

Bila Muuji ORAL HEALTH Partnerships



Recognising the urgent need for adequate Aboriginal oral health in western NSW, Charles Sturt University (CSU), Greater Western Area Health Service (GWAHS) and Bila Muuji Aboriginal Health Service Inc. have joined forces, launching two oral health partnerships in April 2009.

A Memorandum of Understand (MoU) between CSU and Bila Muuji was established to provide a Student Clinical Placement Program for CSU Dentistry and Oral Health Therapy undergraduates at regional Bila Muuji sites and to investigate opportunities of joint research projects. The MoU will result in Bila Muuji input into curriculum content and delivery, provision of scholarships for CSU students and patient care at Bila Muuji sites by CSU students and staff. Prof Ward Massey, head of the CSU dental school, has been working cooperatively with Bila Muuji members to develop a scholarship that will support and encourage Aboriginal students from western NSW to study in the Bachelor of Oral Health program.

Furthermore, a partnership between Bila Muuji and GWAHS has led to the appointment of Oral Health Promotion Coordinator, Ms Kay Jackson. Kay is based in Dubbo and works with the communities and organisations in the Bila Muuji sector, and with GWAHS and other relevant organisation and groups, to implement dental prevention and education programs identified in the Bila Muuji Regional Oral Health Promotion Plan.



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This plan was developed in 2008 with input from staff and management personnel of Bila Muuji organisations.

Some of the oral health promotion activities already under way include school based toothbrushing and education programs in Bourke, Walgett and Dareton, daily brushing at preschools in Walgett, Orange and Wellington, and Fluoride Varnish application by health professionals in Walgett. Kay supports local staff in their activities, and is working with them to identify further opportunities for coordinated oral health prevention activities.

Ms Jenni Floyd, GWAHS Area Manager Oral Health Services has been a supporter of dental programs in the Bila Muuji region for many years, and we are grateful to her and other GWAHS senior management for the ongoing collaboration on programs.

