

**THE WALGETT ABORIGINAL MEDICAL SERVICE AND  
BREWARRINA ABORIGINAL HEALTH SERVICE**

**INTO THE FUTURE**

**STRATEGIC PLAN**

**2014 - 2017**



## **FORWARD**

The Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service has grown from a fledgling health service established in 1986 into a large fully accredited health provider now offering a broad range of primary health care services to the Walgett Shire. Likewise the Brewarrina Aboriginal Health Service, which was auspiced by WAMS in 2003, has consolidated its position as a qualified health service provider delivering the Brewarrina Shire a wider choice of services and supports.

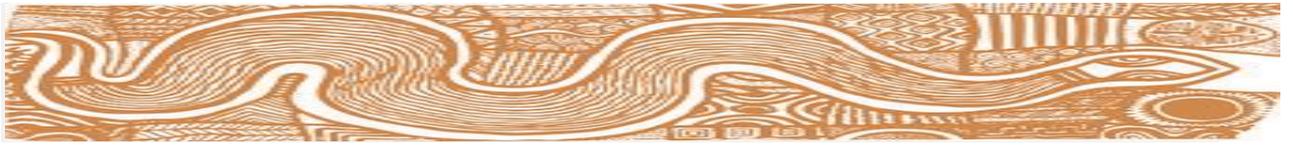
These achievements have been made possible because of our team of professional and dedicated staff and collaborators who have demonstrated commitment and determination, along with a supportive and forward looking Board of Directors.

The past three years have been a period of expansion for WAMS both in terms of our infrastructure but also in relation to the range and complexity of programs we administer. We have maintained a strong working relationship with our funders, partners and our community. Despite the challenges of operating a health service in a remote location, WAMS continues to develop creative solutions with the local service network to resolve some of the protracted issues impacting on our community and Aboriginal people.

As we go into the future I see our immediate focus being one of consolidation as we meet our obligations to have the "Taj" fulfil its core objective to become a thriving centre for the treatment of chronic disease. Equally WAMS needs to continue to maintain its core focus on achieving improved health outcomes for Aboriginal people. This will be achieved in part by expanding on the range of programs we deliver and in doing so engaging qualified staff as well as actively recruiting and training local Aboriginal people to take up these work opportunities.

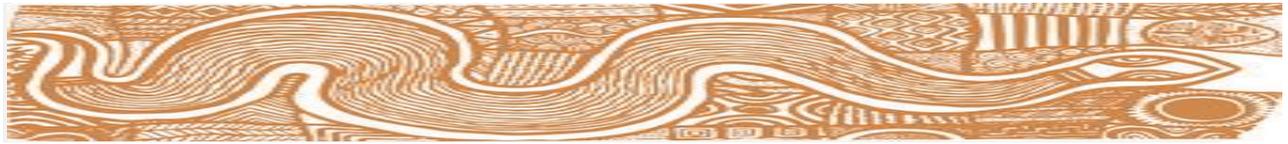
**Christine Corby OAM  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service**

**21 October 2014**





**“WE ARE PROUD  
OF THE SERVICES  
WE GIVE BACK TO  
THE COMMUNITY”**



## **VISION**

The Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service and the Brewarrina Aboriginal Health Service are Aboriginal community controlled organisations committed to providing accessible and confidential services in Walgett, Brewarrina and surrounding communities.

## **PURPOSE**

WAMS/BAHSL remains committed to realising the Vision, and striving towards being the most successful Aboriginal Medical Service in the state. For this to be a reality we need to be clear about our priorities, how are we going to achieve them, and with whom. Consequently we have specifically focussed on exploring opportunities that strengthen our financial security and enable us to deliver a broader range of health (or health related services) to our communities. Likewise WAMS sees the importance of optimising our existing partnerships and establishing further working relationships that go beyond our current network.

Both WAMS' and BAHSL's core purpose is to strive to improve Aboriginal Health outcomes as articulated by the National Aboriginal Health Strategy Working Party (1989), "Not just the physical well-being of the individual but the social, emotional, and cultural well-being of the whole community. This is a whole-of-life view and it also includes the cyclical concept of life-death-life." This is achieved by being actively involved in the community and putting into practise our core values.

## **VALUES**

- We recognise and value the importance of Aboriginal community controlled health services that provide culturally appropriate holistic care.
- We are committed to promoting positive images of Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service (WAMS)/Brewarrina Aboriginal Health Service (BAHSL), Walgett, Brewarrina and surrounding communities.
- We recognise, promote and value the skills, experience and qualifications of the staff and Directors in their own right, as equal to or more than, their counterparts.
- We are committed to communicating in a way that empowers our clients to make informed decisions about their health and social needs.
- We are committed to achieving effective organisational and operational management.
- We respect, encourage and strengthen the heritage and the cultural values/needs of our clients and community.
- We are committed to respecting and maintaining confidentiality within the community, clients and each other within the legislative framework that we are required to work within.
- We will ensure that the rights and responsibilities of all clients are upheld.



- We will provide a non- judgmental service that does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, religion, age, disability, appearance or personal circumstances.
- We are committed to developing the skills of the staff and Directors to ensure the provision of a professional service.

## **WHAT WE DO**

Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service Co-operative Limited (WAMS) is a fully accredited Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service that has been in operation for 27 years and offers an extensive range of centre-based and outreach Primary Health Care services including General Practitioner, Dental and Allied Health services to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people living in Walgett, and surrounding areas. WAMS is also the auspice for the Goonimoo Mobile Children's service and playgroup.

In addition, the Brewarrina Aboriginal Health Service Limited, (which is auspiced by WAMS) is also fully accredited and provides centre-based primary health care services to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people living in Brewarrina.

## **2011 – 2014 OVERVIEW**

### **Successes Achieved**

- Significant community based initiatives included the development of annual community based one-stop health checks for Aboriginal people across Walgett, Collarenebri, Brewarrina and Weilmoringle. This initiative led to a significant increase in the number of Aboriginal women, men and children having annual health checks and has resulted in onward referrals to a range of differ specialist services for a number of these people.
- Constructed a \$3M centre for the Prevention and Treatment of Chronic Disease.
- In 2011, BAHSL completed their first whole of service accreditation in conjunction with WAMS as a subsidiary service. In 2012, BAHSL successfully undertook its second round of accreditation with AGPAL.
- During 2013, WAMS successfully completed its fifth round of accreditation with Quality Improvement Performance (formally QMS), as well as successfully completed its Clinic accreditation with RACGP.
- In an independent survey with Clients they praised the organisation, management, doctors and program staff. They spoke about the organisation and its importance to the community as both a health provider and employer who help keep young people in the area.

### **Setbacks and Challenges**

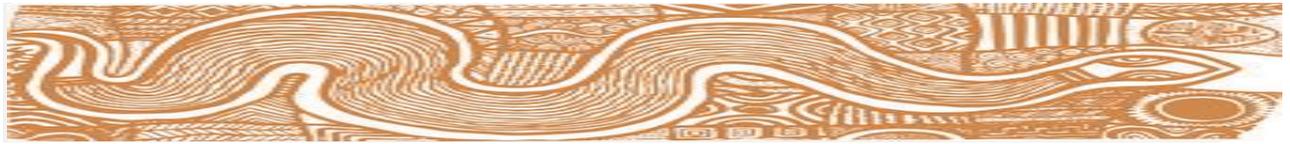
- The recruitment and retention of staff continues to be a struggle and a significant cost factor for the organisation.



- While WAMS/BAHSL have commenced the establishment of a permanent GP service this is still to be fully launched.
- WAMS staff and Board of Directors training and development processes need to be further improved as there are still gaps.
- More young people and people with relevant skills sets need to be included onto the Board of Directors.

## Scorecard Assessing the Completion of the 2011 - 2014 Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

GOALS	COMPLETED	PARTICIALLY COMPLETED	NOT COMPLETED
1. WAMS/BAHSL will have staff who are trained to meet the needs of the client population that they serve		✓	
2. WAMS/BAHSL will have a permanent GP service	✓		
3. WAMS/BAHSL will have strong, formal relationships and equal partnerships with other service agencies.	✓		
4. WAMS/BAHSL will review their facilities to ensure that they are able to meet current needs	✓		
5. WAMS/BAHSL will have effective recruitment and retention processes			✓
6. WAMS/BAHSL will have planned regular outreach services that include visits to Gingie and Namoi as well as a home visiting service	✓		
7. WAMS/BAHSL will review the effectiveness of all of their existing services and ensure that these are relevant for the community that they serve	✓		
8. WAMS/BAHSL will become a leading primary health care service		✓	
9. WAMS/BAHSL will continue to be a committed and available health care service	✓		



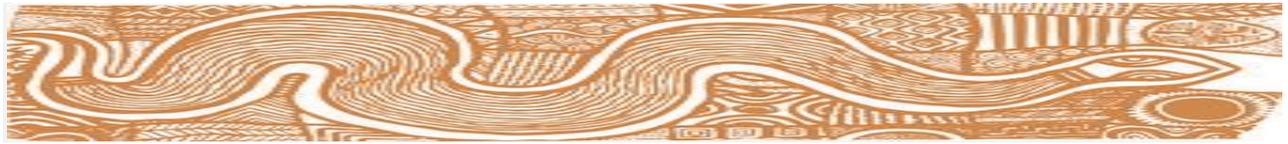
GOALS	COMPLETED	PARTICIALLY COMPLETED	NOT COMPLETED
10. WAMS/BAHSL will expand on existing programs	✓		
11. WAMS/BAHSL will lead the way in cultural awareness training		✓	



**“27 years**

**and**

**going strong”**



## **Strategic Goals**

### **Strategic Goal 1:**

#### **HIGH QUALITY HEALTH SERVICES**

WAMS/BAHSL will work to provide improve processes within Clinical Care, Primary Health Care and Dental Programs and become a leading Primary Health Care Service

### **Strategic Goal 2:**

#### **IMPROVED COLLABORATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

WAMS/BAHSL will work to improve collaboration with community partners and engagement with the community

### **Strategic Goal 3:**

#### **a) QUALITY PERFORMANCE AND A SUPPORTIVE WORKING ENVIRONMENT**

WAMS/BAHSL will work to provide a quality performance for all clients and a supportive working environment for staff

#### **b) WAMS/BAHSL will lead the way in cultural awareness training**

WAMS/BAHSL will work to provide leadership in cultural awareness training

### **Strategic Goal 4:**

#### **FINANCIALLY VIABLE ORGANISATION**

WAMS/BAHSL will continue to work toward becoming a strong and independent financial organisation