



NAIDOC Week 2018

Melanie Robinson – Because of Her, We Can



Government of Western Australia
Department of Health

Melanie Robinson, Acting Director of Aboriginal Health at the Child and Adolescent Health Service, is solid. She has studied hard, she has pushed herself out of her comfort zone, explored a varied career path and loves her country.

Her early life was spent in the Ngallagunda community on the Gibb River Road. When she was eight years old her family moved to Derby so she could attend school and subsequently Melanie attended boarding school at Stella Maris College in Geraldton.

Following school, Melanie completed a Bachelor of Science (Nursing) at Curtin University where she was the only Aboriginal student in the cohort. The transition from school to university was challenging – navigating a big university while feeling culturally safe can be hard for an Aboriginal student from a small community.

Moving back to Derby to work as a registered nurse at the local hospital was a natural progression for Melanie. It was an opportunity to help Aboriginal people navigate the system and encourage them to access health care earlier.

During this time she also worked at Fitzroy Crossing hospital and the Numbla Nunga aged care facility in Derby.

Melanie had caught the travel bug and spent



six-months in London prior to moving to Perth and working at Royal Perth Hospital in aged care, acute medical and the intensive care unit.

In 1998 she travelled to Dublin to live with a friend and her family while she worked in a local aged care unit.

A return to Perth took Melanie to Princess Margaret Hospital, where she worked in oncology, haematology and intensive care for the next nine

and a half years. This was a special time for Melanie as she loves working with children and their families.

In 2008 she worked as a nurse educator at Marr Mooditj Training and mentored and taught Aboriginal students in enrolled nursing and Aboriginal Health Worker Programs. “I loved this work and really enjoyed learning more about Noongar people and getting to know the local Aboriginal community,” says Melanie.

A new position as a Senior Policy Officer and subsequent promotion into a Senior Development Officer role at the Department of Health led to Melanie joining the Aboriginal Leadership and Development Program (LEAD). At this time she also graduated with a Masters in Nursing Research from Notre Dame University.

Melanie says her current role at CAHS, “is a great opportunity for me to apply the skills I learnt in the LEAD Program, which was supported by Aboriginal Health Policy Directorate and the Institute of Health Leadership.”



BECAUSE OF HER, WE CAN!

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