

Let's Talk

Cancer Prevention and
Living with Cancer

e-bulletin
issue 1 | 2017

Throughout this eBulletin we use the term *Aboriginal Western Australians* to include people of Torres Strait Islander descent.

Welcome to the first edition of 'Let's Talk' for 2017!

'Let's Talk' is published quarterly for Aboriginal health professionals and those working with Aboriginal communities who are proudly leading the way to a cancer-free future in WA. It has up-to-date information on Aboriginal cancer education and research programs, Aboriginal cancer events, cancer issues, trends and cancer support services available in Western Australia.

New Aboriginal Advisory Group aims to help us close the gap

On 14 November 2016, Cancer Council WA launched our first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), which we consider to be an important step forward in the fight to reduce the impact of cancer in Aboriginal Western Australian communities.

I am really excited about our newly formed Aboriginal Advisory Group, consisting of key Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal health professionals, whose role will be to work in partnership with the executive and staff at Cancer Council to:

- Develop and implement a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in consultation with Reconciliation Australia.
- Monitor the ongoing use and effectiveness of the RAP
- Be a voice for Aboriginal Western Australians for activities and resources that aim to address cancer issues.
- Provide direction and scope for culturally secure supportive care.
- Develop and sustain community-related activities including relationships with professional bodies, community groups and community service organisations

The members of the group are: Professor Neil Drew, Dr Mick Adams, Dr Sandy Thompson, Leanne Pilkington (Deputy Chair), Associate Professor Ted Wilkes (Chair), Kevin Cox, Deanne Lewis, Denice Kickett, Sharon Bushby.



Sandy McKiernan (Director CISS Division), Professor Neil Drew, Dr Mick Adams, Dr Sandy Thompson, Leanne Pilkington (Deputy Chair), Associate Professor Ted Wilkes (Chair), Terry Slevin (Director E&R Division), Cassandra Clayforth (Education and Research Services Manager).

Missing from the photo: Louise De Busch, Deanne Lewis, Denice Kickett, Sharon Bushby and Kevin Cox.

We believe this group will be an integral step to help us close the gap on cancer. Cancer death rates are 30% higher for Aboriginal Australians than other Australians and up to 65% higher in some remote areas. Cancer remains the second leading cause of death in Aboriginal Australians. Aboriginal Australians are more likely to be diagnosed with cancer when it is at an advanced stage of development and have a higher incidence of poorer prognosis cancers that are largely preventable. This is an unacceptable situation and one we believe we can help change.

At the launch of the RAP, Chair of the group and local Aboriginal elder Associate Professor Ted Wilkes, welcomed the Reconciliation Action Plan and said "he was also looking forward to an ongoing connection with this initiative, by agreeing to chair Cancer Council's Aboriginal Advisory Group, which would provide guidance on Cancer Council's Aboriginal programs and services."

"We will only see an improvement in Aboriginal life expectancy through the collective efforts of governments and organisations like Cancer Council, to work towards reconciliation through action plans like this," said Associate Professor Wilkes.

Cancer Council WA has a dedicated Aboriginal community page on our website that houses our RAP and our commitments, so we encourage Aboriginal health professionals and the wider community to [visit the page](#).

We look forward to working with our Aboriginal Advisory Group, Aboriginal health professionals and the wider community to reduce cancer mortality in Aboriginal Western Australians.

Susan Rooney
Chief Executive Officer
Cancer Council WA

Congratulations to The Honourable Ken Wyatt

Cancer Council WA would like to extend our congratulations to the Hon Ken Wyatt MP on his landmark appointment as Minister for Aged Care and Indigenous Health.

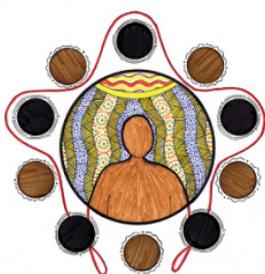
We look forward to a long and productive collaboration for the benefit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to reduce the incidence and impact of cancer in our community.

The Honourable Ken Wyatt



Cancer Council WA's Reconciliation Action Plan video

Reflect
Reconciliation
Action Plan



On 14 November 2016, we proudly launched our first [Reconciliation Action Plan \(RAP\)](#) as a significant step forward in the fight to reduce the incidence and impact of cancer in Aboriginal communities.

Our RAP outlines our commitment to continue to lead a community effort to improve the quality of life and cancer outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Achieving the deliverables set out in our first RAP relies on the combined effort of everyone.

We're excited to release our RAP video [Click here to view](#)

New Mid West Regional Education Officer

We'd like to introduce Tina Pendlebury, Cancer Council WA's new Mid West Regional Education Officer (REO). Tina is based in Geraldton alongside the Cancer Support Co-ordinators April and Lizzie. Tina's role includes delivering cancer prevention and early detection messages through media, events and education sessions to workplaces, health practitioners, schools and community groups. Tina will also collaborate with other organisations to build capacity and develop policy and promote healthy lifestyle choices. If you are holding an event why not ask the Mid West REO along to hold an interactive activity?

If you would like to work together to develop policies for your workplace or community group, or develop an education session on cancer prevention or early detection, please contact Tina Pendlebury on **08 9956 2406** or email at tpendlebury@cancerwa.asn.au. She would love to hear from you.



Our new MidWest Regional Education Officer, Tina Pendlebury

Cigarette packaging warning labels are motivating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander smokers to quit

New research conducted by the Menzies School of Health Research has concluded that graphic warning labels appear to have a positive impact on the understanding, concerns and motivations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander smokers. The research is part of the national [Talking About the Smokes](#) study which gathered baseline survey data from 642 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants before conducting follow-up surveys a year later. Speaking with [Gizmodo](#), study leader Professor David Thomas said that it is important to not only assess the impact of Indigenous-specific tobacco control activity on helping Indigenous smokers to quit, but also to assess the impact of policies for all Australian smokers, with the main implication of this study being that graphic warning labels are likely to be as effective for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander smokers as they are for the broader Australian population.

Make Smoking History for Community Services training

Make Smoking History has partnered with the Western Australian Council of Social Services Inc (WACOSS) to deliver two half day training workshops on what the community services sector can do to help people stop smoking tobacco. These sessions are designed to help participants gain an understanding of the important role they play in providing regular tobacco smoking cessation interventions to clients, and integrating tobacco smoking cessation support into the normal routine operation of their organisation. Dates and workshop topics below:

Thursday 11 May 2017	Make Smoking History in Your Community Service Organisation
Thursday 8 June 2017	The Roles of Community Service Workers in Reducing Tobacco Use

We encourage you to forward this information to any colleagues working in the community services sector. For more information please contact Emily Box, Make Smoking History Priority Settings Coordinator via email ebox@cancerwa.asn.au.

New Online Community for people affected by cancer

With technology changing how many people affected by cancer are seeking information and support, Cancer Councils are embracing the online space with the launch of our new Online Community.

On average, there are over 30,500 searches on Google for cancer related terms such as 'living with cancer', 'support groups', 'I've just been diagnosed', 'treatment and side effects' and more each month.

Our Online Community offers people currently living with cancer, survivors, families, carers and the wider cancer community the opportunity to connect, share experiences and find information and support in a safe forum.

At least 82,000 newly diagnosed people will search online for information each year, with approximately 42,000 people visiting an online support group forum at least once. Research shows that the provision of online information to people affected by cancer helps them to gain control, reduce anxiety, improve their adherence with treatment, create realistic expectations, promote self-care and generate feelings of safety and security.

Through blogs, discussion forums and support groups, members can discuss their experiences and share stories, tips and coping strategies to help normalise concerns and reduce social isolation.

How our
community is
there for you



4,887
MEMBERS



3,730
FORUMS & BLOGS



WITH MEMBERS
ACROSS
AUSTRALIA

Our CISS Director, Sandy McKiernan, said the Online Community aimed to reduce isolation by encouraging people affected by cancer to share their stories and build meaningful online relationships with other people in similar situations. We are embracing new and innovative ways for people to seek information and support. The online platform is designed to complement our existing information and support services, connecting people with each other in real time, regardless of when they seek information.

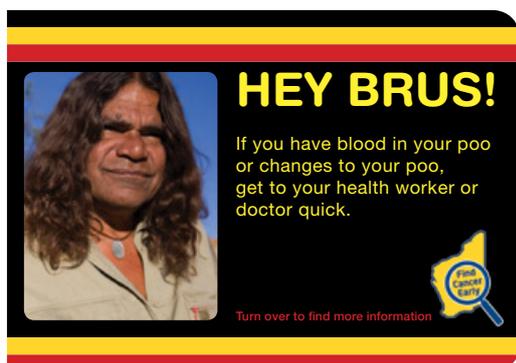
"What we are seeing through our peer support programs is more and more people are now turning to digital platforms for information and support, to connect with others who can relate to what they are experiencing," said Sandy.

"What's most appealing about the platform is its accessibility – it's available 24/7 and from any online device. There are closed groups for sensitive issues and the entire website is moderated and community managed by qualified health professionals," added Sandy.

[Our Cancer Council Online community is now live.](#)

Aboriginal cancer publications

New Find Cancer Early postcards and check-lists for Aboriginal Australians released



Find Cancer Early is a community-based awareness campaign that focuses on the five most common cancers in Western Australia - bowel, lung, prostate, breast and skin. The campaign originally targeted regional people whose cancer outcomes aren't as good as those living in Perth, and has recently been extended to Aboriginal people as the message of finding cancer early is relevant to all. We now offer 8 check-list postcards for Aboriginal Australians that includes plain language information about the signs and symptoms of the five common cancers. Click on the links below:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bowel cancer males	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prostate cancer
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bowel cancer females	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Breast cancer
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lung cancer males	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Skin cancer males
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lung cancer females	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Skin cancer females

If you would like to order campaign materials to help promote the Find Cancer Early message in your community, please order here <https://www.cancerwa.asn.au/resources/publications/aboriginal/>.

“A whispered sort of stuff”: A community report on research about Aboriginal people’s beliefs about cancer and experiences of cancer in Western Australia

This report is about Aboriginal people’s experiences of cancer and cancer services by Professor Sandy Thompson, Dr Shaouli Shahid, Heath Greville and Associate Professor Dawn Bessarab summarises the findings from a research project investigating Aboriginal people’s experiences of cancer in Western Australia. It provides important recommendations for health and other service providers about how cancer-related services for Aboriginal people should be improved.

The artwork featured in this report is from a painting called ‘Relay for Life’ painted by Geraldton based Yamaji Art Centre artists Margaret Whitehurst, Charmaine Green and Barbara Merritt. The painting was donated to the 2009 Geraldton Cancer Council Relay for Life in recognition of all people who are affected by cancer, which knows no barrier. We thank Margaret, Charmaine and Barbara for allowing us to use their work in this report.

To order these resources today, go to our website [Aboriginal resources](#).



A whispered sort of stuff: A community report on research about Aboriginal people’s beliefs about cancer and experiences of cancer in Western Australia

[Click to download PDF](#)

Submit an article

We invite past course participants of the Cancer Council WA Aboriginal Cancer Education Course and health services / organisation / departments working with Aboriginal Western Australians to submit contributions for publication in this bulletin. Articles and events that pertain to cancer control and support are most welcome.

If anyone would like to submit an article for the next bulletin, please refer to our [Contribution Guidelines](#) and email ldebusch@cancerwa.asn.au by Friday 21 April 2017.

Our next edition is due in June 2017!