinic at least three times in the past 24 months.



# Kimberley Renal Services

## Episodes of Care

KRS is contracted by WACHS to deliver haemodialysis at renal health centres located in Broome, Derby, Fitzroy Crossing, and Kununurra for 162 patients. Additionally, a new renal health centre is in development in Halls Creek.

In 2022/23, KRS delivered 22,636 episodes of care<sup>3</sup> across the Kimberley. This year also saw 173 new patient referrals into the service for allocation to renal GP and nephrology clinics.

## West Kimberley Flood Event

Ex-tropical Cyclone Ellie brought heavy rainfall to the Kimberley from late December into early January 2023, leading to the suspension of services at Fitzroy Crossing Renal Health Centre due to the rising river levels. In a coordinated effort with emergency services, an evacuation plan was executed.

Adverse weather conditions hampered access to Broome and Derby airports, resulting in the diversion of six patients via RFDS transfer to Port Hedland. The remaining patients and staff were airlifted by helicopter from the renal centre to the local airport before being transported via light aircraft to Derby Renal Health Centre.

<sup>3</sup>An episode of care is a contact between an individual patient and service, with one or more staff, to provide health care within one calendar day. All contacts on the one day are treated holistically as one episode of care.

An interim operational model was put in place to accommodate the additional Fitzroy Crossing patients. The remaining six patients were later transferred back to the region from Port Hedland, bringing the total number of patients dialysing at Derby during this time to 66.

The floods rendered roads impassable, affecting the delivery of medical supplies, medications, and essential items. These challenges necessitated individual management. Additionally, the collapse of the Fitzroy River Bridge severed truck routes to Kununurra. This situation prompted the diversion of supplies from Perth through South Australia, but widespread flooding also affected roads and rail lines, resulting in further delays. Some stock had to be dispatched from Sydney and delivered via the Northern Territory to Kununurra.

KRS conducted generator capacity exercises in Derby and Fitzroy Crossing to assess fuel and runtime capacity, ensuring operational readiness in the event of power disruptions, and preparing for potential fuel supply shortages.

In all this was a significant effort, and after two and a half months of living in Derby, patients happily returned home.



## Support Services

In 2022/23, our Chronic Kidney Disease Educators provided 393 education sessions attended by 1,010 individuals, while our Pre-Dialysis Educators delivered 336 education sessions.



**KIDNEY HEALTH FOR ALL**  
PREPARING FOR THE UNEXPECTED,  
SUPPORTING THE VULNERABLE!

The logo for World Kidney Day, featuring a stylized red and blue kidney shape with the text "World Kidney Day" and "International Federation of Kidney Foundations".

To enhance patient engagement and support, Aboriginal Care Coordinators conducted monthly one-on-one meetings with each patient. Additionally, bi-annual yarning circles were held to gather feedback, discuss review survey outcomes, and identify potential concerns, improvements, projects, or service design changes.

Transplant education sessions were collaboratively delivered to patients, including new dialysis patients and kidney transplant recipients. These sessions offered valuable insights into suitability reviews, required workups, and were mandatory for patients progressing in their workup stages. This approach facilitates patient engagement, allowing them to openly discuss their concerns and questions with those who have navigated the transplant journey.

KRS received and accepted 10 transplant referrals for workup, resulting in five patients receiving kidney transplants during 2022/23. This brings the total to

**27**

transplants since 2020.



## Infrastructure

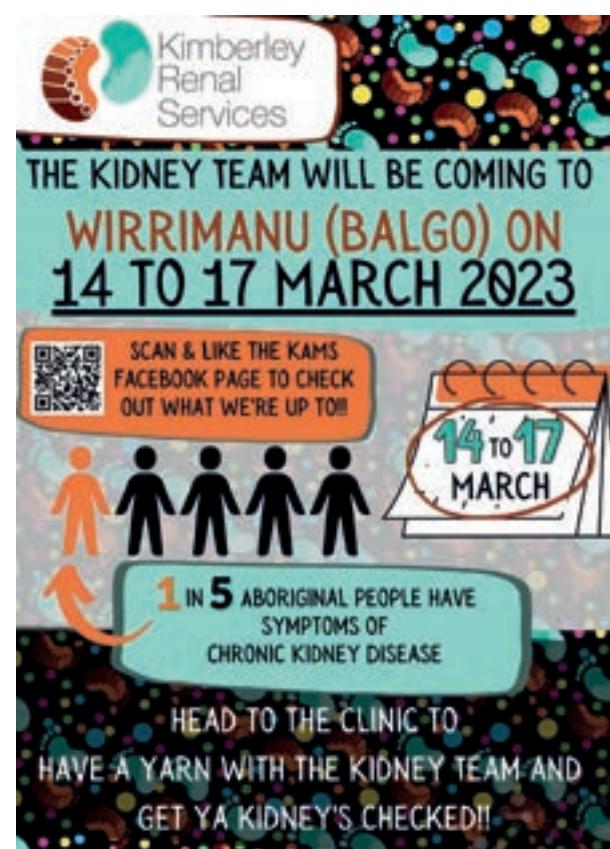
Infrastructure assessments have been conducted at all renal health centres to ensure facilities are fit for purpose, support future planning, identify, and address maintenance and repairs, and ensure compliance with accreditation standards. Annual site visits encompass a comprehensive approach, including infection prevention and control, work health and safety, and asset management, involving members of the KRS Leadership Team.



## Mobile Dialysis Unit

In June 2023, the Mobile Dialysis Unit was phased out from its role of dialysing returning patients from Perth during their isolation period, which was underway as part of our COVID-19 Response Plan.

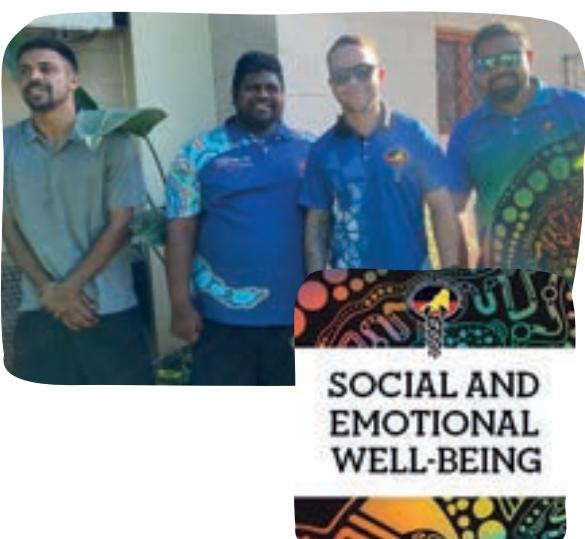
The unit is being prepared for potential reinstatement, and planning has commenced for its deployment in 2023. A patient survey conducted in 2022 indicated that most patients would prefer visits to Bidyadanga, Balgo, and Halls Creek, with the addition of accommodating patient requests for other locations across the Kimberley. In support of this initiative, KRS has also facilitated two staff members in obtaining their Heavy Rigid License, addressing a previous barrier to the unit's deployment.



# Mental Health

## Social and Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health

We believe in a holistic approach to mental health that considers the importance of connection to Country, Culture, spirituality, and ancestry in shaping the wellbeing of individuals and communities. Our dedicated SEWB team delivers preventative and clinical mental health services in alignment with the ACCHS SEWB Service Model and across various funding streams.



### Support for Flood-Impacted Communities

In response to the West Kimberley flood event, the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) provided funding to facilitate immediate SEWB support to affected communities. We worked with BRAMS, DAHS, and Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre to ensure the delivery of culturally safe services that prioritised the needs of Aboriginal people. The floods had a significant impact on many, and the immediate need to expand the scope of existing SEWB services was urgent. We recognised the ongoing need for increased SEWB support and have advocated for continued funding for local Aboriginal-led service delivery.

### Support for Young People

We provide SEWB support services and education and training programs to communities in Balgo, Bidyadanga, the Dampier Peninsula (including Beagle Bay), Billiluna, Broome, and Mulan. This includes delivering information and training on several topics like healthy relationships, mental health, SEWB, and volatile substance use. Our engagement has reached over 500 Aboriginal community members through educational programs, on-Country and cultural activities, and access to health checks.

These services are funded through WACHS Strengthening Aboriginal Health.

### Suicide Prevention and Wellbeing

#### Kimberley Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Plan

After the completion of the Kimberley Aboriginal Suicide Prevention (KASP) Trial, KAMS took the lead in developing the *KASP Regional Plan 2021–2025*, under the governance of the Aboriginal Regional Governance Group. This comprehensive plan incorporates 13 recommendations that cover the three levels of intervention endorsed in the 2016 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Evaluation Project Report titled '*Solutions that work – What the evidence and our people tell us*'.

To support the KASP Plan, some funding has been provided through the WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA). This funding encompassed project coordination and specific initiatives including:

- *Wot Na' Wot Kine* – this campaign was originally co-designed by Goolarri Media with Empowered Young Leaders and launched in October 2019. The campaign was reintroduced from December 2022 and continued to display content around help seeking through to March 2023 via Goolarri Media radio and television. A series of posters and flyers were created, aligned to the Kimberley Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug (MHAOD) Service Map, to provide information around services and supports available over the wet season period.

- Community Liaison Officers (CLO) – positions were established in the central, east, and west Kimberley regions. CLOs work closely with communities to bolster place-based initiatives and promote cultural wellbeing activities. The East Kimberley CLO position is delivered by Kununurra Waringarri Aboriginal Corporation.
- *No Wrong Door* – this initiative is about referring people to the right place, no matter where they arrive when they are experiencing a crisis. Activities included coordination of the Leadership Group, Kimberley MHAOD Service Map, Lived Experience Network, Natural Helpers and the peer-led model of screening and assessment.
- *Liyan Natural Helpers – Young Mob* – this peer-to-peer suicide prevention training program builds the confidence, capacity, and capabilities of young people across the Kimberley to act as ‘natural helpers,’ recognising the vital role young people can play in suicide prevention.

Further funding for KASP Plan activities is provided by the WA Mental Health Commission through the WA Aboriginal CLO Program. This additional funding supports the Kimberley Wellbeing Officer and the annual Community Initiative Sponsorship Program. Thanks to the Sponsorship Program, we have supported 16 place-based, community-led initiatives and activities throughout the region.

As part of the KASP Plan, we want to build skills and develop confidence of Aboriginal people as “natural helpers” by providing formal and informal training and development opportunities. In addition to *Liyan Natural Helpers – Young Mob* we delivered the Kimberley Empowerment Healing and Leadership Program to inmates at the West Kimberley Regional Prison through funding provided by Centacare Kimberley as part of the reintegration support service.





### Culture Care Connect

Culture Care Connect is an innovative program funded by NACCHO. This program represents a natural extension of our ongoing efforts as outlined in the KASP Plan with the aim to consolidate various aspects of suicide prevention planning, coordination, and activities throughout the region. This comprehensive approach encompasses raising awareness, early intervention, crisis management, and aftercare services.

A key objective of Culture Care Connect is to establish a proactive service expressly designed to assist and guide Aboriginal people in the aftermath of a suicide attempt or suicidal crisis. Through the implementation of an aftercare model, our goal is to provide clients with a safe environment, culturally appropriate care coordination and support, and linkages to various aspects of treatment and response.

During 2022/23, our focus was on laying the groundwork for this new program. This included developing a detailed workplan, initiating the recruitment process for new positions, outlining the service model, and developing a comprehensive training calendar. An integral part of this effort is the delivery of Aboriginal Mental Health First Aid Training across the region. Additionally, our team attended an onboarding workshop in Canberra in June to further align our efforts with NACCHO's objectives and strategies.





*headspace new centre mural, co-designed by Youth Advisory Members, Elders and staff with local artist Bek Treacy.*

### **Co-location Model**

A fundamental aspect of our headspace service is the co-location of complementary services to expand the array of no-cost offerings accessible to young people under one roof. These services include mental health counselling, provided by HelpingMinds, Boab Health Services, and the WACHS Kimberley Mental Health and Drug Service (KMHDS). Psychiatry in-reach is facilitated by KMHDS, and we also host a visiting psychiatrist specialising in attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) assessment and diagnostic clarification through the Rural Health West Specialist Program. This has proven to be a valuable addition to our service, with seven clinics completed and 16 clients serviced.

### **Youth Advisory Committee**

At headspace Broome, the voices and opinions of young people are central to our operations. Our Youth Advisory Committee convenes monthly to ensure that the perspectives of young individuals guide our work. They have actively supported various community activities, including R U OK? Day, headspace Day, Harmony Day, and Youth Week. Additionally, they organised events such as an anime night, contributed to the design of a mural for our centre, and played a crucial role in developing our Community Awareness Plan.



### **Work and Study Program**

Through the Work and Study Program, which follows the Individual Placement Support (IPS) model, two youth vocational specialists are dedicated to supporting the work and study needs of young people. In 2022/23, we provided 385 direct occasions of service to young people, with 73% of these individuals identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Of these, 18 young people secured placements in competitive work or study. To ensure our alignment to the IPS model, we successfully completed our sixth IPS fidelity review, achieving a 'good' rating. Funding for this program is provided by the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

## Social and Emotional Wellbeing

Our dedicated headspace youth SEWB worker plays a vital role in enhancing culturally secure pathways for Aboriginal young people within the headspace journey. In 2022/23, they actively engaged in community awareness activities, including weekly involvement with the Broome PCYC safeSPACE program, initial 'meet and greets' with other service providers, and one-on-one interactions with young people. This position is funded through WACHS Strengthening Aboriginal Health.



## Peer Work

Our peer work initiative continues to provide valuable pathways for young people accessing headspace. Our primary peer worker led 31 after-hours groups aimed at assisting socially isolated young people, while also providing one-on-one support to 26 young people. They collaborate closely with our GPs and counsellors, particularly focusing on assisting young people dealing with anxiety, social isolation, and confidence issues. Funding for this service is provided by Lotterywest.



## Other Highlights

- We implemented 'single-session therapy,' offering timely one-off sessions to address specific issues or needs.
- Co-designed groups, including the System Restore Social Club, Safe Space, and Healthy Hoops. These initiatives specifically aim to support vulnerable young individuals in improving their SEWB and enhancing their access to other headspace services.
- Community awareness activities, such as West Australian Football League Juniors, the Skill Engineer Program, Young Deadly Warriors, Vocational Training Group, IDAHOBIT Day, Wear it Purple Day, Women's Health Week, Kullarri NAIDOC Festival (in collaboration with Broome Senior High School and Kimberly Stolen Generation Aboriginal Corporation), and the Shire of Broome Skate Festival.





*Image courtesy of Robak Photography*

*Image courtesy of Robak Photography*



# Kimberley Supports

In our role as coordinator, and as a member of the Kimberley Supports Consortium, KAMS facilitates access to allied health and preventative disability services through the Remote Community Connectors (RCC), Evidence, Access, and Coordination of Planning (EACP), and Remote Early Childhood Supports (RECS) programs. Additionally, KAMS administers the Individual Capacity Building (ICB) program.

Funding for the ICB program is provided by the Australian Government Department of Social Services, while the RCC, EACP and RECS programs are funded by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA).

## Remote Community Connectors

RCCs operate within local communities to ensure that the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) has a positive impact on people with disability and their communities. Whenever possible, RCCs live in the communities where they work, allowing us to leverage their local expertise in Culture and language. Their role encompasses:

- Raising awareness and enhancing understanding of the NDIS from an Aboriginal cultural perspective.
- Identifying local individuals who may qualify for the NDIS and engaging with them and their families to enhance their comprehension of the NDIS.
- Referring individuals who request further assistance to the EACP program.
- Supporting the NDIA and other organisations in reaching out to, and communicating with, NDIS participants.

## Evidence, Access, and Coordination of Planning

The EACP program supports Aboriginal people living with disability in their application for the NDIS and the NDIS planning process.

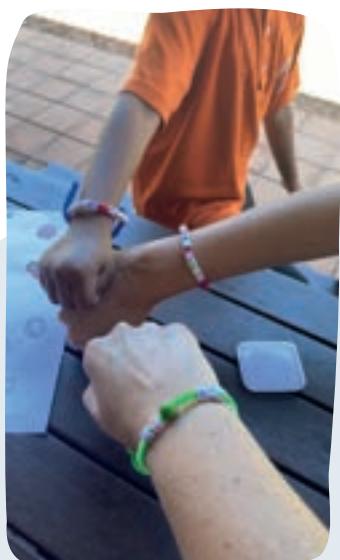
Participants receive support and advocacy as needed throughout the entire planning process, which involves navigating the following steps:

- 1. Initial engagement and raising awareness about the NDIS and the NDIS planning process.**
- 2. Assisting with the completion of application forms and helping people acquire medical and functional evidence.**
- 3. Supporting people in submitting their applications and facilitating communication with the NDIA representative.**
- 4. Aiding in establishing connections with local service providers.**

## Remote Early Childhood Supports

Our RECS team assists families with children under the age of seven who experience developmental delays or disability to access short-term early intervention services provided by family support workers and allied health professionals.

Our primary goal is to proactively address the need for long-term disability support by offering intensive multidisciplinary allied health therapies over a brief period (six to 12 months) during the early years. This involves utilising culturally appropriate assessment tools to evaluate children and facilitating connections between families and suitable services, supports, and pathways. Our family support workers ensure culturally secure service delivery.



## Individual Capacity Building

We deliver the ICB program in Balgo, Beagle Bay, Bidyadanga, Billiluna and Mulan. The program aims to increase access to community peer support groups, workshops and social events for people living with disability. Activities include:

- Increasing community awareness about disability.
- Creating culturally specific resources for communities about disability.
- Providing linkages between service providers and communities.
- Creating simple pathways for people and providers to be able to access different services.
- Ensuring accountability and commitment to person-centred care through a Cultural Reference Group.



# Population Health

Our Population Health Unit delivers preventive health programs to enhance awareness, limit the progression, and enhance the prevention of health conditions across the region.

## COVID-19 and Influenza

Our services have remained vigilant in raising awareness of COVID-19 and influenza, and have widely issued public health messaging, including promotion of vaccinations. The Kimberley region is regarded as managing this well – together with our member services and WACHS we have put systems in place to support vulnerable people. For example, coordination of the COVID-19 Ambulatory Responses Team (C-CART) model between the ACCHS sector and WACHS worked well to ensure that many COVID-19 patients were looked after at home.

## Hearing Health

The incidence and prevalence rates of otitis media and conductive hearing loss are high in the Kimberley region, particularly amongst children in remote Aboriginal communities.

Our Hearing Health Program is delivered in schools and primary health care clinics, to detect, diagnose, and treat middle ear disease and conductive hearing loss in children and young people from zero to 21 years. Funding for this program is provided through Strengthening Aboriginal Health (WACHS), Rural Health West (RHW) and DOHAC.

## Outreach Visits

In 2022/23 we conducted seven outreach visits, providing services to a total of 383 patients:

- Dampier Peninsula (Beagle Bay, One Arm Point, Djarindjin and Lombadina) (July 2022 and March 2023)
- Bidyadanga (August 2022 and March 2023)
- Halls Creek and Ringer Soak (September 2022)
- Kutjungka region (October 2022 and May 2023)

Unfortunately, visits scheduled for Derby, Kandiwal, Kupungarri, and Pandanus Park (October to November 2022) and Broome (February and June 2023) were cancelled.

Securing an Ear, Nose, and Throat specialist to support these outreach visits has been challenging. We have also faced difficulties related to weather conditions, road conditions, resource and staffing availability, staff accommodation, clinical support, and patient attendance.

During these outreach visits, patients were referred to Hearing Australia, WACHS, allied health professionals (including dental and speech therapists), and their GPs for further assessment, treatment, consultation, or specialist appointments. When applicable, local primary health care clinics were included in these referrals to facilitate treatment, review, and monitoring.



## Continuous Quality Improvement

In February, RHW facilitated a roundtable meeting between KAMS and WACHS to discuss ear health service provision in the Kimberley. The roundtable provided an opportunity for discussion about RHW outreach health services, including the provision of services under the RHW *Healthy Ears – Better Hearing, Better Listening* program. During this meeting, service delivery challenges and recommendations for improvement were identified.

This year, we updated our Hearing Health Consent Form. This form is essential for obtaining parental or guardian permission and consent for checking and treating their child/children's ears, as well as for sharing information with other visiting and allied health services. Parents/guardians have the option to withhold consent or withdraw it at any time. Throughout the year, we conducted community visits to explain the new form.

Our team has identified service gaps and collected valuable insights into what is effective and what is not working in hearing health. They continue to collaborate with stakeholders to enhance ear health services within the ACCHS sector.



## World Hearing Day

For World Hearing Day 2023, we partnered with ear health services in the Broome Kullarri region to promote and increase awareness regarding the significance of primary ear and hearing care. We were a part of health promotion events at BRAMS and in Beagle Bay, aligning with the theme, 'ear and hearing care for all.' Each event included video otoscopy, health promotion kits, informative resources, a questionnaire about ear health, participation prizes, and a BBQ luncheon. We were pleased to have the company of over 30 adults and 70 children and young people at these events.



## Tackling Indigenous Smoking

Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS) is dedicated to enhancing the health of Aboriginal people by reducing smoking rates and promoting optimal health. The program encompasses various initiatives, such as school and community educational programs, facilitation of quit support groups, referrals to Quitline, advocacy for smoke-free environments at regional and national levels, and support for smoke-free events, workplaces, and community spaces.

Over the past year, our team has been actively engaged in expanding the reach of the *Her Rules Her Game* brand throughout the region. This brand has experienced significant growth in its following, particularly in connecting with Kimberley women through various social media campaigns aimed at educating, supporting, and promoting access to essential services.

To further extend our presence in the East Kimberley area, we launched a new television campaign, 'Inspiring the next generation,' which prominently features women from the East Kimberley region. This campaign has garnered excellent feedback from the community, having been broadcast during prime-time slots on Channel 7 from July through to September.

We participated in various events, including a Women's Wellness Camp attended by community members from Bidiyadanga. The camp featured interactive educational sessions covering topics such as smoking, sexual health, food hygiene, and SEWB. Participants even had the opportunity to design a fishing shirt.

TIS is funded by DOHAC and delivered in partnership by KAMS, BRAMS, DAHS, OVAHS, and YYMS.



## Sexual Health

Our Sexual Health Program plays a crucial role in providing clinical education, training, and culturally tailored sexual health promotion resources and campaigns specific to the Kimberley region. The program is delivered in partnership with our member services and is dedicated to delivering high-quality sexual health services and supporting an increase in opportunistic and targeted screening, along with appropriate management and follow-up for individuals with sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and blood-borne viruses (BBVs).

In 2022/23, we placed a strong emphasis on addressing the ongoing syphilis outbreak in the region.

Our staff work closely with communities to identify and develop culturally relevant prevention strategies. They engage in school-based education, covering students from kindergarten to year 12, as well as extending their educational efforts to other settings such as men's and women's spaces, camps, alternative education settings, sports events and training, groups for young people, and health promotion activities.

Our team comprises a Regional Sexual Health Coordinator, a male and a female Sexual Health Project Officer, an STI and BBV Project Officer, and a Regional Sexual Health Nurse. This year:

- Our Regional Sexual Health Nurse conducted regular monthly visits to our remote health centres, providing clinical support, management, advice, and education.
- Our STI/BBV Project Officer engaged in consultations regarding the MMEx<sup>4</sup> sexual health module to enhance its functionality across KAMS and our member services.
- Our Sexual Health Project Officers continued to deliver education and health promotion activities at our remote health centres and member services. They actively sought community input to determine suitable settings and topics for education and health promotion.

Our Sexual Health Program is funded through NACCHO, WACHS and the WA Department of Health.

Our team has achieved positive outcomes across the region, encompassing clinical services, quality improvement, clinical and community education, and health promotion initiatives. Some highlights from 2022/23 include:

- Participation in community-led women's health and men's camps in Bidyadanga, as well as Women's Health Week in the Kutjungka region.
- Implementation of opportunistic screening days in collaboration with the Men's Outreach Service in Broome and Bidyadanga Men's Space.
- Completion of a comprehensive review of the KAMS Syphilis Outbreak Response and the development of an action plan.
- Enhancement of skills and delivery of protective behaviours education in community settings.
- Development of engaging, locally focused resources covering Cervical Screening Test self-collection, protective behaviours, STIs and BBVs.



<sup>4</sup> MMEx is the 'Medical Message Exchange' and is the platform that we use for electronic health records.

## Australian Nurse-Family Partnership Program

The Australian Nurse-Family Partnership Program is a mentoring, advocacy, and behavioural change program designed to have a positive impact on pregnancy, child health, and developmental outcomes. The program involves visiting women in their homes during pregnancy and the first two years of their children's lives.

Our team strives to empower women based on their individual strengths, supporting them in setting and achieving goals, and celebrating their progress. We encourage women to build confidence in navigating services to meet their needs while enhancing their self-efficacy and equipping them with tools for positive attachment and responsive parenting.

While home visits are the primary mode of program delivery, group activities play a crucial role in achieving program goals. These activities focus on building relationships and fostering social interactions among women, while also offering opportunities to provide educational content in an informal setting.

As a newly funded program, our planning commenced in October 2023 when we began appointing staff. The program rollout has involved collaboration with our member services and other stakeholders to assess its suitability in communities across the region.



Australian   
**Nurse-Family**  
Partnership Program

We have successfully recruited all funded positions, including the Nurse Supervisor, Nurse Home Visitors, Family Partnership Workers, and an Administrative Officer.

We transitioned from planning to implementation in March 2023 and are currently providing this program to women in the West Kimberley, including Broome, Beagle Bay, and Djarindjin, as well as in the East Kimberley, encompassing Kununurra, Wyndham, Warmun, and Halls Creek (at YYMS). Women can self-refer to the program or be referred by our member services and WACHS.

The program is funded by DOHAC.





## Kimberley Foot Initiative

The Kimberley Foot Initiative is part of a national initiative aimed at reducing diabetes-related foot complications and amputations among Aboriginal people, funded through the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute. The initiative has entered 'Phase Three' with a focus on enhancing community awareness of how to prevent diabetic foot complications and providing education to patients who are living with diabetes or are at risk of developing diabetic foot complications.

To enhance the cultural security of specialist services, our Aboriginal Health Worker attends Boab Health and WACHS-run specialist clinics. They have also been working closely with our Men's Health Regional Facilitator to provide foot screening on an outreach basis to communities and have delivered several patient education sessions. Our newly recruited Health Promotion Officer will develop resources and activities to enhance awareness of diabetic foot care and how to prevent complications.

Activities implemented in 2022/23 include:

- **Happy Feet:** Engaging school-aged children by providing white canvas shoes and paint pens so they can draw on their own shoes while discussing the importance of wearing shoes to prevent foot infections.
- **Sweet Talk:** Engaging with young people around diabetes prevention by discussing the teaspoons of sugar consumed in popular drinks and the importance of drinking water; and showing the *Diabetes Foot Story* (developed by the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress), to illustrate that diabetic foot complications can develop through poorly managing sugars in diabetes.
- **Pamper Days:** Pampering community members and patients, and talking about the importance of keeping feet clean and wearing shoes.

Our staff continue to strengthen relationships with podiatry services in the region by hosting regular meetings to discuss successes, challenges, and resource development. They also continue to strengthen relationships with our member services and our remote health centres to provide support related to foot health.



Do you have a sore on your foot?  
Do you get numbness, tingling or sharp shooting pains in your feet?  
Do you get cramping in your legs at night?  
Do you have a painful, swollen foot?

**GO SEE YOUR LOCAL CLINIC TO GET YOUR FOOT CHECKED.**



## Rheumatic Heart Disease

The RHD Program is a new initiative that will be delivered across the region. It is funded by NACCHO and delivered in partnership by KAMS, BRAMS, DAHS, OVAHS, YYMS and NEHS.

The program provides a collaborative, comprehensive, and coordinated regional approach to preventing RHD, utilising a culturally secure model of care focusing on community-led solutions and responsive approaches. A key focus will be ensuring strong linkages between ACCHS-run primary health care services and Aboriginal environmental health services. A Program Coordinator and Health Promotion Officer have been established within KAMS to support this work and to work alongside other program staff at BRAMS, DAHS, OVAHS, YYMS and NEHS.



## Men's Health

Our Men's Health Program is for Aboriginal men aged 16 years or older, to support the coordination, development, implementation, and review of practice in men's health service delivery. The goal is to enhance men's health outcomes and remove barriers preventing men from accessing primary health care. In addition to general health and wellbeing, the program places specific emphasis on sexual health, BBVs, chronic disease, and SEWB.

In 2022/23, the program has supported the following activities:

- A men's health event, a program for young men, and the Kimberley Foot Initiative in Beagle Bay.
- A men's health services expo, Men's Shed Health Day, and a men's health event in Bidyadanga.
- Substance use prevention in Balgo and men's health promotion in the Kutjungka region.
- The delivery of Aboriginal Mental Health First Aid, a TAFE young men's program focusing on sexual health and healthy relationships, a Men's health day in collaboration with the Men's Outreach Service, and sexual health checks at BRAMS in Broome.
- Support to the West Kimberley flood response in Derby.

Funding for our Men's Health program is provided by KAMS.







## Strategic Priority 2

# ABORIGINAL ORGANISATIONS

Community control of health and other social services is a vital part of Aboriginal self-determination. When Aboriginal organisations across the Kimberley are strong and functioning well, they are empowered to define the issues impacting their communities, and to develop tailored and holistic solutions to meet their needs. This strategic priority is about achieving a **strong, sustainable, and unified Aboriginal community-controlled sector**.

# Transition to Community Control

In response to requests from local communities, KAMS is providing auspice of projects aimed at facilitating the transition of remote primary health care services to Aboriginal community control and the establishment of new Aboriginal health services:

- 1. Bidyadanga Remote Health Centre Transition Project:** This project seeks to transfer the management of the Bidyadanga Remote Health Centre from KAMS to Bidyadanga Aboriginal Corporation La Grange (BACLG).
- 2. Dampier Peninsula Clinics Transition Project:** The objective of this project is to transition the management of remote area clinics at Lombadina and Djarindjin, and Ardyaloon from WACHS to KAMS.
- 3. Fitzroy Valley Health and Wellbeing Project:** This project aims to establish a dedicated ACCHS in Fitzroy Crossing.

Funding for these projects is provided by KAMS and the WA Department of Health. These initiatives are in alignment with the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap* and underscore the robust partnership between KAMS, local Aboriginal communities, and the State Government.



## Bidyadanga Remote Health Centre Transition Project

BACLG and KAMS have worked closely together to plan, manage, and advance transition activities. At the core of this work is a solid foundation of good governance, underpinned by several key documents, including a business case, implementation plan, risk plan, and a communications plan.

Throughout 2022/23, we have prioritised the following areas:

- Governance:** This encompasses the establishment of structured reporting lines between the health centre and the BACLG CEO and Council. Additionally, it involves defining reporting and approval pathways to both the Council and the KAMS Board.
- Workforce:** Undertaking a comprehensive review and gap analysis of both the BACLG and KAMS staffing to draft a proposed organisational structure.
- Quality management:** Addressing healthcare standards and accreditation requirements to draft a policy framework that supports quality management.
- Financial arrangements:** Assessing funding allocations, budgets, and operational expenses.

Furthermore, KAMS has secured stage one funding from DOHAC for the construction of a purpose-built health centre in Bidyadanga in two stages. This new facility will replace the current building and enhance access to services. The matter of land tenure is a pivotal aspect, which is being addressed through the Bidyadanga Land Activation Pilot project, a place-based partnership involving the WA Government, residents, and Native Title holders.





## Dampier Peninsula Clinics Transition Project

A Working Group has been established to oversee the Dampier Peninsula Clinics Transition Project. Members include two representatives from the communities of Ardyaloon, Djarindjin, and Lombadina, as well as representatives from KAMS, WACHS, DOHAC, and the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

Community consultation is vital to this project. During 2022/23, four Working Group meetings and three community meetings were held locally. A communique was widely distributed after each meeting to provide transparent communication and raise awareness about the project.

An Electronic Medical Record Sub-committee has been established by the Working Group to oversee and manage the effective transition of electronic medical records from the WACHS Community Health Information System to the MMEx. Membership includes community representatives, KAMS and WACHS.

KAMS and WACHS also meet monthly to negotiate detailed requirements of the transition, including funding, assets, and infrastructure. Work on the business case for the transition has continued.

## Fitzroy Valley Health and Wellbeing Project

The Fitzroy Valley Health and Wellbeing Project Working Group continues to work towards the establishment of an ACCHS in Fitzroy Crossing.

In late 2022 four Working Group and two community meetings were held, however meetings scheduled for February and March 2023 were rescheduled to April and June because of the devastating West Kimberley flood event. A communique was widely distributed after each Working Group meeting to provide transparent communications and raise awareness about the project.

The Working Group have chosen a name for the new service: 'Barrala Health Service.' They have also had a logo designed for the service. The word 'barrala' from the Bunuba language has the following meaning:

**Barrala**  
Bunuba language

**BARRALA**  
Health Service



*The wax, **barrala**, from the spinifex bininybali, can be used as medicine. It is collected and made into a smooth flattened disc. This is rubbed on the head of a newborn baby to make it grow up strong and healthy. It also stops the children from getting colds in the future. The wax can also be boiled in water and the liquid drunk to treat colds and flu. The seeds are called walalurru.*

The draft rule book for the service underwent further legal review and was endorsed by the Working Group in April. This will be presented at a community meeting, to meet pre-incorporation requirements under the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 (CATSI Act), in August 2023.

Once incorporated, the service will be able to negotiate funding for operations and infrastructure, including funding to build the clinic and provide staff housing.

# Kimberley Supports Consortium

The Kimberley Supports Consortium was established to provide targeted support to ensure equity and access to the NDIS by Kimberley Aboriginal people. The Consortium provides strategic oversight and enables consolidated and collaborative delivery of three programs (Remote Community Connectors, Evidence, Access, and Coordination of Planning, and Remote Early Childhood Supports (RECS)) across the region, whilst accommodating local needs.

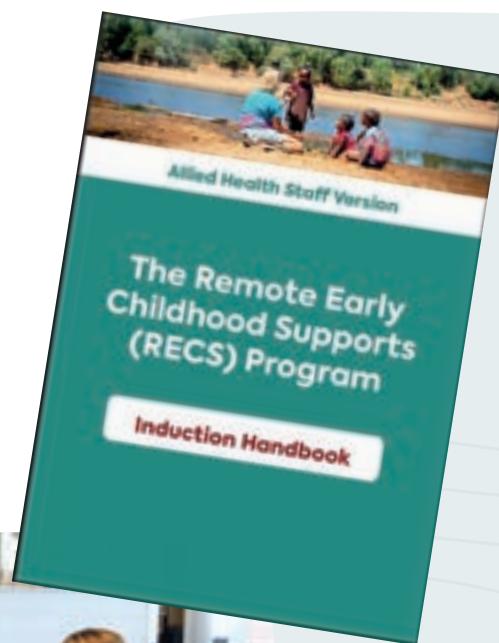
KAMS provides auspice to the Consortium, which is comprised of:

- Broome Regional Aboriginal Medical Service
- Derby Aboriginal Health Service
- Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services
- Kununurra Waringarri Aboriginal Corporation
- Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre
- Nirrumbuk Environmental Health and Services
- Ord Valley Aboriginal Health Service
- Winun Ngari Aboriginal Corporation
- Yura Yungi Medical Service

The Consortium met three times in 2022/23, and they also came together for co-design workshops.

At one workshop, discussions revolved around the future of the RECS program with the NDIA. Consortium members have been delivering RECS for almost three years, and this workshop provided an opportunity to evaluate the current program to assess strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for the future of the program. This included exploring whether an Aboriginal-led program like the one developed by the Consortium could be replicated in other regions.

A later workshop involved the NDIA and WACHS and was focused on defining shared outcomes for early childhood services and how, as a service sector, they can work together to achieve those outcomes. This process included mapping the early childhood developmental services that are already available in the region.



# Supporting Member Services

## Lead Clinicians Forum

We have established the Lead Clinicians Forum which meets four times per year to oversee clinical practice standards in ACCHSs and to discuss collective clinical issues. This forum ensures clinical teams across the ACCHS sector are communicating well and sharing ideas. Membership is multidisciplinary and includes clinicians from Aboriginal Health Worker, medical and nursing scopes of practice.

## Communications and Graphic Design

The overarching goal of our communications is to deliver culturally safe health and wellbeing information. We are committed to ensuring that information is consistent, credible, compelling, and clear, while also being accessible and timely.

To streamline our efforts, we have established a Communications and Engagement Strategy. This serves as a guiding document for our staff, aimed at facilitating the design, development, and delivery of culturally safe health information to Kimberley Aboriginal communities, as well as our members, stakeholders, and partners.



## Coordination of Visiting Services

Through the Rural Health West Medical Outreach Indigenous Chronic Disease Program, we participated in a pilot program to better coordinate and integrate visiting health services across our health centres. Each year we receive visits from a broad range of providers. This program enabled us to look for opportunities for improvement to avoid service duplication, support patient attendance, and streamline processes. By streamlining our administrative processes, we had more capacity to deliver services.

In the 2022/23 period, our Communications Team, comprising a Senior Manager, Senior Policy Officer, and Communication and Engagement Officer, worked across the organisation to implement this Strategy. This encompassed the utilisation of both 'minor-scale' and 'major-scale' communication tools, targeted specifically at Kimberley Aboriginal communities and our own staff.

Our Graphic Design Officer also plays an instrumental role in supporting member services by crafting and designing resources tailored for diverse services and programs.

In 2022/23 period, our Graphic Designer completed an impressive portfolio of over **400** individual tasks some of which necessitated multiple iterations.

## Infection Prevention and Control

Our Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) program is designed to take a proactive stance on the prevention, surveillance, investigation, and control of infections within KAMS and KRS services, enhancing both patient and staff safety. Additionally, we offer guidance and support in auditing and accreditation processes to our member services. The program is funded by KAMS and KRS.

In 2022/23, our primary focus was on conducting comprehensive site audits at KAMS, KRS, and member service clinics. These audits aimed to evaluate compliance with infection control protocols and identify areas for enhancement.

Consistent hand hygiene auditing was conducted across KRS, adhering to the World Health Organization's *5 moments for hand hygiene* approach. Most audits revealed compliance rates surpassing the national average. Ongoing education and feedback mechanisms were in place to maintain hand hygiene standards among staff.

We refined our healthcare-acquired infection surveillance system to enable prompt detection and reporting of infections. This system aids in trend analysis and informs targeted interventions to mitigate healthcare-acquired infections within our facilities. In conjunction, we completed a series of root cause analyses to gain deeper insights into factors affecting patient outcomes.

Training focused on transmission-based precautions continued, incorporating COVID-19 management protocols into standard training modules. An aseptic technique learning resource was also developed and made available through 'Right Place' (our learning management system), ensuring healthcare workers remain updated on best practices in aseptic techniques, thereby contributing to safer patient care.

In 2022, our IPC Coordinator participated in the Hot North Antimicrobial Stewardship Program. Created to enhance the skills of healthcare workers in antibiotic usage, auditing, stewardship, surveillance, and communication, the program equipped them with valuable knowledge. Then, in collaboration with the Public Health Registrar, the Coordinator established the Kimberley ACCHS Antimicrobial Stewardship Program.

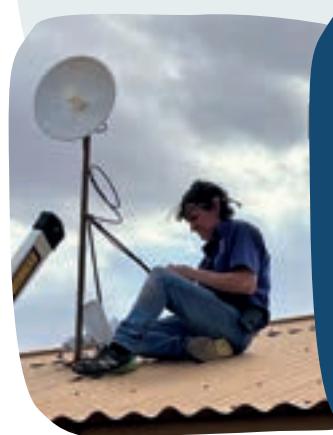
This initiative aims to promote the safe and appropriate use of antimicrobials and disseminate best practices among clinicians and healthcare providers in the region. The group convened in Kununurra, featuring presentations by KAMS, Kimberley Pharmacy Services, and medical students from the University of Notre Dame. The students shared the findings of their delegated audit topics related to antibiotic use.

## Information and Communications Technology

Our ICT team plays a critical role, providing comprehensive technical support to KAMS and our member services across 25 distinct sites. The team's services include:

- The supply, installation, and maintenance of all core ICT infrastructure for each individual site.
- Managing a wide-area network that connects each of these sites.
- Operating an ICT Helpdesk for immediate troubleshooting and support.
- Ensuring robust site ICT security and backup functionalities.

Another significant function of the ICT team is their support in health informatics for our MMEx system. This includes services such as fielding development requests, managing projects, fulfilling data and report requests, and taking care of user account maintenance, support, and administration.



Our ICT team provided comprehensive technical support to KAMS and our member services across **25** distinct sites

## Service Delivery

The past year was especially busy for our ICT team, with numerous projects running concurrently with our already active helpdesk services. Over the reporting period, the helpdesk responded to a notable 31,631 requests, marking an increase on previous years. We received 712 new and 147 exit user account requests.

This year, we also observed an improvement in obtaining new ICT equipment from our suppliers, despite COVID-19's lingering impact on supply chains. Almost \$400,000 worth of new computers, printers, and other IT equipment was processed

through our IT stock supply system. Our stock room often cycles quickly from full to empty as we strive to meet the large demand for equipment across the region.

Logistically, our ICT team covered more than 40,000km in road travel to provide site support and install new equipment.

Security was another area of intense focus, particularly given the substantial rise in phishing and fraudulent communications. Nearly 8.5% of all incoming emails were successfully quarantined and blocked before reaching our inboxes.

# 31,631

requests responded to

# 712

new user requests

# 147

exit user requests

# \$400k

worth of IT equipment

# 40k

km in road travel

# 8.5%

incoming emails  
successfully quarantined  
and blocked

## Projects

A range of ICT projects were actively managed throughout the year. Many, such as adopting new backup technologies or implementing a refreshed network, may go unnoticed. However, our team's ability to manage these seamlessly is commendable. Afterhours work has also been a key factor in ensuring optimal running of our clinics and services.

One of the major projects completed this year was an internal ICT department restructure. Over the last six months, we welcomed new staff members to expand our support services.

In November, Starlink became available in our region. Within weeks, we were on the road, and sometimes in the air, to install these fast internet services.

By mid-December, services had been installed in several locations, providing internet availability which proved to be critical during the West Kimberley flood event.

Another significant initiative is the MMEx eLearning project, aimed at creating a suite of online training modules. Additionally, we are working on a unified communications migration project, which will see all our supported sites transition to a single, unified communications system by the end of 2023.



## Business Services

In response to our organisational restructure, our Business Services Team emerged as a crucial component of our operational framework. This team includes the Executive Officer, responsible for offering administrative, governance, and logistical support to the CEO, Deputy CEO, and the KAMS and KRS Boards. The Executive Officer oversees several projects including the construction of a new administration building in Broome.

Our Property Manager plays a pivotal role in ensuring the adequacy and quality of staff accommodation. In 2022/23, we achieved several upgrades across our properties, and we expanded our portfolio with the acquisition of two additional units. Our holdings now total 75 properties.

Our Asset Manager oversees all repairs and maintenance activities, guaranteeing the upkeep of our infrastructure across the region. They also oversee a fleet of 75 vehicles, reinforcing our commitment to facilitating essential service delivery throughout the region.

Our Stores Department demonstrated remarkable resilience in 2022, effectively adapting to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. They have remained steadfast in their mission to supply our health centres with indispensable items, thereby reinforcing their ability to support service delivery.

The team also plays a pivotal role in implementing infrastructure upgrades, repairs, and maintenance. Notably, their collaboration was instrumental in securing a successful service maintenance program submission, leading to repairs and maintenance for remote staff accommodation. Funding for these projects has been provided by DOHAC.

## Finance

In 2022/23, our Finance Team continued to serve as the centralised hub for all financial activities across KAMS and our member services. Their comprehensive services range from regular and quarterly reporting to the Board and CEO, to fulfilling annual reporting obligations including those linked to the Annual General Meeting, Annual Financial Statements, and Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT). The team is also responsible for managing funding and grant acquittals, Business Activity Statements, and the general ledger. In addition, they advised on FBT and the Goods and Services Tax (GST), managed our salary sacrifice packaging partner, and oversaw payroll integrity.

Beyond these tasks, they were actively involved in annual budgeting, including supporting the preparation of operational budgets. Their role is pivotal in maintaining financial governance, as they uphold standards in financial policy and procedures.

The team are also responsible for managing staff travel – and have had a busy year providing this service across the organisation.



## Funding Contracts Management

During 2022/23, we received funding from 26 organisations to provide services under 77 funding contracts. This funding allows KAMS and KRS to deliver vital health services across the Kimberley as well as providing ongoing administrative and other support to our member services and the employment of our staff.

Our funding contracts management includes sourcing and submitting funding applications, contract and subcontract negotiations and execution, and the facilitation and quality assurance of required contractual deliverables and milestones including (but not limited to):

- Annual activity workplans including budgets and risk management plans.
- Financial reporting.
- Quarterly data reports.
- Half-yearly performance reports.
- Required compliance statements (e.g., Vulnerable Persons/Child Safety and the Disability Inclusion and Access Plans).

**200+**

reports to funding bodies were provided in 2022/23.

Continuous quality improvements which commenced in 2022/23 are the revision of our subcontracting documentation and the initial market research for a contract management system that will be tailored to our requirements.

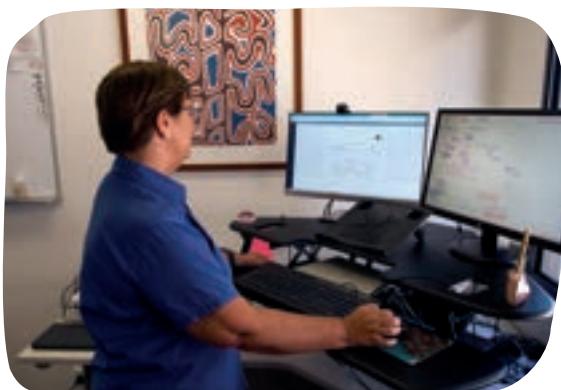
## Quality

Through our quality program, we maintain required accreditations and support monitoring, compliance, and continual improvement systems across all our business areas. We use 'LogiQC' software to administer our quality management system (QMS).

The *ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management Standard* guides our management and integration of quality assurance and improvement as part of everyday business. We have maintained this certification since 2012. Annual post-certification audits were conducted in August and May, and no non-conformances were found. This is a testament to the systems that we have in place and the consistent work and effort of all our staff.

Our remote health centres and headspace Broome are accredited against the Royal Australian College of GPs (RACGP) *Standards for General Practices 5th edition*. These standards have been developed to protect patients from harm by providing clear requirements for the quality and safety of health services and to support health services in identifying and addressing opportunities for improvement in their systems and processes. Self-assessments were completed in September, and onsite audits were conducted in November, resulting in successful re-certification prior to the previous term's expiry in April 2023.

All KRS renal health centres continue to be licensed to conduct a day hospital (Class C) by the Licensing and Regulatory Unit. KRS is also accredited under the *National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards* – an accreditation assessment was conducted, and no non-conformances were found.



Our Mental Health, SEWB and headspace Broome services were accredited for the first time against the *National Standards for Mental Health Services* in May 2022, which was then confirmed at an onsite audit in August. The first post-certification audit was undertaken in May 2023, and no non-conformances were found. headspace also achieved accreditation against the headspace Model Integrity Framework.

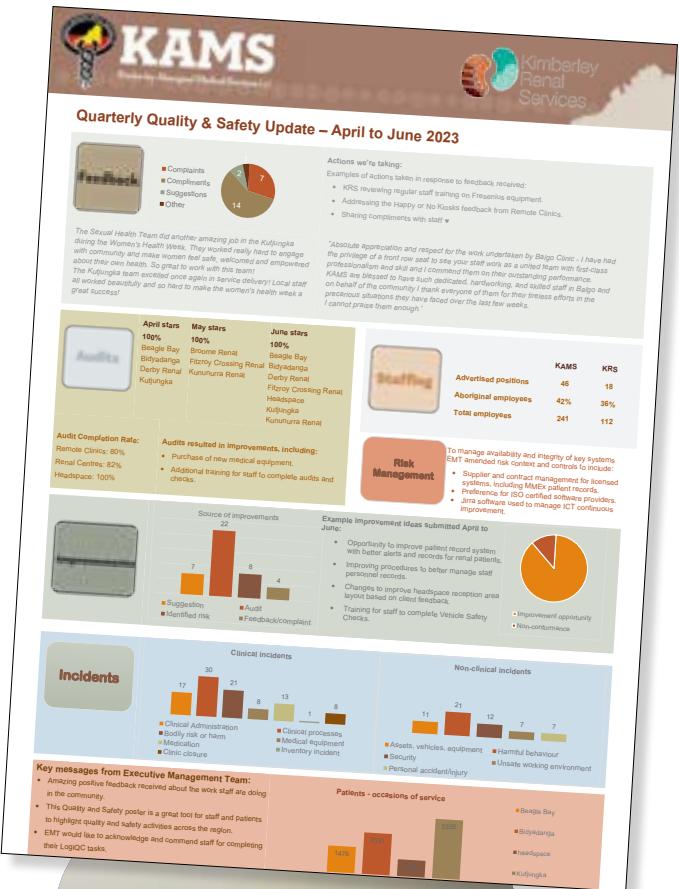
Our annual QMS Review Day was held in October and involved a thorough review of the QMS against evolving internal and external contexts. Our Executive Management Team undertook a high-level analysis of the performance and functions of our accreditation and quality improvement processes and agreed on several actions and decisions to improve the QMS over the coming year under a QMS Action Plan.

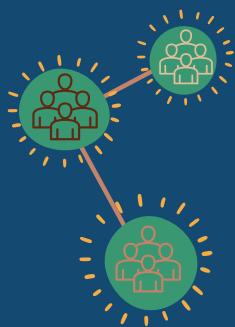
In addition to achieving accreditation requirements, we have progressed several quality improvement projects including:

- Implementation of quarterly safety and quality reporting, which includes the publication of posters that provide summary data for patients and staff.
- Implementation of the 'controlled actions' feature in LogiQC to support consistent incident management actions.
- Implementation of a new assets register in LogiQC, which is currently being populated to work in tandem with other LogiQC registers.
- Documentation of clear systems to manage access to data for research purposes.
- A reference group to provide consumer input on quality and safety data.

We are also developing improved policies and processes to manage qualification certifications of agency staff and external clinicians, induction packages, and an improved system for recording clinical audits. In addition, we have identified a need to improve the management of clinical and organisational risk at KAMS.

Funding for our quality programs is provided by KRS and DOHAC.





## Strategic Priority 3

# REGIONAL WORKFORCE

A robust Aboriginal health and wellbeing workforce is crucial to the success of Aboriginal organisations in the Kimberley. Their deep understanding of, and connection to, Aboriginal Culture and Kimberley communities make them indispensable in delivering culturally safe services. They also play a pivotal role in establishing a sustainable and enduring workforce. This strategic priority is focused on nurturing a **skilled, supported, and connected Kimberley Aboriginal health and wellbeing workforce**.

# Individual and Team Achievements

In the pursuit of excellence and the delivery of holistic health services to Kimberley communities, numerous individuals, and teams within KAMS have been recognised for their exceptional contributions and dedication. These acknowledgments span a wide range of achievements, from outstanding clinical care to leadership, community engagement, and innovation.

This annual report celebrates the remarkable accomplishments of our staff and partners, reflecting their unwavering commitment to improving Aboriginal health and wellbeing in the region. Among these accolades are awards for public health excellence, recognition of exceptional Elders and young leaders, and acknowledgment of outstanding contributions from employees who consistently go beyond their roles. These honours exemplify the dedication, innovation, and outstanding service that our staff provide.

## Public Health Association of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Public Health Award

Corina Darkie received the Public Health Association of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Public Health Award on 29 September 2022. Corina, an Aboriginal Health Worker at the Balgo Remote Health Centre, is recognised as a passionate and dedicated team member. She excels as a health worker, interpreter, liaison officer, and patient advocate. In 2021, she played a crucial role in vaccinating her community against COVID-19. During Balgo's first outbreak in April 2022, she contracted the virus but continued working with the Outbreak Response Team, conducting contact tracing interviews, and persuading individuals to isolate, all while in isolation herself. Corina is proactive, passionate, and deeply committed to equitable healthcare delivery.



## Ray James Memorial Award

Congratulations to Emma Carlin, Erica Spry, and Zac Cox for winning the prestigious Ray James Memorial Award for their article titled "When I Got the News": Aboriginal Fathers in the Kimberley Region Discussing Their Experiences during the Antenatal Period. This article was published in the Health Promotion Journal of Australia. The study revealed that Aboriginal men value their engagement with antenatal care services and provides insights into improving Aboriginal paternal involvement in these services.





## WA ACCHS Sector Award Winners 2022

Six of our staff were honoured at the 2023 WA ACCHS Sector Awards. The 2022 Awards were postponed and presented on this occasion:



### Elder in the Community 2022



Wilson (Ahmat) Mandijalu was recognised as an Elder in the community for his outstanding work at the Bidyadanga Remote Health Centre since 1985. His commitment and knowledge have been essential for the health centre's success. Ahmat played a crucial role in encouraging his community to get vaccinated against COVID-19 and implemented innovative strategies to engage the community, including offering vaccinations at home and in non-clinical settings.

### Elder in the Community 2023



Uncle Kevin Puertollano has made significant contributions to KAMS and the Broome community through his involvement with headspace Broome as an Elder of the Our Journey Our Story Project. Uncle Kevin supports the team by providing wisdom, cultural knowledge, and cultural mentoring to staff and young people.

*Image courtesy ABC Kimberley*

### Contribution by an ACCHS Employee 2022



Jessica Fong was recognised for her outstanding leadership and contributions as an ACCHS employee. Jessica's knowledge, skill, and dedication have made her a role model and leader within KRS. She provides valuable advice and guidance to the management team and is passionate about ensuring KRS provides the best possible care to patients.

### Contribution by an ACCHS Employee 2023



Philippa (Pip) Bird has excelled in her role as Kutjungka Remote Health Centre Manager, demonstrating leadership and dedication during challenging times. She has actively engaged the community and adapted health centre operations to meet their needs. Pip is known for her genuine care, respect, and understanding for her staff, clients, and community.

## WA ACCHS Sector Award Winners 2022

### Young Achiever 2022

Kiarnee Baguley, an outstanding young leader, has made significant contributions to KAMS. She is passionate about her work, manages stakeholder relationships, and advocates for the region's needs. Kiarnee is a founding member of the Empowered Young Leaders Design Committee.



### Young Achiever 2023

Hannah Wade is another young achiever who has progressed in her career at KAMS. She has displayed dedication and exceptional service to clients. Hannah has held various roles within the organisation and has contributed positively to its development.



## KAMS Employee Awards

### Bringing Out the Best Award

Chantal McMahon received this award for her outstanding leadership and contributions throughout KAMS. Chantal organised care packages, coordinated teams, and supported various initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic.



### Outstanding Contributor

Chantal McMahon received this award for her exemplary performance and contributions to KAMS. She led COVID-19 logistical responses and was instrumental in obtaining infrastructure funding to build a new health centre at Bidyadanga.



### Serving the Client Award

Tiana Bell received this award for her commitment and work in infection prevention and control. She played a critical role in managing activities to protect staff and clients during the COVID-19 outbreak.



### Chief Executive Officer Awards

Jake Coles was recognised by our CEO for his exceptional work as a Stores Officer during the COVID-19 outbreak. He worked tirelessly to source essential supplies and played a crucial role in keeping communities safe.



The CEO Team Awards were presented to Kimberley Supports and the Kutjungka Remote Health Centres for their outstanding contributions to communities and their commitment to improving health outcomes.



# Workforce Development

## Registered Training Organisation

KAMS has been involved in training since the first cohort of Aboriginal Health Workers graduated in Broome in the early 1980s. The KAMS Registered Training Organisation (RTO) was initially established to provide a local option for individuals to become Aboriginal Health Workers without having to relocate to Perth. The Aboriginal Health Worker workforce emerged as a response to the need for culturally safe primary health care services for Aboriginal people in the Kimberley, whose health needs were not adequately addressed by mainstream services.

KAMS also offers specific non-accredited training and mentoring opportunities to foster the growth and development of the Aboriginal workforce and to provide career and leadership pathways for local people.

Our RTO is accredited to provide:

- Certificate III in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care
- Certificate IV in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care Practice
- Certificate IV in Mental Health



**31** new students commenced training in 2023 across the Certificate IV qualifications:  
**23** primary health care and  
**8** mental health

These students travelled from various locations across the Kimberley region to undertake their training in Broome.

Unfortunately, due to workforce limitations, we were not able to deliver Certificate III qualification this year however this is set to resume in 2024 along with a newly added Certificate II in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care. We continue to seek new, high-quality educators to add to our skilled and experienced team.

In May 2023 we celebrated the graduation of students from the 2022 cohort at the Mangrove Hotel, and were proud to add eight new bright, enthusiastic, and qualified Aboriginal Health Workers to our invaluable Kimberley Aboriginal health workforce. One student graduated from the Certificate III, six graduated from the Certificate IV primary health care, and one from Certificate IV mental health.

Along with producing another group of competent and confident health workers in 2023, our staff are working toward implementing the newly updated Certificates III and IV in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care Practice, which will be rolled out over the next two years. They continue to work closely with other ACCHS RTOs around Australia, to build capacity and create better experiences for our students and their communities, both regionally and nationally.

Our Aboriginal Regional Facilitator works with health providers across the Kimberley to ensure students can achieve the requisite placements and experiences.



## Allied Health Assistance

Allied Health Assistants are an important part of the health workforce. They support patients/clients by delivering allied health services and building links with the community. We are building the capability of the disability workforce and supporting providers to retain workers with the right skills, values, and attributes in the sector.

Through consultation with our member services, it was agreed that our first training priority would be focussed on upskilling of Remote Early Childhood Supports Family Support Workers, across the Kimberley Supports Consortium, to gain a Certificate IV in Allied Health Assistance. 12 students are enrolled in face-to-face learning, that will be delivered in blocks every five to six weeks in Broome. These students come from Halls Creek, Fitzroy Crossing, Beagle Bay, Bidyadanga and Broome.

Training commenced in May and is being delivered in partnership with an external RTO, Insight Training. North Regional TAFE are also providing language, literacy and numeracy support where required.

We congratulate the students on their attendance and efforts so far and look forward to their graduation in early 2024.

Funding for this program is provided by the National Disability Service via the WA Department of Communities.



## Solid Connections

Our Solid Connections Program aims to provide Aboriginal people with an opportunity to discover new skills and explore career pathways in the care and support workforce. Participants are also assisted to meet the minimum requirements prior to being enrolled in any formal training or employment. We support students in a flexible and culturally safe learning environment.

In 2023 we delivered part one of the program. During May and June, courses completed included:

- Kimberley Empowerment Healing and Leadership Program
- Plan personal development and care needs
- Apply basic digital literacy for training or workplace purposes
- Conduct manual tasks safely
- Provide first aid

Participants also completed a workshop at the Broome Jobs and Skills Centre and took part in a morning tea with guest speakers who spoke about careers in the care and support sector.

This program is funded through the NACCHO Home Care Workforce Support Program.



## Elder Care Support Program

Our Elder Care Support Program aims to increase workforce capability and capacity in Aboriginal community-controlled aged care support, and to empower the sector to coordinate place-based care needs. After undertaking a 'train the trainer' program delivered through NACCHO in Canberra, our staff can now deliver a suite of non-accredited training to the local workforce and other participants as required. They will also provide advocacy support to ensure the workforce and clients participating receive culturally safe care and conditions.

As part of the program, an Aged Care Support Coordinator and Aged Care Support Connectors will be based within local ACCHSs. They will engage directly with community members and local service providers to support Aboriginal people to understand, coordinate and access aged care services.

Funding for this program is provided by NACCHO.



*Image courtesy of NACCHO*

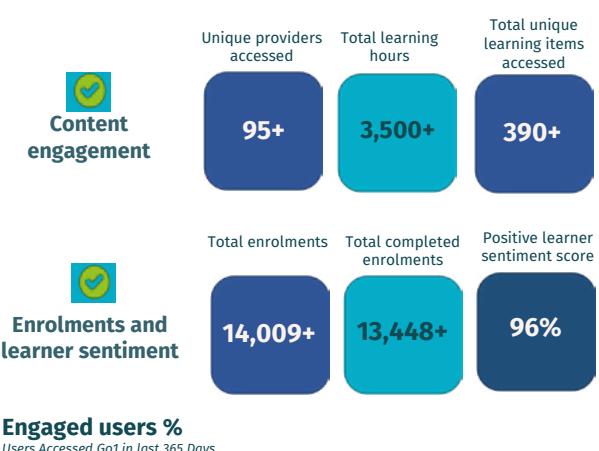


## Learning and Development

Our learning and development objective is to design and deliver training and development opportunities throughout KAMS to enhance effective communication and interpersonal skills while fostering relationships across all organisational levels.

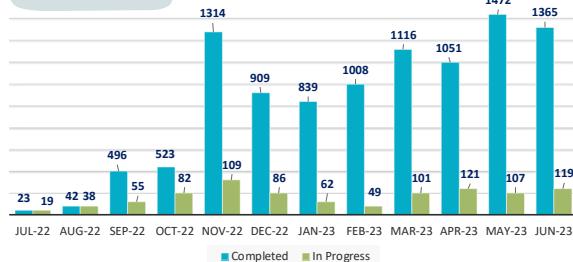
Since the launch of Right Place, our staff have successfully completed thousands of online courses, over thousands of hours of dedicated learning time. We are committed to consistently improving our offerings by designing, upgrading, and delivering new courses for our staff. Additionally, we continuously optimise processes to ensure the long-term support and sustainability of the system.

### Right Place - Year in Review 2023



KAMS has 400 licenses

#### Enrolments

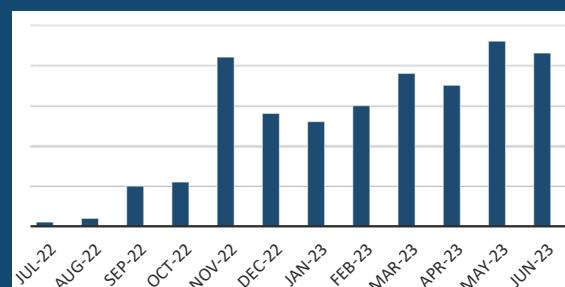


Top course names	Number of enrolments
KAMS Cultural Safety Program for the Kimberley	241
KAMS Working in the ACCHS Sector	212
KAMS Employee Assistance Program (EAP)	568
KAMS Work Health and Safety Induction	194
KAMS Driver Safety	203
KAMS Confidential Policy	356
KAMS Code of Conduct	205
KAMS Workplace Bullying	321
Induction to Aboriginal Environmental Health Services	381
KAMS – Introduction to Quality	204

### Summary - Looking Back

Based on feedback from learners, there is a **positive sentiment score of 96%** upon completing courses. This is based on 450 learner submissions.

**3,500+ hours of learning completed** over 12 months.  
**14,009+ enrolments** over 12 months



# SEWB Workforce Support and Development Unit

Our SEWB Workforce Support and Development Unit is dedicated to enhancing and bolstering the capacity, confidence, and responsiveness of the Aboriginal SEWB and AOD workforce. This encompasses frontline staff, supervisors, and managers, with the aim of addressing the growing and significant demand for SEWB, mental health, and AOD assistance of individuals, families, and communities.

We support 12 ACCHSs and ACCOs that offer SEWB and AOD services throughout the region, and we may assist other stakeholders upon request. Based on learning and development assessments, the following training programs were delivered this year:

- Kimberley Empowerment Healing and Leadership
- Aboriginal, and Youth Mental Health First Aid
- Liyan Natural Helpers
- Writing case notes

Our annual Kimberley SEWB and AOD Workforce Forum took place in Derby. This event included professional development and training for staff, opportunities for peer networking, and information sharing. The Forum also placed a special focus on the pilot project that highlights the ACCHS SEWB model of service, which was developed in consultation with AHCWA's member services. DAHS serves as a pilot site for this initiative.



Funding for this Unit is provided by NIAA, and we work closely with AHCWA who deliver workforce development and support in other regions across the State.



# Clinical Training

## Medical

Providing opportunities for doctors undergoing basic training is an important part of what we and our member services offer. Examples include Broome Hospital Resident Medical Officers completing a rotation through our remote health centres, or specialty training for GPs or public health registrars on their fellowship training pathways.

We offer postgraduate year two doctors from Broome Hospital a joint placement with the RFDS in our Beagle Bay Remote Health Centre. Our commitment to the training of junior doctors was recognised by the Postgraduate Medical Council of WA in allowing us to continue for a second year. This is a natural extension of the exposure medical students are given when they are based at the Rural Clinical School of WA (University of Western Australia (UWA)) in Broome and are placed at all our remote health centres throughout the year.

The Australian GP Training Program changed in 2023 with the winding up of WA GP Education and Training to be run by each college (RACGP) and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine. Along with our member services we continue to offer many opportunities in settings from general practice to remote health centres along with various special interests and research projects that may constitute part of postgraduate qualifications. We also accept public health trainees, which is both invaluable for them in gaining experience and to KAMS in providing support across all our programs.

## Kimberley Foot Initiative

Through the Kimberley Foot Initiative we upskill clinicians in our member services and our remote health centres in the use of the MMEx Foot Screening Tool and implementation of the Kimberley Podiatry Referral Pathway. Along with a podiatrist we also upskill clinicians in wound and dressing management, specifically diabetic foot ulcers. This also provides an opportunity for clinicians to discuss follow up care for patients who may need this to prevent amputation, or after amputation.

## Acute Rheumatic Fever and Rheumatic Heart Disease Community of Practice

Kimberley RHD program staff have joined the Acute Rheumatic Fever and RHD Community of Practice, facilitated by NACCHO. In June 2023, our staff travelled to Darwin to participate in training on the use of echocardiograms (echos) in ACCHSs. The workshop provided us with the opportunity to meet and network with other health workers, learn about their RHD programs, and gain insights from their lived experiences. We also had hands-on practice performing an echo on our team members under the guidance of clinicians from the University of Melbourne. Additionally, we experienced an echo from the perspective of a patient.

The gathering included a workshop focused on the strengths, barriers, and opportunities related to the delivery of RHD programs, encompassing areas such as environmental health, health promotion, secondary prophylaxis, and training. This collaborative exercise allowed us to share knowledge and experiences, which will inform the future direction of our program.



## Hearing Health

In April 2023, Dr Kim Isaacs invited our Hearing Health staff to present to third-year medical students at Curtin University, alongside AHCWA, about the importance of early detection and intervention, lifelong impact, how to work safely with Aboriginal families (cultural safety), the ACCHS model of care, and holistic ear health care.

In June, in collaboration with AHCWA, training and upskilling was offered to ACCHS staff in Broome and Kununurra.

## Sexual Health

Our Sexual Health team has provided training and information this year which included:

- Organising a three-day Kimberley Sexual Health Forum, bringing together staff from our member services, remote health centres, and WACHS.
- Co-facilitating the Sexual Health Quarters' 'Nuts and Bolts of Sexual Health' training.
- Upgrading the skills of clinical staff in point-of-care testing and providing brief education sessions on the syphilis outbreak, known as 'Syphilis Bites.'



## Remote Health Centres

Our remote health centres support a regional workforce by providing employment opportunities and increasing skills and qualifications for Aboriginal people. In 2022/23, our health centres collaborated with our RTO to facilitate Aboriginal Health Worker training in the East Kimberley, allowing more locals to access training without having to be away from their family and community for extended periods. Three Aboriginal Health Workers registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency and are now Aboriginal Health Practitioners. Additionally, we support Aboriginal Health Worker and nursing students in completing clinical placements within our health centres.





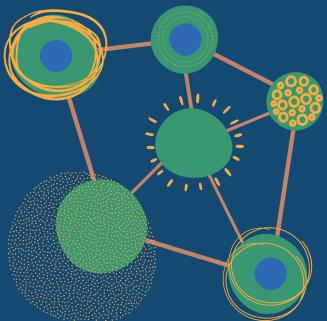
## headspace Broome

headspace Broome hosted five mental health student placements, including two Aboriginal students, and our first Early Career Program graduate completed their 12-month secondment with us. This program is funded by headspace National.

## Infection Prevention and Control

Edith Cowan University was engaged to provide training to us and our member services in the conduct of fit testing for respiratory protection equipment. The initiative aimed to strengthen workforce capacity to step up fit testing as needed, particularly in the event of an outbreak involving airborne viruses. Concurrently the vaccine-preventable disease program was actively promoted to encourage vaccination, thereby safeguarding both employees and patients.





## Strategic Priority 4

### HEALTH SYSTEM

A healthier future for Kimberley Aboriginal people requires a collaborative effort, led by Aboriginal organisations alongside governments, education providers, researchers, and other service providers. The leadership and voice of Aboriginal communities is critical to develop a health system that services Aboriginal people well. This strategic priority is about a **collaborative regional, state, and national approach to improving Aboriginal health and wellbeing.**

# Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing

## Aboriginal Regional Governance Group

Kimberley Aboriginal leaders have established the Aboriginal Regional Governance Group (ARGG) to provide unified leadership to partner with the WA Government to address youth wellbeing in our region. ARGG membership is comprised of:

- Binarri-binyja yarrawoo
- EC-West
- Empowered Young Leaders
- Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Cultural Centre (KALACC)
- Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services
- Kimberley Land Council
- Kimberley Language Resource Centre

At the request of the WA Government, the ARGG has agreed to partner with the State to advance the implementation of the State's *Commitment to Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing*, which is their response to the combined 86 recommendations arising from the State Coroner's *Inquest into the deaths of thirteen children and young persons in the Kimberley Region*, and the Parliamentary Inquiry *Learnings from the Message Stick: The Report of the Inquiry into Aboriginal Youth Suicide in Remote Areas* (2016).



The ARGG is focussed on four workstreams:

1. Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing
2. Kimberley Aboriginal Suicide Prevention
3. Empowered Young Leaders
4. Kimberley Juvenile Justice Strategy

The governance of this partnership is through the Kimberley Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing Steering Committee. The ARGG has tabled a draft Partnership Agreement and Implementation Plan at the Steering Committee and is working with the WA Government to advance these documents.

In November, the Steering Committee endorsed the Kimberley Co-design Guide, developed by KALACC on behalf of the ARGG. This guide is a practical resource for partners to support authentic and respectful co-design of programs, policies, and actions for the partnership.

Funding for the executive support function of the ARGG is provided by the WA Mental Health Commission.

## Empowered Young Leaders

Empowered Young Leaders (EYL) has been established to ensure that young Aboriginal people in the Kimberley have a voice and can contribute to decisions directly affecting them and become leaders of change on behalf of their own and future generations. The EYL Design Committee, and the broader EYL network, advocate for formal opportunities to contribute to the development of government policy and programs in the Kimberley region.

The WA Department of Communities provides project funding for EYL through KAMS. At the request of EYL, the Department agreed to explore contracting options between KAMS and EC-West and as a result, KAMS has subcontracted EC-West during the reporting period to deliver the project.

EYL is now working to establish itself as an independent standalone ACCO, focused on the needs of Aboriginal young people in the Kimberley.

## Advocacy for People with Disability

Since its inception in 2018, the Kimberley Supports Consortium has advocated for Kimberley Aboriginal people with disability. They have extensively discussed the complexities that Aboriginal people with disability living in remote areas experience, and they have also shared the success of their work as a Consortium. In 2022/23, Consortium representations included:

- The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability. Our Deputy CEO Jenny Bedford presented to the Royal Commission alongside Pat Turner, CEO of NACCHO, and Cassie Atchison, CEO of BRAMS on 14 July 2022.
- The Independent Review of the NDIS: we were invited to discuss the work of the Consortium with State and Federal ministers and the Independent Review Panel.
- The Select Committee into Child Development Services Inquiry into Child Development Services. Our Kimberley Supports staff presented at the public hearing in Bidyadanga on 1 May 2023, alongside representatives of BACLG.

The NDIS Review will examine the design, operations, and sustainability of the NDIS. It will also explore ways to make the market and workforce more responsive, supportive, and sustainable. Kimberley Supports has proactively engaged with the NDIS review over the year to represent the experiences of Kimberley people with disability.



# Kimberley Aboriginal Health Planning Forum

The Kimberley Aboriginal Health Planning Forum (KAHPF) is the leading regional health forum dedicated to enhancing health outcomes for Aboriginal people in the Kimberley. It is jointly chaired by our CEO and the Executive Director of WACHS Kimberley. KAMS provides executive and secretariat support.

Current members include:

## Core members

- Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services
- Broome Regional Aboriginal Medical Service
- Derby Aboriginal Health Service
- Nindilingarri Cultural Health Services
- Ord Valley Aboriginal Health Service
- Yura Yungi Medical Service
- Boab Health Services
- Nirrumbuk Environmental Health Services
- Royal Flying Doctor Service
- WA Country Health Service
- Milliya Rumurra Aboriginal Corporation
- Bidyadanga Aboriginal Community La Grange
- Lions Outback Vision



**Kimberley Aboriginal Health**  
Planning Forum

## Associate members

- Aboriginal Health Council of WA
- Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care
- Australian Government Department of Social Services
- Kimberley Stolen Generation Aboriginal Corporation
- Mens Outreach Service Aboriginal Corporation
- National Indigenous Australians Agency
- Rural Health West
- St John WA
- WA Department of Communities
- WA Primary Health Alliance

The KAHPF convened on four occasions during 2022/23. In this time, the forum revised its terms of reference and initiated a mid-point review of its Strategic Plan, *Together in Wellness*.

Funding for the KAHPF is provided by KAMS and WACHS Strengthening Aboriginal Health.

[kahpf.org.au](http://kahpf.org.au)

## Sub-committees

To support and progress the Strategic Plan, the KAHPF has established 10 Sub-committees. Sub-committees are the 'engine room' of the KAHPF and focus on issues requiring coordinated planning and action.

### Clinical Guidelines

Sub-committees have developed Kimberley Clinical Guidelines which are an invaluable resource for healthcare professionals as they standardise the screening for and management of health conditions more prevalent in the Kimberley. In 2022/23, Sub-committees finalised several clinical guideline reviews, and KAHPF endorsed the following:

### Chronic Disease Sub-committee

- Chronic Kidney Disease
- Foot Ulcer Management
- Leprosy
- Malignant Otitis Externa
- Smoking Cessation

### Maternal, Child, Youth and Family Health Sub-committee

- Child Abuse and Neglect
- Child Sexual Abuse
- Family and Domestic Violence
- Sore Throat in Kids

### Sexual and Reproductive Health Sub-committee

- Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) screening

The Kimberley Standard Drug List and Kimberley Standard Dressing List are available in addition to these.

Our staff, and particularly our Medical Director, provide significant input and support in the ongoing process of writing and reviewing the guidelines. Documents have been prepared to outline the process for implementing them, ensuring that the review of evidence used, rationale, and implementation issues are captured.

### Sexual and Reproductive Health

The Sexual and Reproductive Health Sub-committee is co-chaired by KAMS and WACHS, with KAMS providing secretariat support. This year, KAMS has supported the Sub-committee in advocating for the inclusion of their priorities in future pandemic planning to ensure that the importance of sexual health is not set aside in a pandemic situation.

### Chronic Disease

The Chronic Disease Sub-committee is co-chaired by KAMS and WACHS, with KAMS providing secretariat support. This year, KAMS hosted annual chronic disease workshops.

There is a profound need for action on oral health, and this is a standing priority of the Sub-committee. Our staff have worked with experts to prepare a detailed project plan that collates the history, current situation, actions required, monitoring, and evaluation. The project requires significant resourcing and has been put on hold pending access to funding.

KAMS chairs and provides secretariat support to the Kidney Health Action Group, which is a working group of the Chronic Disease Sub-committee. This year, the group re-established meetings and membership with greater engagement of primary health care providers, shifting the emphasis from renal disease to kidney health.

## Research

Since its inception, KAHRA has worked in partnership with the KAHPF, providing services to all KAHPF members as well as other health services and research bodies. KAHRA chairs and provides secretariat to the Research Sub-committee. This Sub-committee plays a crucial role in advising the KAHPF on strategies to optimise the impact of research on Aboriginal people and health services in the region. KAHPF members highly value this service because it provides them with ready access to advice and support, reducing the unnecessary burden generated by research proposals and projects. The Sub-committee's terms of reference were revised in April, including new KAHPF-led conditions for projects.

KAHRA team members worked closely with the KAHPF to enhance regional support processes for new research projects and communicate the requirements and expectations accompanying the implementation and later lifting of the moratorium on new research that was implemented due to COVID-19.

## Data

KAHRA chairs and provides secretariat support to the Data Sub-committee. This year, the Sub-committee reviewed its terms of reference and provided advice to the KAHPF and other Sub-committees as required.

## Kimberley Ear Health Coordinating Panel

The Kimberley Ear Health Coordinating Panel is a working group of the Maternal Child, Youth and Family Health Sub-Committee. KAMS is a key member of the Panel, and have been working collaboratively on planning, clinical guidelines, and reviewing the terms of reference.

## Kimberley Regional Aboriginal Men's Health

KAMS chairs and provides secretariat support to the Men's Health Sub-committee. This year, the Sub-committee has collaborated to review and renew its focus. A planning day and two meetings were hosted by KAMS, enabling the Sub-committee to finalise their revised terms of reference and establish a solid action plan. There is strong and equal representation from relevant service providers and community members from across the Kimberley.



## KAMS in the Media

We provide advocacy and leadership related to Aboriginal health and wellbeing and are recognised as a powerful and effective advocate at local, regional, statewide, and national levels. We are frequently contacted by the media to provide comment and in 2022/23 our public commentary included:



**New community-led Aboriginal medical service proposed for Fitzroy Crossing**  
(National Indigenous Times 3 July 2022)



**Flu surges across the Kimberley after successive years of very low case numbers during COVID-19** (ABC 6 July 2022)



**Our CEO Vicki O'Donnell was a guest on The Drum where she discussed Closing the Gap, the national approach to juvenile detention, and Australia's response to trachoma**  
(ABC 26 August 2022)



**Mental health screening with a culturally appropriate tool**  
(Partyline 22 September 2022)



**Australia's first Indigenous-run renal facility celebrates 20th anniversary in Broome**  
(ABC 14 December 2022)



**Mental health concerns for Kimberley residents cut off from alcohol, drug supplies, by flooding**  
(ABC 21 January 2023)



**Our Deputy CEO Jenny Bedford was a panel member on The Drum where she discussed the housing situation in the Kimberley, the cost of living, and the importance of Aboriginal-led health, wellbeing, and environmental health services** (ABC 4 April 2023)





## Strategic Priority 5

### SHARED KNOWLEDGE

A culture of shared learning across our sector can support continuous improvements in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organisations that lead to better outcomes for Aboriginal people. We can cultivate this culture by using and sharing research, data, technology, and knowledge. This strategic priority is about having a **resourceful health system driven by research and innovation**.

# Kimberley Aboriginal Health Research Alliance

KAHRA brings together Kimberley health services, Aboriginal communities, and Kimberley-based health research organisations. The founding members include KAMS, WACHS, AHCWA, University of WA Rural Clinical School of WA (RCSWA), the University of Notre Dame Australia, and the Telethon Kids Institute. This collaboration combines the wisdom and cultural strength of communities, the knowledge and commitment of regional health services, and research expertise to drive evidence-based change. KAHRA is supported by Lotterywest.

The activities of KAHRA are intended to achieve the vision of 'Aboriginal people in control of Aboriginal research to improve Aboriginal health and wellbeing in the Kimberley.' The KAHRA team is located alongside our KAMS Research Team.

In mid-2023, the KAHRA team was nearing two years of full operations. There has been great progress towards achieving the objectives of KAHRA, including Aboriginal leadership of health research, community ownership and participation, coordination, and collaboration, creating change, cultural integrity and research rigor, health services improvement, and workforce development. This has occurred through the KAHRA team and other staff from founding member organisations undertaking a range of activities under the direction of the KAHRA Board of Directors, which we fully support.

The first KAHRA Forum was held in Broome in October 2022. Representatives from a range of local and national organisations attended. Feedback from attendees included that the event was excellent and should be held annually, and that it was clear how research should be done in the Kimberley. KAHRA also hosted an Indigenous data sovereignty event in conjunction with the Forum.



The Kimberley Health Evidence Data Platform project has continued to develop, with an aim of bringing together health care data from the ACCHS and government sectors. The project is in the phase of establishing governance and partnerships. Most of the project steering committee membership is comprised of Kimberley ACCHSs. Funding for this project is provided through the Australian Government Medical Research Future Fund.

KAHRA hosted an Indigenous Data Sovereignty and Governance Roundtable in March, with a guided discussion format led by the Data Project Coordinator and involving founding members. Outcomes included a shared understanding and improved knowledge of what each organisation is doing in this space.

The Support Network for Aboriginal Researchers has continued to strengthen, and we have received heartening feedback from members regarding it being a safe and trusted space for coming together and sharing challenges and learnings.

KAHRA formed a Research Workforce Working Group in mid-2022, and this has continued to meet regularly to collaborate on shared workforce-related objectives. This has included the development of the *KAHRA Research Workforce Strategy and Action Plan*.

The *15 Years of Research in the Kimberley* study was completed, and a paper was published in early 2023. Recommendations arising will form part of the Kimberley Aboriginal Health Research Model that is being developed.

The KAHRA Network was launched in March 2023, to bring together organisations aligned with the principles, values, and purpose of KAHRA.

The KAHRA team has continued to provide research-related advice and support to ACCHSs, and they have completed a range of fee-for-service activities for other stakeholders that have been highly valued.

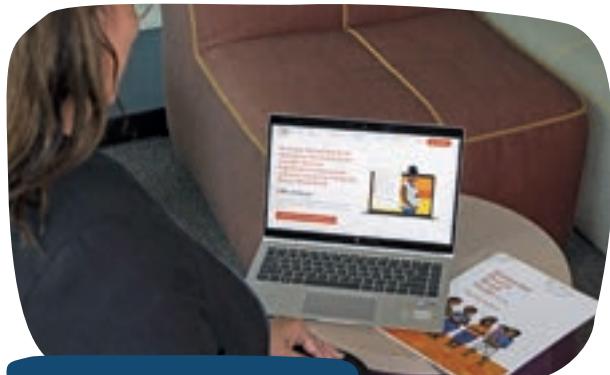
The KAHRA website and social media platforms have continued to grow in activity and reach.



## Our Research

The implementation project for the Kimberley Mum's Mood Scale (KMMS) concluded in 2022. This project supported a general increase in perinatal mental health screening across the Kimberley ACCHS sector from 2018 to 2021. The project team and partners worked diligently to establish the KMMS as the primary perinatal mental health screening tool used across the region. The KMMS is now utilised for 99% of perinatal mental health screenings in Kimberley ACCHSs.

As part of the Transforming Indigenous Mental Health and Wellbeing (TIMHWB) project, KAMS researchers and partners authored a publication about the experiences of Aboriginal SEWB Workers across the Kimberley region. This publication, titled *'It's Us, Or Maybe No One: Yarning with Aboriginal SEWB workers from the Kimberley Region of WA'*, provides the background story to the development and rollout of KAMS and TIMHWB's SEWB Welcome Guide for the Aboriginal Workforce.



[kahpf.org.au/kmms](http://kahpf.org.au/kmms)

We are also actively working to develop wellbeing-(trauma-) informed care approaches across ACCHSs in the region. This new research project aims to enhance clinical responses to the experiences of trauma that many Aboriginal patients face, along with the impacts this has on their health care access and engagement. The collaborative project is led by the RCSWA and the UWA Medical School, in partnership with KAMS, BRAMS, and the TIMHWB research project.



KAMS continues its efforts to establish the *Be Healthy project: Implementing culturally secure programs for obesity and chronic disease prevention with remote Aboriginal communities and families*, in partnership with the RCSWA and others.

Phase 3 of the ORCHID (Optimisation of Rural Clinical and Haematological Indicators for Diabetes in pregnancy) study has been reached. This project is a partnership with the RCSWA, our member services, and others across WA. The findings will contribute to updating the Kimberley Clinical Guideline for Diabetes in Pregnancy to optimise screening.

The 'Our Journey Our Story' research project aims to co-design more culturally secure mental health services that better meet the needs of Aboriginal young people and their families. Our headspace and SEWB staff, Elders, and Aboriginal young people are actively involved in the project. This year, we held monthly 'yarning in the garden' sessions with Elders at headspace Broome, and we presented the project to the National headspace Forum. Funding for this project is provided through the Australian Government Medical Research Future Fund.

## Sharing Our Learnings

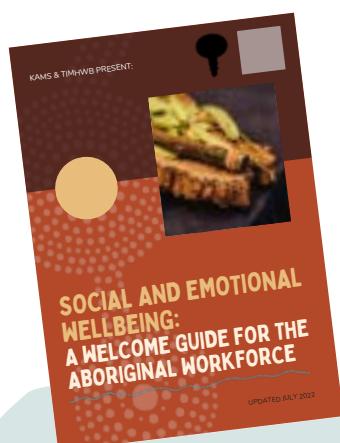
Our staff have been actively promoting the work that we do with our member services, Kimberley Aboriginal communities, and other partners.

At an international level, our Deputy CEO, Jenny Bedford, joined a delegation from NACCHO to Timor-Leste in March to gain an understanding of the country's cultural, political, and health service delivery context for potential First Nations partnerships. The visit also focused on understanding the Timorese perspective on how primary health care is delivered, with an emphasis on the ACCHS Model of Care, workforce training and community ownership of primary health care programs.



Our staff have made presentations at conferences and forums across Australia, including:

Dr Lorraine Anderson, Renee McKenzie, Sarah Sihlen, Tori Jamieson, Jeff Turner, and Timothy Cooker (OVAHS) delivered a joint invited speaker session on the Kimberley perspective on approaches to sexual health in ACCHSs at the Joint Australasian HIV and AIDS and Sexual Health Conferences on the Sunshine Coast (August 2022).



Zac Cox and Denise Cox presented the SEWB: *A Welcome Guide for the Aboriginal Workforce*, alongside TIMHWB, at the third SEWB Gathering in Canberra (September 2022).



Dr Lorraine Anderson presented about emerging diseases, vaccination, and trust at the IRNet National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research Showcase in Sydney (September 2022).

At the inaugural KAHRA forum in Broome (October 2022):

- Vicki O'Donnell spoke about real partnerships to drive real change.
- Allaneh Matsumoto and Kelly Blackburn presented an analysis of 15 years of research in the Kimberley.
- Erica Spry presented alongside Matt Lelievre (RCSWA) about community diversity, engagement, and translation in action: the Kimberley way.
- Isaac Torres presented about the Kimberley Health Evidence Data Platform Project.

Dr Lorraine Anderson presented about the Kimberley COVID-19 response, alongside Dr Jason Agostino (NACCHO), at the NACCHO conference in Canberra (October 2022).



Lucille Bin Sulaiman and Joe Ghandour (WACHS) presented about regional data and reporting outcomes, on behalf of the KAHPF Kimberley Ear Health Coordination Panel, at the WA Ear and Hearing Health Forum in Perth (November 2022).

Erica Spry and Emma Carlin (also RCSWA) presented about innovation and implementation in perinatal depression and anxiety across the Kimberley at the AHCWA statewide conference in Fremantle (March 2023).

Dr Lorraine Anderson was a keynote speaker at the first Australasian Conference on Point of Care Testing for Infectious Diseases in Sydney (March 2023).

Jenny Bedford provided a presentation about our approach to developing a skilled, supported, and connected Aboriginal workforce at the National Workforce Summit hosted by NACCHO in Brisbane (March 2023).

At the Lowitja Institute's Third International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference in Cairns (June 2023), KAHRA staff presented:

- Mingoke 'making better', evidencing culturally strong SEWB for Indigenous young people in educational contexts (Abby-Rose Cox and Kimberley Seear).
- Building a strong community-led Aboriginal health research workforce across the Kimberley (Elisha Rahimi, Shania Ah Chee, and DeShaun Matsumoto).
- A mixed methods study of 15 years of Aboriginal health research in the Kimberley: 'We've been researched, we think, from head to toe, inside and outside, upside down' (Allaneh Matsumoto and Charmane Johnson).





- At the WA ACCHS Ear Health Forum in Perth (June 2023), our hearing health team presented good news stories, and they co-presented with AHCWA on the ACCHS Model of Care.

In May 2023, the inaugural Ear and Hearing Health Summit brought together key stakeholders from the ear and hearing health sector, with the primary focus on discussing action needed to reduce otitis media in Aboriginal children by ensuring equitable and timely access to care. The summit looked at key areas for change across the ear and hearing health system. Our hearing health staff were invited to agree upon guiding principles that would underpin all work undertaken in the ear and hearing health system and work through activities to discuss current challenges and identify opportunities and solutions in improving ear and hearing health for Aboriginal people. Discussions identified action areas of prevention, referral pathways, and continuity of care.









### Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services Ltd

12 Napier Terrace, Broome  
Western Australia, 6725  
**P** (08) 9194 3200  
**E** [admin@kams.org.au](mailto:admin@kams.org.au)

[KAMS.org.au](http://KAMS.org.au)

[kimberley-aboriginal-medical-services](https://www.linkedin.com/company/kimberley-aboriginal-medical-services)

[kams\\_kimberley](https://www.instagram.com/kams_kimberley)

[KAMS](https://twitter.com/KAMS)

[kams.org.au](http://kams.org.au)