

The following projects and processes are examples of collaborative activities between health services and Aboriginal communities and Organizations. These examples and contact with the associated personnel may assist with the implementation of the Guidelines. To obtain contact details for personnel associated with these examples please contact Angela Clarke on (03) 8344 0812

Mercy Hospital for Women / Rumbalara Aboriginal Medical Co-operative Shepparton Video Project

Mercy Hospital for Women, in conjunction with Rumbalara Aboriginal Medical Co-operative Shepparton and Aboriginal women living in and around Shepparton, is exploring the development of a video as a way of addressing some of the additional obstacles that rural Aboriginal women face when attending local or city hospitals. It is envisaged that the video will utilise a narrative format and will provide practical information and support to women as well as historical, educational and cross-cultural information for Health service providers.

- Consultations have been with Rumbalara staff and medical, Aboriginal elders, patients, the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, the MHW Social Work department, Transitions clinic, Medical staff, Multi Cultural Services Dept and Management.
- Jane Harrison - scriptwriter for the hospital video project has received the notes, feedback and changes to the Video script.

Plans to begin filming will be after the MHW moves to the new premises in Heidelberg, early 2005.

The video project team members are Nikki Marshall - Project Coordinator, Jane Harrison - script writer (Stolen) and Michelle Hickey-Donovan – Aboriginal Health Worker, Beryl Thomas – Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer.

BARWON HEALTH Geelong Hospital

Geelong Hospital has a Department of Aboriginal Health which was established in 1982 and is situated in Kardinia House. The hospital and the local Aboriginal organization (Wathaurong) have an excellent working relationship which is based on the concept of Community Control. This ensures that the Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer is able to work within this philosophy meaning that the hospital program is community driven. This benefits the local community and the hospital by ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's health needs are being identified and addressed.

The hospital recognizes that Aboriginal health is a specialized area in which they need to ensure that they have a positive working relationship with the local community that

is maintained and respected at all levels within Barwon Health. Barwon Health provides services in primary care such as dental, outreach teams (mental health), they provide women's and children's health programs, counseling services and other programs that are required by both the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and wider community. As Wathaurong Co-op is in the process of setting up an Aboriginal Medical Service it is imperative the working relationship with Barwon Health/Geelong Hospital and other relevant health facilities within the Barwon region continue to provide culturally relevant services by working together to ensure positive outcomes.

Royal Children's Hospital, Aboriginal Family Support Unit

Aboriginal Liaison Policy Advisory Committee

The work of the Aboriginal Family Support Unit at the Royal Children's Hospital has been guided by the Aboriginal Liaison Policy Advisory Committee (ALPAC) since it was established in 1993. ALPAC was initially developed to reduce the isolation of the Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer and to ensure that the Aboriginal Liaison service was able to effectively contribute to structural organisational change with support from both community and senior hospital staff.

ALPAC is comprised of Aboriginal community members from key organisations and selected staff from the hospital, all of whom offer advice and direction in all areas of work in the Aboriginal Family Support Unit. The committee also acts as a disseminator of information, both in the hospital and the Aboriginal community, and its role in decision-making and policy advice has been effective in achieving systemic change that permeates the whole hospital system.

The committee's specific role is:

- To provide policy guidance and expertise in evaluating and improving the hospital's service delivery to Aboriginal families,
 - To address barriers that may impede Aboriginal families from accessing the hospital's services,
 - To provide advice and support in the process of changing the hospital's environment to one that is culturally sensitive, affirming, safe and welcoming for Aboriginal families,
 - To ensure that policy changes are implemented and permeated throughout the hospital's management structure,
 - To promote its strategies for change and improved service delivery to Aboriginal families to other service providers,
 - To act as a forum to bring together the knowledge of Aboriginal community members and non-Aboriginal hospital staff in the best interests of Aboriginal families,
 - To provide, when required, individual or collective support for the staff of the Aboriginal Family Support Unit.
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About the Health Associates Program

The aim of the 'Aboriginal Women's Health Associates Program' at the Royal Women's Hospital (RWH) is to provide a direct link between Aboriginal Community Health Workers and hospital staff from all patient service areas, therefore building and supporting a more effective partnership between The RWH and Victorian Aboriginal communities. Enhancement of service provision to Aboriginal women using the hospital and continuity of care should follow. All of the 'associates' are self-nominated and have expressed a strong commitment and interest in improving service provision to Aboriginal Women. The Aboriginal Women's Health Business Unit (AWHBU) is responsible for ongoing support and review of this program. To date the AWHBU has provided each of the 'Associates' (for their unit or department), a directory of Aboriginal Community Health Services and a resource package containing journal articles, reports and references for books, web sites etc. regarding Aboriginal women's health. Already a number of information sessions have been conducted by the AWHBU with the Aboriginal Women's Health Associates and flowing from this the scheduling and delivery of broader staff in-service sessions throughout the hospital. A series of intensive one day Aboriginal Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity Workshops was developed and facilitated by – the Resources Unit for Indigenous Mental Health Education and Research (RUIHMER). Each of the 'Associates' had the opportunity to participate in one of these workshops during 2000/2001. The participant feedback was positive and enthusiastic. Future workshops and information sessions will be offered to staff who were unable to attend and new staff joining the program. Below is a more detailed outline of the aims and objectives and the Aboriginal Women's Health Associates Program

Aims

- To improve service delivery to Aboriginal women and the services of The Royal Women's Hospital.
- To increase access to services for Aboriginal women and community based service providers.

Objectives

To establish a registrar of Aboriginal Women's Health Associates in order to:

- Facilitate effective partnerships between the hospital and Aboriginal Community Agencies by streamlining access to hospital services
- Increase awareness of issues affecting Aboriginal Women's health amongst service providers across hospital departments

Role and responsibility of associates

The specific responsibilities include:

- To act as the first point of contact in relation to clarification of policy/ protocol issues relevant to direct service provision
- To be the first point of contact for external service providers from Aboriginal community based services
- To take responsibility for the distribution of resources relevant to the health care needs of Aboriginal women
- To provide feedback to the AWHBU regarding the needs of the department in relation to education and training

- To attend regular meetings with the Health Associates to keep informed of the developments within the hospital in relation to Aboriginal Women's Health Business at the RWH

**The 2nd HEALTH OUTCOMES
AGREEMENT**

For

**THE IMPROVEMENT OF KOORI
HEALTH STATUS IN THE
GOULBURN VALLEY**

Between

**RUMBALARA ABORIGINAL
CO-OPERATIVE**

And

GOULBURN VALLEY HEALTH

(July 2003 - July 2006)

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1. Purpose

The purpose of the agreement is to demonstrate improved health outcomes for Aboriginal people within the Goulburn Valley. The parties agree to work together to assess the health needs within the Aboriginal community, plan services and provide resources.

In particular, the agreement seeks to improve the understanding of health needs at a local level through better data collection and consultation, improve the coordination of care across primary and acute health services and increase the utilisation by Aboriginal people of all levels of health services.

This will occur in a manner that respects the wishes of the Aboriginal community and acknowledges the history of inequality in health and inequity in health service access of the Aboriginal community.

2. Commitment

The parties acknowledge that improving Aboriginal health is a national priority supported by governments at both federal and state levels.

The parties acknowledge that this agreement is one part of a long-term commitment to achieving the goal of improving health outcomes for the Aboriginal community within the Goulburn Valley.

The parties acknowledge the efforts made by many people in the establishment and achievements of the first health outcomes agreement.

The parties acknowledge that this agreement is a priority area for both services and that they will endeavour to see that the agreement is reflected in the operational plans and resource allocation of both services.

The parties agree to maintain at the highest level, a Koori Health Taskforce to report directly to both parties' Boards of Management.

3. Implementing the Agreement

3.1 The Koori Health Taskforce

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will jointly manage this agreement through the Koori Health Taskforce. This Taskforce will consist of a minimum of two Board of Management members and the Chief Executive Officers from each party. Other staff and community members will be invited onto the Taskforce.

Specifically the Taskforce will:

- Promote a new three year agreement;
- Establish Developmental Teams as required to meet key objectives;
- Provide leadership, set policy, receive reports, approve developments and find resources to assist in implementing the agreement;
- Review progress on a yearly basis and reset objectives where required;
- Communicate within organizations about process and achievements, and formally report to respective boards.

3.2 Developmental Teams

To achieve the priorities listed under item 4 of this agreement, “Developmental Teams” will be established. These teams will involve key staff from the appropriate sections of both organisations. In addition, representatives from external organisations such as the Department of Rural Health, Goulburn Valley Division of General Practice, and Aboriginal community members may be invited to join the appropriate team as required.

Where existing working parties or committees are already in place these should continue under the new agreement. Where no working parties exist, appropriate partnership arrangements will be established e.g. Developmental Teams. The Taskforce will decide the membership of each team and appoint a team leader. There is to be an equal representation of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal on each developmental team. All developmental teams will have a Memorandum of Understanding and an annual work-plan, and will provide regular reports back to the Taskforce on progress and achievements.

4. Priorities for the new agreement

The three major priority areas for the new agreement are: -

- Data and research;
- Community relations and;
- Health Priorities; Memorandums of Understanding.

4.1 Data and research

The highest priority for the new agreement is the development of strategies to improve the quality of data and to make this data available to those planning and managing services and undertaking research.

Reason:

National health status data of Aboriginal people suggests that illness and mortality rates are significantly higher in Aboriginal communities than the broader community.

There has been no efficient and effective collection or analysis of the health status data of the local Aboriginal community that is necessary in the development of health strategies to target high incidence of chronic illness such as diabetes, asthma, cancers and coronary disorders.

The Aboriginal Liaison Officers manually record monthly statistics required by the Koori Health Unit, Department of Human Services.

Objective:

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will develop efficient and effective ways to collect data.

Goulburn Valley Health will develop an effective and efficient reporting system for Aboriginal Liaison Officers monthly statistics.

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will initiate discussions with Government agencies, the University sector and the local Aboriginal community with the understanding of establishing arrangements for collection and analysis of health status data of the local Aboriginal community.

Any use of the data for health research projects is to be approved and supported by both organisations, Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative.

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will establish effective and appropriate primary care strategies and

programs to address the high incidence of chronic disorders in the local Aboriginal community. The programs will be based upon the health status data, as it is produced and will include preventative and educational sessions to assist patients to self-manage and take control of their own health.

4.2 Community Relations

There are ranges of non-clinical issues to the new agreement. Many of these have seen substantial progress in the initial agreement, but remain matters of ongoing concern. These include the purpose and reasons pertaining to the first agreement that still remain:

- Support for the Aboriginal Liaison Officers
- Developing a cultural awareness plan
- Increasing employment of Aboriginal staff at Goulburn Valley Health
- Promoting mutual understanding and respect of the roles of both organisations by staff at all levels
- Promoting the rationale, principles and achievements of the agreement to the broader community
- Increasing the visual representation (paintings, posters, murals, etc.) of diversity in public areas of Goulburn Valley Health
- Resolution of complaints

The above tasks will be delegated to one Developmental Team known as the Community Relations team. This team will develop a series of working parties to address the specific objectives.

4.2.1 Support for the Aboriginal Liaison Officers

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will review the scope, function, accountability, relationships, community involvement and support for the Aboriginal Liaison Officers; Acute Care, GV Area Mental Health and Community Interlink.

Reason:

The Liaison Officers have wide responsibilities, and are subject to many different expectations which at times are difficult to reconcile, from within the Aboriginal community, Goulburn Valley Health, Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative and the Department of Human Services.

Objective:

Job descriptions and budgets for Aboriginal Liaison Officers and programs to be reviewed to give more attention to: -

- Advocacy for patients and liaison on their behalf
- Assisting patients with making complaints

- Being associated with discharge planning of Aboriginal patients
- Developing cultural awareness
- Transportation of patients and home visits
- Training and resources for the Aboriginal Liaison Program
- NAIDOC week, Sorry Day and Reconciliation week
- Developing closer relationships with the Aboriginal community and networking with community projects eg. Indigenous Networking meetings; Domestic Violence Taskforce, Family Decision Making, NAIDOC committee and etc.

Aboriginal Liaison Officers peer support meetings to be planned each month and to be regularly maintained.

4.2.2 Development of cultural awareness plan

Goulburn Valley Health in conjunction with Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative and the Aboriginal community will provide appropriate and effective cultural awareness training for all staff that provides a service of care to the Aboriginal community.

Reason:

The level of awareness of Aboriginal culture by Goulburn Valley Health staff needs improvement to ensure that they are able to provide the best possible care and service to Aboriginal people. This in turn will help raise the confidence of Aboriginal patients in the hospital.

Objective:

Cultural awareness packages will be developed in conjunction with the Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative and the local Aboriginal community to ensure cultural appropriateness.

To ensure cultural appropriateness, the Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will endorse and approve cultural awareness packages developed by Goulburn Valley Health.

All new staff to attend an orientation tour of Goulburn Valley Health to include the Minya Barmah room and a cultural presentation from Aboriginal Liaison Officers and Rumbalara Health workers.

- Currently the monthly orientation tour of Goulburn Valley Health includes a 10 - 15 minute information session of the role of the Aboriginal Liaison Officers. This time needs to be extended to 30 to 45 minutes, to include Aboriginal Liaison Officers of GV Health, Health Workers and Nurses from Rumbalara Health Service.

The partners will discuss other ways to capture nursing and medical staff, reception clerks, nurse unit managers and executive staff currently employed with GV Health.

Goulburn Valley Health will develop a policy in relation to providing cultural awareness training of all new GV Health staff.

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will discuss and develop a process for exchanges of staff between the partners, for example, Rumbalara Nurses and Health Workers working short term at GV Health and GV Health Nurses working short-term at Rumbalara Health Service.

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will discuss ways in which the hospital will become more user-friendly to the Aboriginal community.

4.2.3 Increasing employment of Aboriginal staff at GV Health

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will develop effective equal employment and training opportunities to increase the number of Aboriginal staff within Goulburn Valley Health.

Reason:

Aboriginal Liaison Officers are working in isolation from one another.

There are low numbers of Aboriginal people employed with Goulburn Valley Health considering the staff numbers over 1400.

There are four specific Aboriginal identified positions within Goulburn Valley Health funded by Department of Human Services. Aboriginal Liaison Officers employed in the areas of, Acute Care, Mental Health and two officers within Community Interlink.

There have been informal discussions amongst Aboriginal Liaison Officers and Aboriginal Health Workers surrounding the establishment of an Aboriginal Unit within Goulburn Valley Health Hospital.

Objective :

The partners will submit for ongoing funding for a Health Outcomes Agreement Policy Officer or Manager to the Department of Human Services to coordinate and support Aboriginal Liaison Officers within an “Aboriginal Unit”.

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will negotiate the need for an Aboriginal Unit within the Minya Barmah room, or in another environment that is sufficiently resourced and supported by each Aboriginal Liaison Officer.

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will support placements for students and promote a safe and culturally supportive environment.

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will enter into discussions with employment and training agencies with the view of increasing Aboriginal employment within Goulburn Valley Health.

The partners will develop effective policy for equal opportunity and employment/training for students studying health and other employable Aboriginal people; for example, reception areas, health information/data collection, post acute care and District Nursing are areas Aboriginal people need to be employed.

- By the end of 2003, eleven Aboriginal Division 2 Nurses will have graduated

4.2.4 Promoting mutual understanding and respect of the roles of both organisations by staff at all levels

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will communicate closely in delivering health care to the Aboriginal community.

Reason:

Communication between both organisations has been limited in the provision of health care to the Aboriginal community.

Objective:

Arrangements, (with safeguards for confidentiality) for the sharing of patient care information.

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will discuss a process for exchanges of staff between the partners, for example, Rumbalara Nurses and Health Workers working short-term at Goulburn Valley Health, and GV Health Nurses working short-term at Rumbalara Health Service.

The Chief Executive Officer, Board of Management, Executive Managers and staff of both organisations are to be represented on the Koori Taskforce.

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative Board of Management will meet twice a year to discuss achievements and outcomes to date.

4.2.5 Promoting the rationale, principles and achievements of the agreement to the broader community

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will promote the purpose and commitment of the 2nd Health Outcomes Agreement within both organisations and to the broader community.

Reason:

Knowledge and awareness of the Health Outcomes Agreement between Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative staff and the broader community has been limited.

Objective:

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will meet twice a year to enable partners to review

the objectives of the Health Outcomes Agreement, discuss issues arising, achievements and strategies to work towards improving outcomes.

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will discuss a community forum to disseminate outcomes to the broader community.

4.2.6 Increasing the visual representation (paintings, posters, murals, etc.) of diversity in public areas of the GV Health

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will discuss ways in which the hospital can increase the visual representation in public areas of Goulburn Valley Health.

Reason:

To enhance and raise the level of awareness of the local Aboriginal culture and community at Goulburn Valley Health, which has been limited.

Objective:

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will purchase at least one item of local Aboriginal art during the term of the agreement.

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will discuss ways to access public display areas within the hospital during special occasions, for example NAIDOC week, Sorry Day, Reconciliation week and ATSIC council elections.

4.2.7 Resolution of complaints

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will discuss policy, procedures and the management of complaints by members of the Aboriginal community.

Reason:

The Aboriginal community needs to be aware of the complaints process within Goulburn Valley Health.

Acute Aboriginal Liaison Officer is unaware of all complaints or grievances the Aboriginal community have with the service delivery at GV Health.

Objective:

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will develop a culturally appropriate complaints process, for example, all complaints for Aboriginal patients to include participation of the Aboriginal Liaison Officer.

Aboriginal Liaison Officer made aware of complaints from Aboriginal patients and community.

Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative will establish a register of complaints that has been recorded by the Aboriginal Liaison Officer and/or Taskforce.

4.3 Health Priorities

The following health issues are identified as priorities for joint action to be documented in an agreement (or Memorandum of Understanding). Given the resource requirements involved, it is not practical to proceed with all health priorities at the same time, so they have been staggered over a three-year period.

To commence in the first and second year of the new agreement

- Women's health (including maternity) services
 - *A Memorandum of Understanding for an "Integrated Women's and Early Childhood Health Program" between Goulburn Valley Health and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative is awaiting endorsement.*
- Aged care services
 - *Rumbalara HACCC service and GV Health's; Community Interlink, ACAS assessments, District Nursing, Rural Health and Hospice have developed Service Models*
- Mental health services
 - *A Memorandum of Understand for Mental Health Services between Goulburn Valley Area Mental Health Services and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative is currently in draft form.*
- Alcohol and drug services
- Dual Diagnosis
- Diabetic management
- Audiology
- Dentist
- Paediatric services

To commence in the third year of the Agreement

- Other services as identified by the Taskforce e.g. cardiovascular treatment and rehabilitation services, accident and emergency services

The Memorandum of Understanding for each of these health priorities will include: -

- Identification of the health needs (including community consultation)
- Identification of data requirements
- Inclusion of representatives from external agencies and/or community members
- Identification of priorities (with regard to what is achievable within agreement time frame and what is appropriate for joint action)
- Identifying the model of care
- Implementation plan (including addressing resource requirements)
- Identification of measurable performance/outcomes indicators to be achieved, and
- A timeframe for regular reporting to the Taskforce

5. Promoting the Agreement

The Taskforce will undertake a range of communications strategies to ensure the purpose of the agreement and its achievements within the respective organizations, and the broader community is promoted and disseminated. A community launch of the signing of the agreement.

The second health outcomes agreement between Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative and Goulburn Valley Health will take effect for a three year period commencing/...../2003.

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS: RUMBALARA ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE

Chairperson

Name:.....

Signature:.....Date:.....20
03

Chief Executive Officer

Name:.....

Signature:.....Date:.....2
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FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT: GOULBURN VALLEY HEALTH

Chairperson

Name:.....

Signature:.....Date:.....200
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Chief Executive Officer

Name:.....

Signature:.....*Date:*.....
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