

# Bullinah

Aboriginal Health Service

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# Annual Report

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2022-2023



## VISION

A Strong, Empowered and Healthy  
Goori Community

## OUR MISSION

Bullinah, is a leading Aboriginal organisation,  
we work together with our communities and  
partners to achieve positive health and wellbeing outcomes  
by delivering sustainable and wholistic services

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# Our Board

## Brenda Holt CHAIRPERSON

A proud Bundjalung woman, has deep roots in her local community. With nearly two decades of experience in Aboriginal Health, she has held various roles and currently serves as a Senior Aboriginal Health Manager -Educator within the Training and Support Unit of the NSW Health. Additionally, she offers her expertise as a Cultural Advisor to the CEO's office at HETI.



In her current capacity, Brenda plays a vital role in imparting education, offering mentorship, and providing leadership support to Aboriginal Health Workers who play a crucial role in caring for Aboriginal mothers, infants, and families throughout New South Wales. Her dedication extends to the Bullinah Aboriginal Health Service, where she is deeply committed to its operations and envisions its growth as a community-driven organisation. Brenda is passionate about witnessing the community flourish within community.

## Emma Walke DEPUTY CHAIR

Emma is a Bundjalung woman from Northern NSW and her family is from Cabbage Tree Island/Ballina area. She is a mum, a potter and works in health. Employed as the Head of Indigenous Health for Sydney Medical School and Academic Lead for Aboriginal Health Education at the University Centre for Rural Health, University of Sydney based in Lismore. Emma is passionate about our mob receiving the best possible health care, her work and the opportunity to be a part of Bullinah.



## Nancy Walke DIRECTOR

Nancy is a Bundjalung woman who comes from the first group of people to settle on Cabbage Tree Island. Her grandfather was Benjamin Bolt. Nancy has spent many years working in the health sector and is passionate about Aboriginal people being able to access a wide range of health services. Bullinah Aboriginal Health Service is a friendly and efficient health service that will continue to grow.



## Wendy Knight DIRECTOR

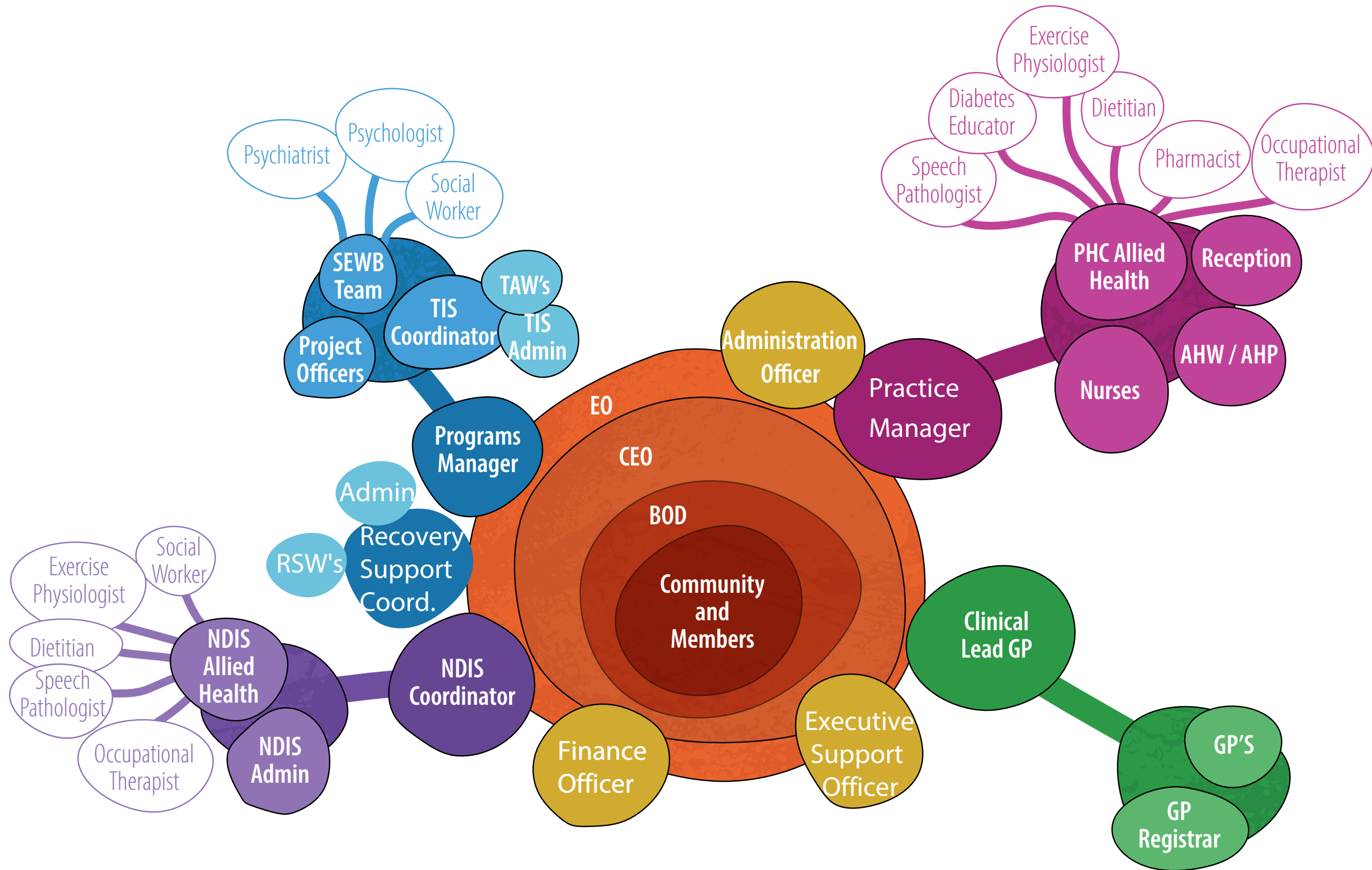
Wendy is a proud Aboriginal (Barkindgi) woman from Gamilaroi Country with an unwavering commitment to Aboriginal families and communities - ensuring the promotion of Indigenous voices on issues affecting our children and families in today's society. As Executive Director, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Practice and Partnerships, Wendy leads a vibrant and creative team of First Nations staff transitioning the care of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and their carer households from Life Without Barriers to community, our ACCO's, across Australia.



Wendy holds over 25 years' experience in the social service sector, Wendy is results and outcomes driven. Wendy has extensive experience in the child protection, out of home care and contract management in both government and non-government roles. With proven success providing effective management of human, financial and physical resources with a high level strategic and operational management as well as organisational change leadership, Wendy ensures the achievement of strategic goals, financial sustainability, progressive change and meaningful service delivery.

Wendy is a confident and articulate communicator with extensive sector networks to support sustainable outcomes in Not for Profit's, government, and external organisations at both State and National level. A resourceful problem solver and innovative change manager with ongoing commitment to excellence and best practice, my personal attributes include honesty, sincerity, integrity, and empathy.

# Organisational Structure





# Strategic Framework 2023 - 2026

Bullinah Aboriginal Health Service (BAHS) is an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service which was established in March 2008, for Goori People in Ballina, Cabbage Tree Island, and surrounding communities.

## Our Vision

Is for *A strong, empowered and healthy Goori Community.*

This is an enduring statement of BAHS' reason for existence.

## Our Mission

Bullinah, is a leading Aboriginal organisation, we work together with our communities and partners to achieve positive health and wellbeing outcomes by delivering sustainable and wholistic services.

## Our Values

- Cultural Safety
- Self Determination through Aboriginal Ownership and Community Control
- A whole of life approach to wellbeing
- Integrity
- Wellbeing through employment
- Empowerment of our clients and staff
- Ethical behaviour and treatment of others
- Respect

**Our Guiding Principles** - The Following Principles guide Bullinah in our pursuit towards our vision:

- Using Aboriginal Strengths-based approaches
- Commitment to cultural safety
- Working to reduce the impact of racism and stigma
- Pursuing equitable, sustainable needs-based funding.
- Recognising community and family connection
- Acknowledging the impact of past policies
- Upholding the principles of human rights and social justice
- Facilitating access to services
- Environmental sustainability and awareness

## Our Domains of Work

The key domains of work for BAHS include:

- Comprehensive Primary Health Care
- Social and Emotional Wellbeing Services
- Community Engagement and Partnerships
- Social and Cultural Connection Programs
- Health Education and Promotion
- Disability Support Services
- Effective Corporate and Clinical Governance
- Community-led research
- Community Advocacy

## Our Strategic Priorities

The six strategic priorities for the next three years are:

**One | Governance and Culture** | We respect, honour and celebrate Aboriginal culture and Identity. We respect the Aboriginal holistic view of health that includes physical, spiritual, cultural, emotional and social wellbeing. We continuously embed excellence in governance practices within a culturally safe environment.

**Two | Community** | We listen to and work in partnership with our community. We are a fierce and powerful advocate for our community, raising awareness about issues that are important to our community.

**Three | The Bullinah Team** | We are a collaborative, compassionate and professional service driven organisation that values and prioritises our teams wellbeing and development. We foster a culture of care and support facilitated through caring and comprehensive human resource practices within an Aboriginal Community Controlled Framework.

**Four | Services** | Our services are delivered under a "whole of life" preventative health strategy that is delivering on the Bullinah Vision. Our strengths-based services focus on individual, family and whole of community wellbeing.

**Five | Sustainability** | We continually grow our financial power, business skills and emotional intelligence, ensuring long term sustainability to support organisational growth to meet community need. We work to embed environmental sustainability across Bullinah.

**Six | New Building** | We strive to build and deliver our services from our own 'fit for purpose', environmentally sustainable facility on a single site in Ballina, ensuring additional capacity to meet the growing needs and emerging priorities of community.

# Chairperson's Report



## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

*"I respectfully acknowledge the past and present traditional custodians of this land on which we are meeting onto day. It is a privilege to be standing on local Bundjalung country. We recognise the strength, resilience and capacity of our Aboriginal community and have the utmost respect for their Elders past, present and future.*

On behalf of the Board of Bullinah Aboriginal Health Service Limited, I am delighted to introduce the Annual Report for the year 2022/2023. This year has once again highlighted the immense value of placing Aboriginal health in the hands of the Aboriginal community.

As Chair of the Board, I am pleased to share our Annual Report and extend our heartfelt appreciation to the dedicated staff of Bullinah Aboriginal Health Service. They have admirably navigated the challenges presented during this year, ensuring continued access to essential services for our local Aboriginal community despite significant disruptions.

In my role as Chair, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to each of the fellow Board members. A special acknowledgment goes to Aunty Nancy Walke for her remarkable decade of dedicated

service. I also want to recognise Emma Walke and Wendy Knight for their significant contributions and strong leadership in their respective roles. Balancing the challenges of running a thriving Aboriginal business and empowering Aboriginal governance will remain a pivotal aspect of our organisational strategy.

Since our previous Annual General Meeting (AGM), Bullinah has witnessed significant growth in our service delivery, innovation in program implementation, and ongoing staff development. The robust partnerships we've established in various service areas are highlighted in this report, all of which contribute to the continuous progress of Bullinah Aboriginal Health Service Limited and the community it serves.

As we move forward, we've set ambitious goals for expanding our services and achieving

positive outcomes. We eagerly anticipate the establishment of new partnerships that will empower us to enhance and extend our community-focused initiatives. In addition to our governance and financial frameworks and accountabilities, our values continue to serve as our guiding principles in realizing a brighter future for our community.

We provide services, securing funding from diverse sources, and attaining accreditation across various national standards. Our commitment to best practices at Bullinah Aboriginal Health Service encompasses tailoring services to match community needs, enhancing community access to services, promoting seamless service integration, improving overall community health and social outcomes, and fortifying the capabilities of our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.

Looking ahead, we extend a warm welcome to our new Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Payden Samuelsson. Payden brings a wealth of experience in the realm of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, informed by his leadership roles within the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (ACCHO) sector. Payden exemplifies effective workforce strategies, both within Bullinah Aboriginal Community Control Health and other primary health care organisations.

Throughout this year, Bullinah Aboriginal Health Service has once again witnessed growth, but our ability to expand our service delivery is hindered by space and building limitations. The time has truly come for Bullinah to have a dedicated, purpose-built centre, and this will be our primary focus moving forward as we have been successful in securing funding required to build a remarkable new facility. We are committed to persevering until this dream becomes a reality. When embarking on the construction of a new structure within a community, it's crucial to express our gratitude and extend our thanks to the community for their invaluable support, understanding, and cooperation.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to express our heartfelt gratitude to our community for standing by Bullinah during an exceptionally challenging but stimulating year. We extend our thanks to the dedicated Bullinah team for their unwavering commitment to providing exceptional services and support to community. As a Board, we eagerly anticipate the year ahead, where we anticipate Bullinah making significant strides toward realizing our vision of "A strong, empowered, and healthy Goori community."

**Brenda Holt**  
Chairperson



# Message from the CEO



I would like to begin with some acknowledgements and an expression of gratitude to:

- Bullinah’s directors, members, clients, and the wider community – you are the reason for Bullinah’s existence and each of you contribute to what makes Bullinah such a great organisation to be a part of
- Our Team – You have all demonstrated such an important level of commitment, resilience, and responsiveness throughout this past year. Through our health services, wellbeing programs, cultural and social connection initiatives, and community advocacy you have all made significant and highly appreciated contributions to the wellbeing of the Bullinah community, and the effectiveness of the organisation as a whole
- Jody Irwin, our former CEO - Her guidance has set a solid foundation for our organization’s workplace culture, growth and strategic direction for the future, a foundation which positions the organisation strongly to for growth in line with community need.
- Our key stakeholders and partners – Your contributions, either through funding, service delivery partnerships, or advocacy and support

have all had an impact that assists Bullinah to continue to work alongside our community towards our vision off ‘A Strong Empowered, and Healthy Goori Community’.

The 2022/23 financial year has been a defining period for our organization, characterized by resilience and forward momentum as we return to a level of ‘business as usual’ following disruptions in previous years. Our commitment to the community’s health and overall well-being has guided our response to challenges and shaped our achievements.

A highlight of this year was the successful acquisition of significant major capital works funding for a new building. This is a major achievement for Bullinah and our community that will have a lasting positive impact. The strategic significance of this funding cannot be overstated, as it aligns with our goal of building a ‘fit for purpose’ facility, enhancing our capacity to serve the community effectively. Work from directors and staff, and support from our community since Bullinah’s establishment have contributed to this achievement and I congratulate everyone involved.

Complimentary to the receipt of this funding purchase of the property adjoining the existing block of land owned by Bullinah using self-generated revenue saved over the years, this will support further development. Additionally, Bullinah was able to demolish the existing buildings on the block of land reserved for the build.

The significant rate of inflation will be a challenge throughout this development, but we will monitor the budget and continue to lobby for more funding to ensure this facility will meet the community’s long-term needs. The project is expected to be completed in mid-late 2025

Commitment to four-year rolling funding agreements for the ACCHO sector from the Department of Health and Ageing under the IAHP program (core funding) is another positive outcome from the year which assists with our goal of financial sustainability.

We continue to advocate for significant, long-term funding to support Social and Emotional Wellbeing services for the community.

With support from the Federal Government and NSW Reconstruction authority, this year we were able to establish a small outreach clinic at the Wardell Pod Village to service our Cabbage Tree Island community after doing so from recovery centers and mobile clinics. We also implemented a flood recovery support service aimed at addressing immediate needs and advocating for continued support into the future as the impact of the floods and displacement of community are likely to have lasting impacts.

This year also saw the expansion of our culture as therapy programs in collaboration with our community, after disruptions in previous years caused by COVID and Floods. These initiatives are built on the understanding that cultural and social connections are powerful tools for strength and well-being.

On a sadder program note, we saw the wind up of this iteration of Bullinah’s Solid Mob Tackling Indigenous Smoking program after over a decade due to changes in the program delivery model. I would like to acknowledge the significant efforts of the Solid Mob team in their work building community connections aimed at reducing smoking rates through health promotion activities. Luckily, we have been able to retain the Solid Mob team members in other roles within the organisation and a new look program in partnership with Galambila (Coffs Harbour) and Awabakal (Newcastle) will be rolled out next financial year.

Our strategic collaborative efforts have grown, particularly through the a, the Many Rivers Alliance, Healthy North Coast Aboriginal Partnership, NNSW Aboriginal Health Partnership, the new Tackling Indigenous Smoking partnership with Awabakal and Galambila, and relationships with Jali LALC, Bunjum Aboriginal Corporation, and other organisations within our region.

Initiatives like the Northern Rivers AMS GP conference highlight our commitment to collaboration and have shown immediate success in identifying and addressing emerging health needs within our communities.

Our partnerships enable shared learning, and foster collective approaches to healthcare, strengthening our networks and advocacy for improved service delivery and reduced duplication.

We continue to focus on developing leaders within the organisation with multiple leadership roles being filled by internal team members, demonstrating effective growth and succession planning. We also welcomed several new members to the leadership team from outside of the organisation and ACCHO sector, which demonstrated our ability to attract highly skilled individuals. We continue to prioritise wellbeing through employment by recruiting Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identified positions and encouraging growth and development within the organisation.

As we reflect on the past year and look to the future, our mission remains clear. We are here to serve, to grow, and to heal, guided by our strategic plan and the enduring spirit of our community. Together, we are building a future where health equity and cultural vibrancy are realities for all we serve.

**Payden Samuelsson**

# Finance Report

## Significant Changes in State of Affairs – Excerpt from Auditor report

“There were no significant changes to the state of affairs of the Company during the financial year.”

## Matters Subsequent to the End of Financial Year – Excerpt from Auditor Report

In September 2023 the Bullinah settled on its purchase of 120 Tamar Street Ballina for a total purchase price of \$1,150,000.

The purchase was part funded by a \$700,000 bank loan, the remainder was funded from company cash reserves.

There were no other matters or circumstances that have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the Company, the results of those operations, or the state of affairs of the Company in future financial years.

## Revenue

Bullinah Aboriginal Health Service received funding from the following sources in 2022/2023.

### Department of Health (DoH)

\$4,861,607.91 was received from the Department of Health in 2022/23 for the following:

- **Major Capital Works** – new build: \$2,869,000.00
- **Continuity support** – replacing equipment and establishing Wardell clinic post-floods: \$120,000
- **IAHP Tackling Indigenous Smoking** – Solid Mob: \$562,281
- **IAHP Service Expansion** - Outreach Aboriginal Health Practitioner (AHP) – supporting additional AHP capacity: \$76,836.05
- **IAHP Service Expansion** – CTI – Contribution to the running of the outreach clinic for Cabbage Tree Island residents: \$52,954.58
- **IAHP Primary Health** – core funding for primary healthcare services: \$1,180,535.63

Underspenders were carried forward from the previous financial year in the following programs:

- **IAHP Tackling Indigenous Smoking:** \$152,818.08
- **IAHP Service Expansion** - Outreach Aboriginal Health Practitioner \$65,148.40
- **IAHP Service Expansion** – CTI: \$27,252.87

### NSW Ministry of Health (MoH)

\$723,297 was received from the NSW Ministry of Health for the following:

- **Population Health** – preventative and public health initiatives: \$255,600.00
- **Building on Aboriginal Communities’ Resilience Suicide Prevention** – Culture as Therapy Programs: \$257,697.00
- **Covid – 19** – Workforce support for COVID vaccination and management: \$110,000
- **Workforce Support** – Supporting increased capacity of outreach services for displaced community members: \$100,000

Underspenders were carried forward from the previous financial year in the following programs:

- **Building on Aboriginal Communities’ Resilience Suicide Prevention:** \$277,228.00
- **Covid – 19:** \$19,000
- **Minor Capital Works** – supporting site preparation for new build: \$243,250.59

### NSW Recovery Authority (previously known as Resilience NSW)

\$479,387.27 was received to establish a flood recovery service to provide social and practical supports, advocacy, and referral to other services for community members impacted by the 2022 floods.

### NSW Rural Doctors Network (RDN)

\$440,647.21 was received from RDN which directly funded a number of our allied health and specialist providers in 22/23 who are engaged to contribute to the prevention, detection, and management of chronic disease, as well as the detection and

management of hearing and speech issues and supporting access to NDIS services. \$31,022.388 was carried forward from 21/22.

### National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO)

A total of \$260,000 was received from NACCHO to support Mental Health (\$180,000) and COVID Vaccination (\$80,000)

Underspenders of \$24,859.38 were carried forward from the previous financial year

### Healthy North Coast/North Coast PHN (HNC)

Bullinah’s Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) program was supported by \$150,000 from HNC; \$100,367.00 was received for the Integrated Team Care (ITC) program, supporting care coordination and Supplementary services.

Underspenders of \$18,111 and \$7,546.50 were carried forward for the ITC and SEWB programs respectively

### Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet – Aboriginal Affairs

\$99,724.00 was received for the purchase and fit-out of a program van with kitchen to support remote program delivery

### Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ)

\$21,891.82 was carried forward from 22/23 to support organisational process and equipment upgrades.

### Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council (AH&MRC)

AH&MRC provided \$53,215.77 to support Public Health Initiatives and Nicotine replacement Therapy products, there was an underspend of \$3955.41 carried forward from 21/22.

### James Cook University

\$5,000 was received from James Cook University for participation in the WoMB project, \$33,136.76 was carried forward from 21/22

### Pharmacy Programs Administrator (PPA)

\$11,677.60 was received for the Indigenous Health Services Pharmacy Support (IHSPS) program aimed at facilitating the quality use of medications.

### Self-Generated revenue (SG)

Self-Generated Revenue includes income generated from Medicare, NDIS, WorkCover, Veterans Affairs, as well as General Practice Workforce and Practice Incentives, practice subsidies, GP registrar reimbursements, interest, rent, and recoupments received. A total of \$1,090,285.43 was generated this financial year. This revenue supports the funded programs and is expended to some staff wages, programs and events, Cabbage Tree Island clinics, business planning and Board Governance expenditure.

### Other Revenue

Bullinah received \$2000 in donations from the SCOPE club of Ballina.

Overall, the company shows a net deficit of \$180,434 for the 22/23 Financial year noting significant expenses associated with the purchase of 22 Grant Street, and a ‘loss on sale of non-current assets’ reflecting the demolition of buildings to make way for our new build are significant contributors to this deficit. These expenses should make way for increased non-current asset values associated with the new build in coming years

Elizabeth Roseworn  
Finance Officer



BULLINAH ABORIGINAL HEALTH SERVICE LIMITED  
ABN 32 309 494 532

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	Note	2023 \$	2022 \$
Revenue	2	5,178,833	4,866,338
Interest revenue calculated using the effective interest method		46,573	5,666
Other income	3	11,208	37,502
Administration costs		(333,307)	(207,362)
Depreciation expense		(149,913)	(160,911)
Employee benefits expenses		(3,031,453)	(2,658,935)
Occupancy expenses		(314,948)	(239,159)
Other expenses		(61,150)	(30,830)
(Loss)/gain on sale of non current asset		(789,719)	(21,230)
Services and supplies		(736,467)	(652,816)
<b>(Deficit)/Surplus before income tax expense</b>		<b>(180,343)</b>	<b>938,263</b>
Income tax expense	1(b)	-	-
<b>(Deficit)/Surplus after income tax expense</b>		<b>(180,343)</b>	<b>938,263</b>
Other comprehensive income, net of tax		-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>		<b>(180,343)</b>	<b>938,263</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.  
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BULLINAH ABORIGINAL HEALTH SERVICE LIMITED  
ABN 32 309 494 532

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
AS AT 30 JUNE 2023

	Note	2023 \$	2022 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	5	7,541,541	4,387,849
Trade and other receivables	6	29,802	86,988
Other assets	7	33,409	21,473
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>7,604,752</b>	<b>4,496,310</b>
<b>NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	8	1,880,415	1,947,172
Right-of-use assets	9	-	56,668
<b>TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>1,880,415</b>	<b>2,003,840</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>9,485,167</b>	<b>6,500,150</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Trade and other payables	10	507,816	255,277
Contract liabilities	11	360,939	81,371
Borrowings	12	3,863	-
Employee benefits	13	273,230	215,164
Lease liabilities	14	-	57,797
Other liabilities	15	2,869,000	243,251
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>4,014,848</b>	<b>852,860</b>
<b>NON CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Employee benefits	13	97,387	94,015
<b>TOTAL NON CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>97,387</b>	<b>94,015</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>4,112,235</b>	<b>946,875</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>5,372,932</b>	<b>5,553,275</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Accumulated funds		5,372,932	5,553,275
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>		<b>5,372,932</b>	<b>5,553,275</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.  
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BULLINAH ABORIGINAL HEALTH SERVICE LIMITED  
ABN 32 309 494 532

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	Note	Accumulated Funds \$	Total \$
<b>Balance at 1 July 2021</b>		4,615,012	4,615,012
Surplus after income tax expense		938,263	938,263
Other comprehensive income for the year		-	-
<b>Balance at 30 June 2022</b>		<u>5,553,275</u>	<u>5,553,275</u>
Deficit after income tax expense		(180,343)	(180,343)
Other comprehensive income for the year		-	-
<b>Balance at 30 June 2023</b>		<u>5,372,932</u>	<u>5,372,932</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.  
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BULLINAH ABORIGINAL HEALTH SERVICE LIMITED  
ABN 32 309 494 532

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2023

	Note	2023 \$	2022 \$
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Receipts from customers		8,829,279	5,103,168
Payments to suppliers and employees		(4,851,707)	(4,241,739)
Interest received		46,573	4,788
Interest paid		(310)	(2,236)
Net cash provided by operating activities		<u>4,023,835</u>	<u>863,981</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Payments for plant and equipment		(816,204)	(38,306)
Proceeds from sale of plant and equipment		-	(30)
Proceeds from/(payments for) investments		-	1,161,307
Net cash (used in)/provided by investing activities		<u>(816,204)</u>	<u>1,122,971</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Repayments of leases		(57,802)	(81,708)
Proceeds from financing		3,863	-
Net cash used in financing activities		<u>(53,939)</u>	<u>(81,708)</u>
Net increase in cash held		3,153,692	1,905,244
Cash at the beginning of the financial year		4,387,849	2,482,605
Cash at the end of the financial year	5	<u>7,541,541</u>	<u>4,387,849</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.  
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# Health Services Report

Dr Monica Taylor and Melinda Johnston

Following on from the challenges of 2021/2022, the primary health team entered 2022/2023 with the goal of returning to, and strengthening, our 'Service as usual'.

While COVID continues to circulate, and indeed peak at various times, overall it has become a manageable illness, and is integrated into our routine care. We continue to remain vigilant and provide support to affected community members. Flu season came early this year and affected clients and team members alike. Flu season was unfortunately followed by an intense winter of illness, which again significantly affected both clients and team members. We have had to manage the clinic very short staffed, and are grateful to team members stepping up and carrying the load while others were unwell, and the patience of the community as we endeavoured to minimise disruption to appointment availability and healthcare delivery as much as possible. Non attendance to booked appointments is another issue affecting appointment availability, and the team has been working on innovative ways to reduce barriers to appointment attendance, and ensure clinics are responsive to community needs.

The ongoing effects of the flood are seen by all of our health team, we acknowledge the impact of continued displacement on physical health, as well as social and emotional wellbeing. The Wardell Clinic was up and running from January

2023, with an incredible effort by lead nurse Sumara Etuati. An AH&MRC quality improvement award given to Bullinah outstation health team, recognising the hard work and effort to re-establish this service after the floods. A second team of doctors is now visiting the Wardell clinic on alternate weeks, this was put in place to ensure continuity of care for the community, as when staff have planned or unplanned leave, there is cover from familiar doctors. In addition, the Child and Family Health Nurse is attending the Wardell clinic once per month to ensure access to this important service.

Psychiatric services have proved a more challenging area to ensure access. We have been working hard to improve this, and we are hopeful that in 2024 this will come to fruition, with the addition of youth psychiatric services and an increase in adult psychiatry service capacity.

The CQI- GP team has completed several projects with the aim of ensuring a consistently high standard of care in line with latest guidelines and recommendations, and the health needs of the community. Projects included: Rheumatic heart disease (RHD)- audit and report that was sent to NACCHO and LHD and RHD coordinators, and the sexually transmitted disease audit and report which aids review of new nKPI's. The team has just commenced an audit of Chronic Kidney Disease identification and management across the service.

Reception staff have also been completing CQI projects, including small changes that have improved patient access to all Bullinah services. Also seeking out other community services such as Carers NSW that offer services to our many carers in community. As always the face of Bullinah and the smooth working of all sites.

In addition to CQI, staff across the primary health team have been attending training to ensure the most up to date skills and knowledge. Reception staff have attended medical reception training provided by RACGP. Members across several teams have attended chronic care courses, the CQI forum by AH&MRC, and Trauma training with Dr Derek Chong. Our Social Worker, Sharlene Hargrave attended the 3rd international indigenous health forum, in Cairns, it was great to have representation at this forum. Tarra Gordon attended the Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) conference in Melbourne in August centering on Social, emotional well-being, mental health and suicide prevention outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We continue to learn from the feedback of those attending these conferences to improve our service to Bullinah clients.

In more concrete measures of our activity our health checks (715's) has increased from 293 in 2022 to 357 so far this year, Childhood immunisations rates which fell nation wide during COVID and fell with our patient cohort also (likely

due to vaccine fatigue), still we have the highest childhood vaccination rates in our region, with 84% of 12 month to 24 month fully up to date increasing to 97.6% of 5 year olds. Our clinical team continues to work towards exceeding these numbers.

Finally, as the primary health team continues to expand and excel, the service is also working to become better integrated with the programs, social emotional wellbeing, and flood recovery support services to maintain a wholistic health service approach as Bullinah as a whole grows.



## NDIS Report

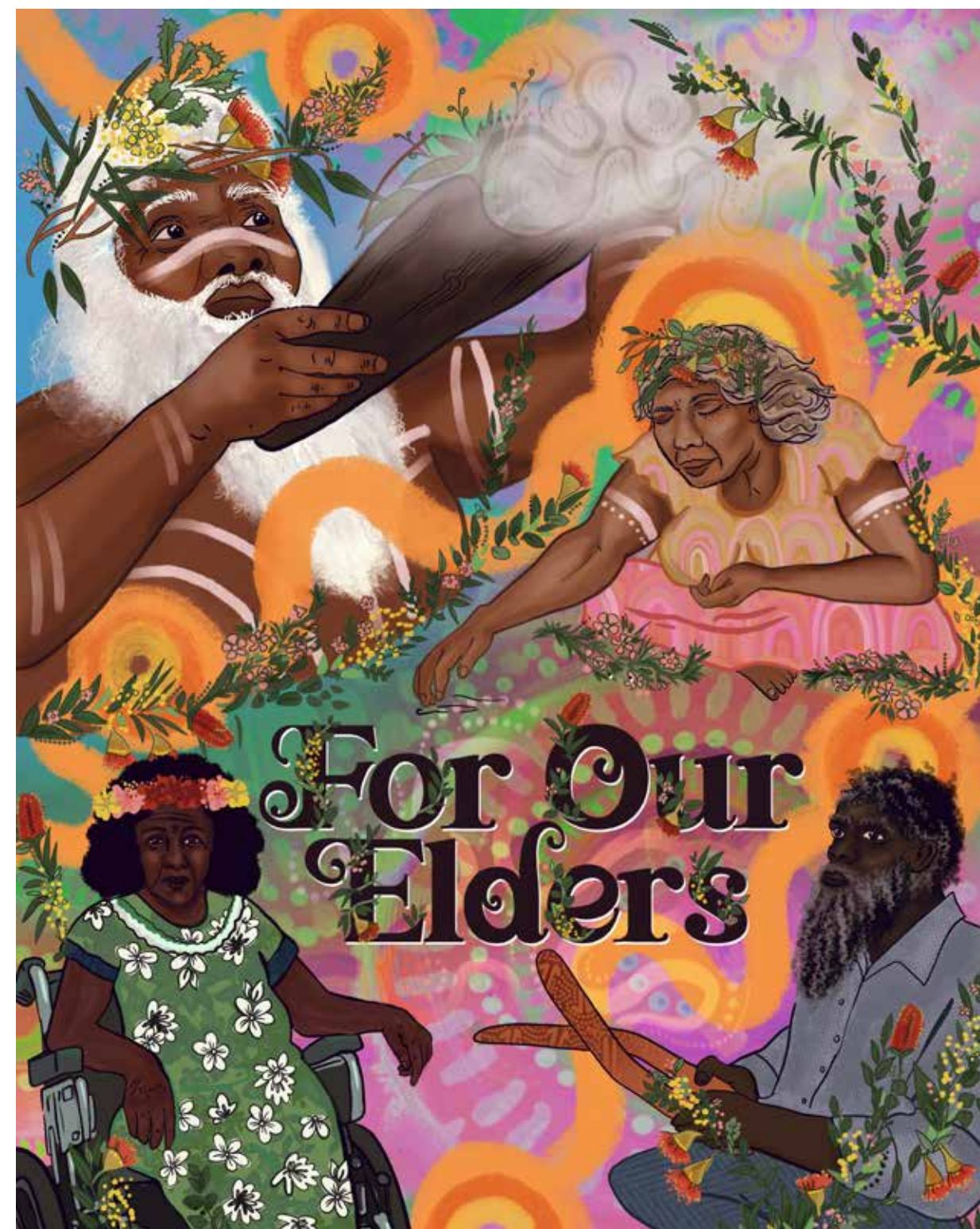
Bullinah has been offering NDIS Services have been operating as a registered NDIS provider for just over 4 years now. We continue to deliver supports to NDIS clients of all ages through the following registration groups: Early Childhood Early Intervention; Exercise Physiology; and Therapeutic Supports. Our NDIS Team welcomed an additional speech pathologist in the 2022-23 Financial year as the demand for the service grows. Our NDIS participant load continues to grow as we expand the capacity of the NDIS Allied Health team, as well as its NDIS providers. In the last financial year, Bullinah Aboriginal Health has delivered more than 500 hours of NDIS supports, to 40 active NDIS participants. Of these participants, 20 are seen through Early Intervention Program (Under 7's).

Our NDIS participants are seen onsite at BAHS, in their homes, at child-care and school settings, as well as at Bullinah outreach clinics. On top of the NDIS supports delivered, Bullinah provides support to community members by assisting them in accessing the NDIS through advocacy, admin support and partnerships with Local Area Coordinators who attend on-site at Bullinah regularly.

Bullinah plans to expand its NDIS services to include support coordination, support workers and group programs however, this is somewhat

restricted by current infrastructure constraints and workforce capacity. Bullinah's NDIS workforce continues to enhance their knowledge and skills within the NDIS, and the involvement of other Bullinah providers in a client centred care model allows for effective continuity of care.

**Nicole Dein and Robin Heuston**  
NDIS Coordinator and Admin Support



**NAIDOC Week**

**2-9 JULY 2023**

#NAIDOC2023 #ForOurElders

@naidocweek @naidocweek facebook.com/NAIDOC

**For Our Elders, Bobbi Lockyer**

Where there is knowledge there are our Elders. Our Elders paved the pathways for us, taught us our knowledge, our history, they passed down their art, stories and wisdom. Our Elders are the foundation of our communities and role models for our children. With this poster I wanted to showcase how important our Elders are in passing down traditions and culture to our children and future.



naidoc.org.au



Aboriginal flag designed by Mr Harold Thomas. Torres Strait Islander flag reproduced by kind permission of the Torres Strait Island Regional Council, designed by the late Mr Bernard Namok.



# Solid Mob Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS) program

The Solid Mob Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS) program aims to improve the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the Northern Rivers region, by reducing the prevalence of tobacco use, and vaping through health promotion educational activities. Priority groups include pregnant women, youth, and people living in remote communities delivering education to encourage and promote positive behaviours to smoking and vaping.

## Highlights from 2022/2023.

### Youth Colour Fun Run Event – October 2022

The Solid Mob team collaborated with NDIS service providers, Aboriginal Organisations and Services, Northern NSW LHD, community members and Ballina Shire Council to deliver a Youth Colour Fun Run event in Ballina. Approximately 250 youth and community members attended the event which was aimed to be inclusive of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people with the focus on delivering an activity to promote physical activity and healthy lifestyle choices, SMOKE and VAPE free. Tamara Smith, Local MP attended and engaged with Elders, community members, and services providers throughout the day and was a great opportunity to promote Bullinah AHS services and programs.

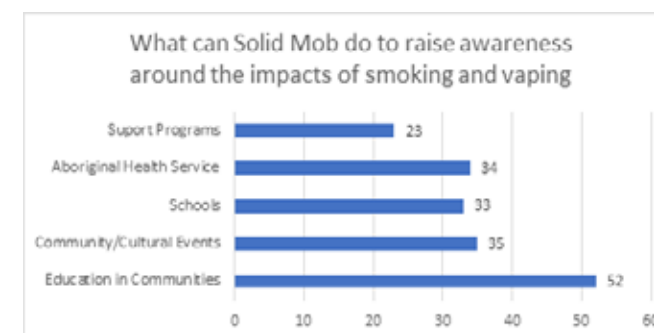


### Northern United Rugby League Football Club (NURLFC) – Koori Knockout Carnival – Byron Bay 16-18th September 2022

The Solid Mob team formed a working partnership agreement with NURLFC Knockout to deliver mass media/social media campaigns to promote smoke and vape free sporting, and community events, and smoke free homes and cars during the three-day event. The carnival attracted approximately 4000 people, with many travelling from as far south as Port Macquarie, west to Tabulam, and north across the Queensland border. The event was a great opportunity for Solid Mob to engage with players, community members, and spectators to deliver key tobacco and vaping education and promote the TIS programs.

### Surveys were conducted with community members throughout the event.

Community members were asked 'How can Solid Mob support your community in raising awareness around the health impacts of tobacco and vaping?' 65% indicated community education, 43.75% through community and cultural events, 42.5% at Aboriginal Health Services, 41.25% at schools and 28.75% stated support programs.



### Promoting Smoke and Vape Free Communities Bus Shelter Campaign – July - September 2023

The Solid Mob team delivered a mass media advertising campaign on bus shelters and billboards to promote smoke and vape free messages increasing geographical reach within the Northern Rivers region. The team interviewed 20 community members from Lismore, Grafton, Maclean, Yamba, Ballina, Casino and Tweed Heads. Each community member provided a quote on the health impacts of smoking and vaping which was displayed along with an image of them with a Solid Mob promotional shirt. ABS (2021) census data identified 15517 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people residing in the Northern Rivers Region at the time of the census which meant the



advertising campaign with key tobacco smoking and vaping messages reached a significant number of people.

### Beats, Basketball and BBQ Youth Event – April 2023

The concept of the Beats, Basketball and BBQ Youth event was designed to appeal to young people and was delivered across three locations, Grafton, Murwillumbah and Goonellabah. This was achieved by engaging Mad Proppa Deadly to run musical workshops, Basketball NSW to run skills/drills and games, and by providing a free BBQ at each location. Throughout the activities approximately 550 people attended across the three locations, and around 70-80% were Indigenous youth and community members.

Approximately 140 Indigenous community members participated in education sessions raising their awareness of the dangers of smoking and vaping, dangers of 2nd and 3rd hand smoke exposure, chronic diseases associated with smoking, cost of smoking, benefits of smoke free homes and cars, and benefits of being smoke free.



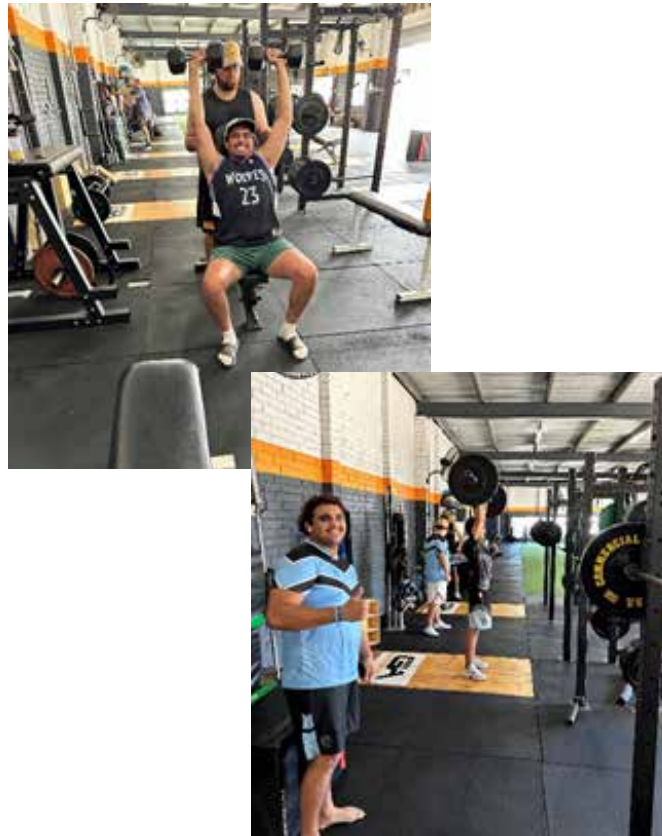


# Programs Report

The Culture as Therapy program continues to deliver programs and events around the Ballina region to improve health outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The team worked in the Ballina and Wardell region again this year, here are some of the highlights of the 2022/23 financial year:

## Wadjee Banaam - Men's Gym Program

The Wadjee Banaam men's program has worked with Uniting Care from the Wardell pods to help deliver a community men's gym program. The aim of the gym program is to use weights as therapy to target men's mental health and wellbeing. The program uses exercise as a tool to also help promote a healthy lifestyle, connect community and create a supportive environment. The men continue to engage in the gym program with new community members attending monthly. The objective of the gym program is early intervention and prevention of number of health issues with include obesity, anxiety, depression, and diabetes. This program has been consistent with community attending and has developed into more than a gym program. The highlight of this program is a number of participants have found a passion to lift weights and regularly talk about the positive impacts the gym program has had on their mental health.



## Other programs

Other programs on offer through the 2022-23 year included:

- Men's breakfasts
- Women's yarnning and craft groups
- Regular cooking and nutrition groups
- Bullinah Dirrawongs – (NSW knockout Health Challenge)



## Women's water aerobics

The women's water aerobics program has been running for over a year, this has seen the group grow significantly and we are seeing new participants engage. The women that attend vary from 16-70+ and all have different physical capabilities, the feedback I have had from the women is how they feel more connected in the community, they have better flexibility, and their confidence is growing. This program aims to get participants moving and exercising in a supportive environment. The highlight of the program are the regular engagement and the supportive and positive environment created.

## Community Events

### Men's Golf Days

The Wadjee Banaam men's program held successful gold days with our last event on the calendar having 40 men from the community and surrounding areas participate. This is a day where Indigenous men from the Bundjalung area can be active, have a yarn and connect with mob. The importance of this event is highlighted by opportunities for discussions about men's mental health and improving moods. The highlight from the Golf days are bringing men together to connect, yarn, share stories and be active to improve mental health.





