

“12 Months On”

Highlights of Outcomes, Achievements and Activities

by the

**Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia
(AHCWA)**

and its

**Member Aboriginal Community Controlled
Health Services (ACCHSs)**

April 2007 to April 2008

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Section 1: Corporate Governance

- In April 2007 the AHCWA Board endorsed a *2007-2008 Action Plan*, describing business strategies and detailed implementation measures.
- In October 2007, and then in January 2008 and April 2008, the AHCWA Board formally considered *Quarterly Reviews* of performance against the 2007-2008 Action Plan and approved the 2008-2009 Action Plan in April 2008.
- In October 2007 AHCWA received an unqualified audit for its *Financial Statements* for 2006/2007 presented to the 2007 Annual General Meeting
- In January 2008 AHCWA's Board of Directors adopted a *Charter of Corporate Governance*.

The Charter was customised from the model published in "*Boards That Work*" by Geoffrey Kiel and Geoffrey Nicholson, and is specifically customised for the *Corporations Act* under which AHCWA is incorporated.

The Board and the Secretariat now implement best practice in all aspects of corporate governance.

- In February 2008 AHCWA received a "Low Risk" rating at its inaugural *Risk Assessment Profile* with the WA Office of the Department of Health and Ageing/Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (DoHA/OATSIH)

This is the lowest rating and reflects the hard work of the Board and Secretariat – especially the Corporate Services business unit – on installing and maintaining compliance and risk management plans.

- In April 2008 AHCWA's Board commissioned an update for the *AHCWA Triennial Strategic Plan*.
- AHCWA's Board of Directors met in **April 2007, June 2007, August 2007, October 2007, January 2008, and April 2008** to govern AHCWA's affairs.

Directors unable to be in Perth participated by teleconference

Section 2: Support to Members

- In June 2007 AHCWA's Board formally workshopped with senior managers from the WA Office of DoHA/OATSIH options for shared assistance to "*Services of Concern.*"

This laid down a framework for open assessment of cooperative solutions.

- In December 2007 AHCWA's implementation of the "*NPCC Chronic Disease Project*" with member ACCHSs was externally evaluated and found to be highly effective.

This did not lead the Government to continue funding, however. Another promising initiative aborted.

AHCWA continues to implement a related but separate "*ABCD Chronic Disease Project*" with a number of member ACCHSs.

- In January 2008 AHCWA's Board adopted a comprehensive "*Member Support and Sector Development Policy*".

This Policy spelled out two implementation strategies:

- (ii) Developmental Strategy – to help expand member ACCHSs
- (iii) Remedial Strategy – to help turn around "Services of Concern"

- In January 2008 AHCWA restructured its business units to provide better integrated services aligned with the "*Member Support and Sector Development Policy*".

This coincided with AHCWA Secretariat recruiting to fill the positions of Manager, Member Support and Sector Development and Public Health Medical Officer.

- In February 2008 AHCWA successfully proposed a \$1.5M *Health Promotion Program* over 2 years to place health promotion personnel with 5 of its 19 member ACCHSs.

This Program is funded via a partnership with **[insert names]**

- In March 2008 AHCWA completed a thorough analysis of the readiness of all member ACCHSs not yet clinically accredited for *AGPAL Accreditation*, with the assistance of **[insert name of consultancy firm]**

In April 2008 AHCWA lodged a formal Proposal with the Head Office of OATSIH for an ongoing funded *Accreditation Support Program*.

- In March 2008 AHCWA convened and managed the annual “*AHCWA Strategic Planning Day*” and the follow-on “*WA Sector Information and Networking Conference*” in Perth.

Feedback from organisations represented confirmed that these were the most useful and best organised of all similar events held previously.

Financial support came from the WA Office of DoHA/OATSIH.

- In April 2008 AHCWA completed the development and national road-testing of a GP-focused *Cultural Safety Training Program*, funded by DoHA/OATSIH and supported by the RACGP.

This means that the Program is available to be delivered by Affiliates across Australia. The Program can be adapted for other professional audiences, including Nurses.

- From January to April 2008 AHCWA developed *Regional Aboriginal Health Profiles* for use by member ACCHS in the *Regional Aboriginal Health Forums* in the Pilbara, Murchison-Midwest-Gascoyne, Metropolitan and South-West regions.

The Profiles brought together epidemiological, demographic and SAMSIS data.

The comprehensive data sets provide the evidence base for prioritising ACCHS services, planning better service coordination with other providers, and identifying much-needed new resources/investments.

This *Regional Development Project* is funded by OXFAM Australia.

- In March- April 2008 AHCWA completed 5 regionally-based *Finance Workshops* for finance officers and chief executive officers of member ACCHSs and commenced 5 more regionally-based *Risk Assessment Workshops*.

This double series of workshops targeted technical, high priority issues for professional development and improving systems and procedures in ACCHSs.

Funding was provided by the WA Office of DoHA/OATSIH.

Section 3: Workforce Development

- In April 2007 AHCWA lodged a costed funded proposal for an “*Assessor Training Program*” to implement a roll-out strategy for transitioning all Aboriginal Health Workers employed in ACCHSs in WA to new national competency standards and related qualifications.

The proposal was eventually funded by DoHA in February 2008 as a national pilot.

5 ACCHS Assessors plus the AHCWA Workforce Information Policy Officer commenced training in March 2008 to acquire their Statements of Attainment for the Assessor Units of the *Certificate IV in Training and Assessment* (BSB41004).

They begin workplace assessments of ACCHS Aboriginal Health Workers in May 2008.

This roll-out strategy is a partnership with the Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council of NSW (AH&MRC) and its Aboriginal Health College.

- In December 2007 AHCWA, supported by the AH&MRC, advocated directly with Canberra senior managers running the “*BMT 100 CEOs Program*” for ACCHSs in WA to access the Program, funded in the May 2007 Budget.

Subsequent email correspondence and a joint teleconference resulted in a satisfactory distribution of Program funds to WA ACCHSs in March/April 2008.

- In February 2008 AHCWA with support from Rural Health West (formerly WACRRM) submitted a *Framework Proposal for GP Recruitment and Retention in ACCHSs in WA* to Health Minister Roxon’s senior advisor.

This sought action to address the GP salary crisis and other constraints on GP employment in ACCHS.

No action was taken, so ACCHSs at the March 2008 Strategic Planning Day approved “*Strategy for GP Sustainability*” calling for an annual injection of an additional \$4.56M.

The AHCWA Secretariat forwarded this to Minister Roxon.

- In March 2008 the AHCWA Board decided that AHCWA would seek accreditation as a *Registered Training Organisation* (RTO) to give it the legal capacity to provide accredited education and training programs for the ACCH Sector's workforce.

AHCWA lodged its application with the Training Accreditation Council (TAC) in April 2008. The response was positive.

- In April 2008 AHCWA launched the "*Diploma of Business Management*" (BSB50401) which is AHCWA's first full accredited national accredited qualification delivered in partnership with the AH&MRC of NSW and its Aboriginal Health College whilst AHCWA awaits RTO accreditation.

17 chief executive officers and senior managers, 15 of them Aboriginal, attended the first 5-day block release in Perth.

The Diploma Program will be completed in June 2009.

Funding comes from the BMT *100 CEOs Program* and Abstudy.

Section 4: Partnerships

- AHCWA, WA Office of DoHA/OATSIH, and the WA Office of Aboriginal Health hold **quarterly** *Partnership Meetings* of the chief executive officers.

These meetings address operational issues of mutual concern and interest.

- AHCWA works collaboratively with the following Western Australian organisations:
 - Rural HealthWest
 - Combined Universities Centre for Rural Health
 - WA Divisions of General Practice
 - **[Smoking]**
 - **[Cancer]**
 - **[Others]**
- AHCWA participates with other State/Territory Affiliates and the Central Office of DoHA/OATSIH in quarterly *Business Improvement Group Meetings* to review program design and implementation matters across jurisdictions.