



Campfire



Winter edition 2016

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Welcome to the first winter edition of Campfire for 2016, the newsletter for the Environmental Health Practitioners working with Aboriginal communities in Western Australia.

This is the first edition for a while – sorry! We hope you enjoy this publication and will pass this on to other like minded people working in areas of allied or environmental health. We promise more regular newsletter updates.

We look forward to working with our colleagues and making the rest of 2016 an enjoyable and exciting year in Aboriginal environmental health.

This publication is produced by WA Health's Environmental Health Directorate. All queries or submissions for future editions can be emailed to Jennie Logan at

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Warakurna June 2016

What's New in Aboriginal Environmental Health?

Aboriginal Environmental Health Database

Jennie Logan A/Senior Program Officer – Aboriginal Environmental Health

As from 1 July 2016 the Aboriginal Environmental Health Database went live and is ready for activities to be entered. If you are not already using the on-line database to record your activity please give it a try as the feedback so far has been very positive both in terms of being quick and simple and saving time. Those already using the Database are happy that it is so easy to use but were concerned as to whether the data entered was saved and where did it go. Please be reassured that if you have followed the manual the data entered has been saved and I can see it immediately. There is no need to email information entered or do anything else.

There will be an additional module added shortly to include the ability to create your own management reports enabling staff and organisations to see how much work has been done and in which areas of environmental health. Watch out for my email to inform you when this module has been added.

For those that are not using it we strongly encourage you to give it a go. Give me a call and I will talk you through it over the phone or go through it all when I visit you in coming weeks and months.

The web address for this is <http://waaeh.gaiaresources.com.au/accounts/login/?next=/home>.

New Service Agreements

Jennie Logan A/Senior Program Officer – Aboriginal Environmental Health

As of 1 July 2016 all Aboriginal environmental health organisations receiving funding from the Environmental Health Directorate have new service agreements. Six organisations have agreements until 2018 and 14 have agreements for two years until 2018 with options of an addition two one year extensions through to 2020.

It is the intention of the Department of Health to test the market in 2017 through a Registration of Interest (ROI) process. More information on the ROI will be made available in up-coming Forums and individual meetings.

I will be meeting with each individual Organisation and staff over the next 12 months to ensure they fully understand their Service Agreement and its requirements to ensure organisations remain Preferred Service Providers into the future.

It is essential that all activity reports are submitted regularly and on time. It is important to know that delays in reporting will mean that quarterly contract payments will be suspended until the reports have been received, checked and entered into our database. To assist you in getting your reports in easily and on time, the new on-line Aboriginal Environmental Health database (above) is now available for everyone to use and will be phased in to take over from the paper Activity Sheets. All contracted Providers were emailed a little over a month ago about this new reporting facility and were issued with an instruction manual with login IDs and passwords etc.

Other reporting requirements are also required, such as the Six Monthly Report, due in August and February each year; and annual Financial Statement due in October each year; the Community Environmental Health Activity Plans (CEHAP) are to be kept up-to-date and submitted at least annually; and Certificates of Currency for Insurances need to be submitted when renewed each year.

If you have any queries regarding this information or reports please do not hesitate in contacting me on (08) 9388-4943 or e-mailing Jennie.Logan@health.wa.gov.au.

The Public Health Act 2016

Robert Mullane, Principal Advisor, Aboriginal Environmental Health

Goodbye *Health Act 1911* hello *Public Health Act 2016*.

It took more than two years for the *Public Health Bill 2014* to pass through Parliament but on 25 July 2016 the Bill received Royal assent and Western Australia now has a new Public Health Act 2016.

As there is a significant amount of work required to transition to the new regulatory framework, implementation is to occur in a staged manner over the next 3 to 5 years. Our Public Health Staff are now busy rewriting policies and guidelines that will change Public Health forever (well until another bill is written in possibly another hundred years).

The Public Health Division will progressively release resources to assist local government and other agencies interpret and administer the Act. These resources will be available on the [Public Health Act webpage](#) of the WA Health website and the Department will also be hosting seminars, webinars and focus groups over the coming years. The website includes:

- [Frequently asked questions](#)
- [Information for local government enforcement agencies including:](#)
 - [Details of the proposed Public Health Act Toolkit for Local Government](#)
 - [Details of the proposed Public Health Planning Toolkit for Local Government](#)
- [Overview of the timeline for implementation](#)
- [Information for Crown authorities](#)

To keep informed about implementation, future seminars and new resources please subscribe to the environmental health mailing list (unless already subscribed). To do so, go to the following link, <http://eepurl.com/ECtdf>. Watch this space for more information email publichealthact@health.wa.gov.au for further information.

Community Needs Survey 2016

Robert Mullane, Principal Advisor, Aboriginal Environmental Health

The last “Environmental Health Needs of Aboriginal Communities in Western Australia” survey was conducted in 2008. Copies of “The 2008 Survey and its Findings” document were posted recently to all contracted organisations for them to use and keep as a record to compare results with a new survey which will be commenced later this year or early in 2017.

The new survey will be a little different from the last one. We will be using a slightly different version of the Healthy Community Assessment Tool (HCAT) developed by the Menzies School of Health Research which is based in Darwin in the NT (we are still making some final edits). You may be familiar with this tool as I have been talking about it for well over a year now. It and its use are also referred to in the recently finalised Service Agreements. Other Australian States and Territories are, at some stage, also intending to use the same survey document. There is a high degree of interest in this project from other Government Departments and research organisations such as the Telethon Kids Institute. It is expected that the results of the survey will help not only with analyzing the different needs, and progress over time of each surveyed community, but also with comparing communities and regions within WA and between each State and Territory.

As in previous surveys, the Environmental Health Directorate will be asking Environmental Health Practitioners to assist them with conducting the new survey and training in how to use it will be made available for those involved. We are looking forward to working with everyone on this project and to the challenge of us also travelling to communities to conduct the survey. There will be more about this project in coming weeks and will be a point for discussion at the regional Aboriginal Environmental Health forums.

Championing Change for the Future

Shire of Derby West Kimberley – Stuart Martin, Genevieve Russ, Sonny McKay, Scott Mackenzie & Taryn Dyer

The Shire of Derby/West Kimberley Aboriginal Environmental Health Unit uses a less traditional approach to health promotion in Indigenous communities -to ensure that our work matters. In many of our communities, we are seeing a missing generation - people and families affected by limited education, apathy, substance abuse, and chronic diseases - often resulting in extended family caring for children. This impacted greatly on the type of health promotion programs and resources we need to access and use.

While a lot of resources and time has been spent on Indigenous health promotion, most of this has been focused on and targeted towards children. Through our evaluation of past programs, we now have evidence recognising a widening gap in knowledge and health standards between adults and children.

We know that children understand our messages and put them into practice in a school environment, but the challenges begin outside of that environment. For example, we teach the kids how to wash their hands but some go home to an environment with no soap or running water.



When working with remote Indigenous communities, we have encountered a number of difficulties which has resulted in a need to utilise more innovative method of consumer engagement and strategy implementation.

Our team has recently developed a new campaign called LIVE DEADLY to engage and address Indigenous adults between the ages of 16-35. This age bracket was chosen as they are the group of adults most likely to be starting a family or have children attending school.

The LIVE DEADLY campaign will be promoted through the communication methods of T.V and radio adverts, posters, brochures and education packages for schools as well as social media.

All promotional material will have an important environmental health message involving:

- Personal Hygiene
- Reporting of housing issues
- Two dogs per house
- Community clean-up
- Tidying house and yard
- Mosquito prevention
- Getting your kids to the clinic
- Trachoma and Skin sores prevention

The Department of Health have supported the LIVE DEADLY campaign through a grant to purchase promotional materials for the campaign. We plan to purchase car wraps and banners as further branding of the LIVE DEADLY message so that the message becomes well known within our communities.

The health and environmental issues in Indigenous Communities continue to challenge public health practitioners, researchers and policy makers. Our team have identified a gap in knowledge between children and adults and have been proactive and innovative at working towards a solution to bridge this gap. It is important that the programs we continue to develop assist with empowering people to exercise more control over their health and environments enabling them to make choices conducive to good health and wellbeing.

Trachoma Education and Training at Warakurna

Jennie Logan A/Senior Program Officer - Aboriginal Environmental Health

In June 2016, Jane Davies, Jane Francis and Ursula Lavender, Nurses from Goldfields Population Health, along with Paul Clifton, Kenan Bender (from the City of Kalgoorlie), Robert Mullane and I made the flight from Kalgoorlie to Warakurna in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands to run training sessions on Trachoma Prevention, Immunization Vaccine Care and Environmental Health Training for the Environmental Health Practitioners, from surrounding communities, and the Clinical Staff from Ngaanyatjarra Health Service.

The experience was a first for me and I met some wonderful people who work hard to make a difference in the Ngaanyatjarra Land communities of Warburton; Warakurna, Wingellina; Blackstone; Jameson; Tjukurla; Kiwirrkurra; Kurrku; Wannam; Pajtjarr and Tjirrkarli.

During the Trachoma Education session, the two Jane's from Population Health simulated how unclean faces and hands can spread germs from one person to another by throwing around a small football covered in the Glitter Bug Potion (which can only be seen under ultra violet light). This certainly livened up the session on Trachoma preventions and gave a realistic understanding that germs can be spread quickly and easily if faces and hands are not washed regularly. The goal is to eradicate Trachoma in the Lands and with the help of all the staff attending the training sessions, I am sure this goal is achievable.

The Goldfields Population Nurses will follow the training with antibiotic distribution in Warburton and Blackstone communities from 29th August to 2nd September 2016; with further screenings in 2017. (For more information contact Population Health in Kalgoorlie).

In another session, Greg Norman, from Ngaanyatjarra Health Service (who hosted the training), went through Trachoma and other health promotions; their teams; up and coming events happening in the Lands; and shared some of the issues, that I am sure all communities experience, such as plumbing problems, and teaching community members that clean homes make healthy homes. I was impressed with the number of female Environmental Health Practitioners on Greg's teams, who attended the training and spoke to me about the work they are doing and talking to other women about keeping their homes clean. It was inspiring.



On the last day in Warakurna we had the opportunity to visit the Warakurna Health Clinic where Ben and Jane Davies posed for a photo. Ben is originally from Queensland (but we will not hold that against him); and has only been at the clinic for a short time but has already made a connection with the community through his bubbly personality.

I would like to thank Greg Norman and his staff for hosting the training sessions, for the great food and BBQ's and George Sio from Shire of Ngaanyatjarraku, who ensured our sausages and meats were cooked to perfection each night.

Another big thank you to the Population Health Nurses; the Clinical Staff from Ngaanyatjarra Health Service; and NACCO Health Staff who participated in the training sessions and shared information.

I cannot leave out thanking Malcolm, our pilot, who ensured we had enjoyable and safe flights to Warakurna and back to Kalgoorlie.

Environmental Health Team Continues Great Work

Marchelle Retallack – Bundiyarra Aboriginal Community Aboriginal Corporation

Bundiyarra has secured funding from the WA Department of Health for the Aboriginal Environmental Health Program to continue.

This allows the corporation to undertake clean ups of communities and residents' houses, along with educating tenants on how to maintain a clean, hygienic home.

Bundiyarra CEO, Marchelle Retallack said the team has now taken a more proactive approach for the service's operation to the demands of the Geraldton community and Pia Wadjari community.

"The City of Greater Geraldton took away vergeside collection in late 2015 resulting in a dramatic increase in the number of clients requiring the Environmental Health Team's services," she said.

"Up to 120 weekly calls were being received from clients needing assistance with rubbish removal and combatting cockroach infestation as a result of having a build up of rubbish around their homes."

As the client base is spread Geraldton wide, it was decided to concentrate on cleaning up and educating street by street, cutting down time wasted on travelling to and fro to each call out. Geraldton was divided into three zones; the zones focus on suburbs that are highly populated by Aboriginal people. They include Rangeway, Utakarra, Karloo, Waggrakine, Spalding and Wonthella.

Next, the streets that were most in need of the service were determined with clients consisting mainly of seniors, pensioners, single mothers and people with a disability. Twelve key streets were identified and are being treated as individual communities with the Environmental Health Team focusing on one street each week.

The aim of the clean ups is to engage as many tenants and/or homeowners as possible to get involved with the Environmental Health Services team. The team provides all the equipment and completes any baiting; however tenants and/or homeowners are encouraged to take an active role in the process.



Led by Environmental Health Services Team Supervisors, Ron Cross and Jessica Harris, clients are provided with vinegar, bi-carb soda and cleaning cloths and shown how to use the two products to clean in the home. They are also provided with a large plastic tub and encouraged to store their dry goods in it to help eliminate mice, rats and cockroaches in the homes.

Each community or street will be revisited a second and third time. It is anticipated that after three visits, tenants and/or homeowners will take more pride and maintain their homes themselves.

"In addition, we hope that any tenants and/or homeowners that didn't participate on the first visit, will participate for the upcoming visits," Ms Retallack said.



“In addition, we hope the number of infestations will dramatically decrease. We have already proven that when treating just one home in a street for cockroaches or other vermin, they simply move on to neighbouring houses.

“The process we are now undertaking is assisting with baiting as many homes as possible in the street and the issue should become eradicated in time,” said Ms Retallack.

The Department of Housing has been provided with the clean-up schedule and are looking to book in their inspections after the Environmental Health Services Team have completed the street.

Participants are rewarded with a free barbecue at the end of the week of the clean-up.

Water Management and Repairs makes a Difference to Irrungadji

Greg McConkey - Empower Education

In April 2016 Greg McConkey was commissioned by Ashburton Aboriginal Corporation and funded by the Department of Training and Workforce Development to run a 10 week of Environmental Health Training Program in Irrungadji Aboriginal Community, located near Nullagine, 200km north of Newman in the Pilbara Region. Through the program it was recognized that the community was experiencing excessive problems with water leaks and that these leaks were causing major public health hazards in and around the many affected homes. Greg McConkey contacted the Water Corporation’s Community Engagement Officer Jamie Elliott to discuss undertaking plumbing repairs throughout the community.

In November 2015 the Water Corporation installed a data logger on the community master meter. This confirmed a significant base flow; caused by numerous leaks throughout the community. In March 2016 new sub meters were installed by the Corporation on individual properties with data loggers to assist with locating leaks within individual properties.

The data loggers confirmed that 5 properties had major leaks; some in the excess of 20 litres per minute. As a result the average water consumption by the Community was 87,312 litres per day. Data from the loggers was used to highlight in which properties there were significant leaks so plumbing works could be prioritized.

In June 2016 extensive plumbing works, funded by the Department of Health’s Environmental Health Directorate, were completed in the community by CFC Plumbing Newman. Nullagine – Irrungadji is a Class 5 town and water charges are applied based on kL of water consumed. At the time of the

plumbing repairs the water charge for the community was \$7.1140 per kilolitre. Based on a reduction in daily water use of 76,640 litres this equates to savings in the order of \$540 per day.

The Water Corporation will continue to monitor the water consumption regularly and identify and repair leaks as soon as they are identified.



Outflowing water leak from within the Kitchen wall

Breaking News – Decision Made on Emergency Plumbing Repairs in Remote Aboriginal Communities.

It is with great pleasure we can announce that the Minister for Commerce has given approval for amendments to be made to the Plumbers Licensing and Plumbing Standards Regulation 2000 to allow qualified environmental health workers to carry out specified emergency plumbing work in remote Aboriginal communities. A copy of the decision paper can be found on the link below.

<http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/announcements/decision-paper-emergency-plumbing-repairs-remote-aboriginal-communities>

The Department of Commerce will start work on getting the regulations drafted to give effect to the new arrangements. The timeframe for this to commence is from 1 January 2017 (or sooner if possible) but it will depend on Parliamentary Counsel's drafting priorities over the next few months.

We will keep you all up-to-date on the drafting process through Forums, meetings and Newsletters.

Aboriginal Environmental Health Training Broker Project

In response to the challenges around providing training and professional development opportunities for our wide-spread workforce, the Directorate has recently entered into a partnership with Bega Garnbirringu Health Service (BGHS) and provided a grant to establish a pilot State-wide Aboriginal Environmental Health Training Broker service. For those of you who are not familiar with BGHS they are an Aboriginal Medical Service based in Kalgoorlie, a Registered Training Organisation and an approved Preferred Service Provider for the provision for environmental health services to the Goldfields Aboriginal communities.

We have asked them to establish and trial a Training Broker service to support our existing environmental health workforce to help ensure that they can obtain local training and education that addresses their needs for relevant skills and knowledge so they can carry out their important work. The Broker project will provide a coordinated State-wide approach to ensure that all contracted environmental health agencies and their environmental health staff have the same opportunity to obtain the necessary work related skills – both accredited and skills based non-accredited training. Community members and other health staff will be able to access the training being provided.

A Steering Committee will be put in place to help guide the Broker project and will comprise of an:

- ✓ Aboriginal Environmental Health Practitioner nominated by each of the four Aboriginal Environmental Health Regional Forums;
- ✓ Representative/s from the Environmental Health Directorate;
- ✓ BGHS Training Manager; and
- ✓ Training Broker Co-ordinator

Over the next 12-18 months the Broker project is expected to be able to deliver up to 100 days of locally based skills based training and assist us here at the Environmental Health Directorate in making sure that Cert II and Cert III courses in Aboriginal Environmental Health are provided. More information will be made available over the next few weeks and months. Look out for an email in your in-box!

Until next time....