

**BRAMS**

May 2022

# NEWSLETTER







**Broome**  
**Regional Aboriginal**  
Medical Service

# BRAMS *May 2022* NEWSLETTER

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## CEO Report



The past few months have been an extremely busy and challenging time for BRAMS.

So busy, in fact, that we weren't even able to produce this newsletter in April, and for that we apologise.

We were fully prepared for the COVID-19 outbreak in Broome, but the sheer number of cases meant we had to divert significant organisational resources towards our COVID response for a prolonged period of time.

I know our staff are exhausted after giving their all these past few months, and I want to thank them all for their dedication and willingness to go the extra mile when the pressure was on.

With the worst of the pandemic behind us for now, BRAMS can once again return its attention to our main focus – delivering the highest quality primary and preventative healthcare, social and emotional wellbeing services, NDIS support and Aged Care to the local community.

We can also look ahead to the new BRAMS clinic on the horizon, and I am excited to announce that we have completed the first draft of the building plans. Kaunitz Young Architecture has developed a wonderful design and I would like to thank David and his team for their input.

We have submitted an expression of interest for an IAHP grant to fund construction, and look forward to getting feedback on our application.

*Cassie*





## Clontarf Health Checks

BRAMS has recommenced doing health checks at local high schools, and boy have we been making up for lost time due to COVID!

We have been to St. Marys, completed health checks on the majority of the Clontarf boys, and have also started seeing the girls through the STARS programme.

In fact, we've performed more than 70 health checks since the start of last month!

The team will be heading to the high school every Friday to continue this important work.



## TIS Conference

From 17 – 19 May, the TIS team travelled to Adelaide to attend the WA/VIC/TAS/SA combined Workforce Development Day and Jurisdictional Workshop.

Our TIS workers provided a presentation on the great work that BRAMS has been doing in the Broome region, and it was a fantastic opportunity to network with colleagues from the other states.



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## New Staff *Welcome!*

BRAMS is delighted to welcome the following staff to the Team:



*Kara Farrell  
SEWB Case Worker*



*Joe Fong  
Registered Nurse*



*Georgia-Rose Gosling  
COVID-19 Screener*



*Rebecca Jennings  
Aged Care Social Worker*



*Halijah Wade  
Medical Receptionist*





## COVID-19 UPDATE

As mentioned earlier in the CEO's introduction, COVID cases have been extremely high in Broome until only recently, and our Respiratory Clinic was put to good use with more than 440 people coming through for testing, treatment and care.

For those patients found to have COVID, we called and made sure they received paracetamol and ibuprofen in addition to their usual medications, and also provided special antiviral medications if required. We liaised with the pharmacies and the Department of Communities to help with the supply of RATs, food and accommodation where necessary.

We also received referrals from the hospital and the public health team, and ultimately cared for 545 patients through BRAMS' own COVID-at-home team.

During this time, we had both a Commonwealth COVID vaccine taskforce as well as support from KPHU to help boost our vaccination rates.

**If you have  
COVID-19  
symptoms you  
should get tested.**

These symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Fatigue
- Runny nose
- Shortness of breath
- Loss of smell
- Loss of taste
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting

**BRAMS is now offering  
COVID-19 Testing.**

Broome Regional Aboriginal Medical Service




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# COVID-19 FUNDING

BRAMS would like to thank AHCWA for their ongoing support to help secure funding from the following providers to assist with our COVID-19 Response.

A very big thank you also like to the following for their assistance providing:

## WAPHA

- COVID-19 Medical Packages
- PPE
- Wages for a COVID-19 Screener
- Marketing and Communications
- COVID-19 at Home Program

## WA Health

- Funding for clinical staff wages working in the respiratory clinic.

## Lottery West

- COVID-19 Wellbeing Packages
- Phone credit for patients isolating



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## SEWB Groups

The SEWB team of Megan Thomas, Stacey Larke, Mikka Poelina and Kara Farrell have been delivering the second round of the Women's Art for Wellbeing Group on Mondays in the Wellbeing Centre.

This is a trauma-informed art therapy group that combines components of mindfulness, Dadirri and narrative therapy. Participants have been invited to explore connection to self and community, and to learn about depression, anxiety, trauma, stress and anger, along with coping strategies to manage these emotions.

Art therapy is a fun, creative and safe way to explore thoughts and feelings, gain insights into oneself and develop new coping strategies. The sessions have included painting, drawing, collage, clay and working with natural and craft objects.

Some of the positive feedback from the first round of the 8-week group includes the following comments:

*"Fantastic way to visualise invisible issues e.g.; anxiety. Knowing that there was a support group was a calming/relaxing thought. Hearing experiences of others helps to realise I'm not alone. Very happy with the group".*

*"I feel grounded and in control now... I got control of my life. Don't be shame. That's what this service is there for. We're all artists. Art therapy was good."*



## Broome Jobs Fair

On 19 May 2022, Melanie Prewett (Aged Care Manager) and Joe Fong (Registered Nurse) attended the Broome Jobs Fair.

The event was a fantastic opportunity to showcase BRAMS and all of the employment opportunities that we provide in the local community.



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# No Tobacco Day

The 31st May was World No Tobacco Day, and our TIS team held a health promotion event at BRAMS.

Given that the event was held on the coldest day in Broome – a bone-chilling 16 degrees!! We were delighted to have more than 150 people attend.

Well done to the TIS team for organising what was a highly-successful event.



**NO JOOBUK**  
BRAMS Tackling Indigenous Smoking

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## Aged Care Update

## Transition Care Program

The **BRAMS Transition Care Program** – Home from Hospital is up and running and we now have 6 clients who are receiving a range of services both in home and in the community.

Our team includes a Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist and Social Worker, as well as an Aged Care Support Worker, ensuring that clients receive the supports they need when and where it suits them. This might be at home, it might be at BRAMS, or it may even be out in the community.

Our small TCP team works with the hospital and the ACAT assessment team to identify potential patients who may need our support when they transition home from hospital.

Once a patient starts with our TCP program, we work with them to make sure they are getting their required personal or medical care, therapies, and social support.

TCP is a short-term service for up to 12 weeks, so we also make sure that our clients have a plan for any future supports they may need after the program has been completed.

Our TCP team regularly networks with other Aged Care providers in Broome to make sure we know what other services are available to the older people we support, and we are looking forward to meeting soon with other AMS's in WA who also provide TCP, to share updates on how we are going and meet the staff from other teams.

BRAMS is on the lookout for more staff to join our growing Aged Care team, and have positions for Registered Nurses, Aboriginal Health Workers and Aged Care Support Workers.

**If you think this rewarding could be for you, please get in touch with us.**



## Aged Care Patient Feedback Profile

Mary joined our **TCP Program** in April 2022 when she was hospitalised due to an injury.

Thanks to the TCP services provided by BRAMS, Mary was able to be discharged from hospital and return to her own home.

Since that time, the program has provided Mary with regular personal care, domestic assistance, physiotherapy, and social / community access support.

Mary said that she feels very supported because BRAMS listens to what she wants, and has enabled her to start walking around her home again courtesy of a new walker.



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## NDIS Groups

The NDIS Peer Support and Carers Art Therapy Groups have been running on Tuesdays and Thursdays in the Wellness Centre.

The Peer Support Group operates on Tuesday mornings from 10am – 12pm. It offers a space for people with disabilities to connect, build skills, engage in art making, learn to cook simple and healthy meals, and hear about other services within community. Each week a different guest speaker presents on their particular service.

Participants have engaged in painting, felting, creating vision boards, drawing, jewellery-making and cooking.

In the coming weeks, Sarah from Camera Story will be coming in to teach photography skills using cameras and phone cameras. This will be completed on Country, at various locations chosen by the participants.

The Carers Art Therapy Group operates on Thursday mornings from 10am – 12pm. It provides a space where carers can relax, unwind, connect to other carers, and find time for themselves through creative expression and home-made self-care and relaxation remedies.

The sessions have included painting, beading, felting, and the use of water colours, along with self-care activities like making your own body scrub, bath bombs, scented eye masks and lip scrubs.

A special thanks to the Boab Health Podiatry team for lending their foot baths and providing creams, nail files, and information on foot health for the day-spa session.





## Advanced Care Planning Workshop

Two representatives from AHCWA came to Broome to meet with BRAMS' Aboriginal Health Workers about a new funding project to help promote the importance of Advanced Care Planning, and how this vital information can best be shared digitally, particularly within My Health Record.

It was a highly informative workshop and identified lots of ways that BRAMS can improve how we best support patients and their families, while also highlighting the need to have some Kimberley-specific forms and information.



## Workforce Conference

On the same day, BRAMS' Corporate Services Manager Diandra Cox and Aged Care Team Leader Telitha Matthews attended the Community Health Workforce Forum in Broome.

Diandra and Telitha provided a presentation on our journey to become an Aged Care provider, and an overview of our Transition Care Program.

As with all such occasions, it was an excellent networking opportunity for BRAMS, and we'd like to say a big thank you to Community Skills WA for organising a super event.





## National Sorry Day Event



On 26th May, BRAMS participated in the National Sorry Day Event hosted by Kimberley Stolen Generation Aboriginal Corporation.

Our Tackling Indigenous Team held a stall at the event where they promoted our program and provided education on the harmful effects of smoking.



## Cultural Orientation Video

BRAMS would like to thank ACHWA and Lottery West for providing us with a grant to film a Cultural Orientation Video.

The funding has also enabled BRAMS to revise our Cultural Safety Framework and develop a Cultural Mentoring Program.

We look forward to updating you on the progress of this work.



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## Clinic Team Leaders

Soleil White and Billy Martin have both been employed with BRAMS since completing their Aboriginal Health Worker Training through KAMS.

### *Soleil's Story*

Soleil completed her training in 2017, and was employed a short time later as an AHW in the clinic.

While working she was also studying to become an Enrolled Nurse, a course which she completed in 2019.

Since that time, Solly has developed a great interest in Chronic Disease Management, and wants to further her knowledge in that area.

She gained a position as an Aboriginal Health Practitioner in the Chronic Disease Team, and was then offered the Chronic Disease Team Leader role in March 2022, a role in which she has thrived.



### *In Her Own Words:*

*My name is Soleil and I am a Yawuru and Bunuba women from Broome.*

*I have worked at BRAMS for almost 5 years now and this how I started my journey working in health care.*

*In 2017 I completed my certificate IV in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care practice at KAMS, and I then was employed at BRAMS to work in the clinic.*

*Once I finished my health worker course and started to work at BRAMS, I was empowered to continue on with my education because I wanted to know more about healthcare and how I can contribute to my community.*

*I then started my Diploma of Nursing course at Notre Dame University's Broome campus, and graduated in 2019 as an enrolled nurse.*

*I continued to work at BRAMS in both the clinic and case managing the RHD clients, and began an interest in chronic disease management and was given an opportunity to join the chronic disease team.*

*After working in the chronic disease team as an Aboriginal Health Practitioner I was then promoted to the team leader position and I am loving it so far.*





## Clinic Team Leaders

### *Billy's Story*

Billy completed his training in 2019. While training, Billy was offered a position at BRAMS as an AHW student. After completing his training, he was then employed as a qualified AHW.

Over the past 2 years, Billy has proven to be a dedicated and caring AHW. He has showed great passion for helping others, and trying to make a difference in the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Billy was offered a position as the Acting Practice Team Leader in January of this year, and then in April took on that role permanently.

Since his transition to the Team Leader role, Billy has been a great role model for the AHW students, as well as his AHW colleagues.



### *In His Own Words:*

*My name is Billy Martin, I am a proud Yamitji, Whadjuk man.*

*I have worked at BRAMS for 3 years now and have been Clinic Coordinator/ Team leader for the past 6 months.*

*I started working in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Primary Health in 2019 when I got the opportunity to enrol in the Cert IV in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Primary Health course at KAMS.*

*During my studies I was offered a traineeship at BRAMS, and upon my graduation was given a full-time job as a Health Worker in the clinic.*

*In my time at BRAMS I have been involved in sexual health programs, chronic disease clinics, the men's clinic and outreach clinics such as Clontarf Football academy and Milliya Rumurra.*

*My real passion is being in the clinic. I enjoy meeting new people from my community and interacting with patients that are well known to me.*

*The best part about working at BRAMS is that not one day is the same. I feel that my strengths are my kindness and compassion, as well as my ability to build good relationships and trust with my patients.*







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