

Weenthunga

Health Network



Annual Report
2016 - 2017



President's Report

It has been a very special privilege to be re-elected the President of the Weenthunga Health Network following the AGM in November 2016, and to be part of the wonderful group on the Committee of Management. Each of my colleagues bring a rich array of knowledge and experience to contribute to the Committee's work, which is essentially to set the strategic direction, strategic goals, the financial plans and the policies of the Weenthunga Health Network and to monitor the operations of Weenthunga.

We value Weenthunga's model of working two-way, as well as the absolute commitment to being First Australian led. The small operational team is led by our Executive Officer Lin Oke and our Health and Education Consultant Steff Armstrong, who work two-way – sharing their knowledge and experience to broaden and strengthen their decision-making and leadership – and set a model for others to follow. A highlight for the Committee was to host the Indigenous Health Leadership Dinner at the Maurice Rioli Room at the Richmond Football Club, generously supported by a grant received from Portland House Foundation. Weenthunga's achievements over five years since it was incorporated were acknowledged by First Australian health leaders, and celebrated by all present.

I look forward to the year ahead, over-sighting the work of the Weenthunga Health Network pursuing its two key objectives which address the inequities in First Australian and Australian health in Victoria.

Brenda McDermott
President



Kevan Deputy President, Lin EO, Brenda President and Carol Treasurer celebrating after 2016 AGM

Governance and Operational Model

Weenthunga's governance is one of First Australian leadership, whilst emphasising First Australian and Australian collaboration. First Australians are the decision-makers as they collaborate and share with the Australians in Weenthunga. The Committee of Management will always comprise a majority of First Australians, and the position of President can only be held by a First Australian. The model underpins Weenthunga's operations, as we acknowledge the value of combining First Australians' knowledge, experience and skills in working with First Australian organisations, communities, health services and people, with the Australians' knowledge, experience and skills in the health system and services and organisational management.



Weenthunga Committee of Management

Following last year's AGM, Terori Hareko-Samios, Carol Mioduchowski and David Menzies were re-elected, new Committee member Justice Nelson joined the Committee of Management, and the Office Bearers were elected: Brenda McDermott, President; Kevan Horder, Deputy President; and Carol Mioduchowski, Treasurer (seen to the left celebrating with Lin Oke). During the year Justice Nelson stepped down from the Committee, and Sam Paxton was appointed to the Committee.



Brenda McDermott
President

Health role: Family Violence Group Worker, VACCA, Gippsland
First Australian: Palawa (Tasmania)



Kevan Horder
Deputy President

Health role: Manager of Chronic Care Unit, Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative
First Australian: Kooma and Guamu descendant SW Queensland



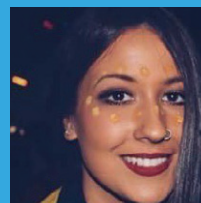
Carol Mioduchowski
Treasurer

Health role: Podiatrist, North Area Health.
Manager – Barwon Health Community Health and Rehabilitation services.
Australian



Terori Hareko-Samios
Committee Member

Health role: Social Work Masters student,
Team Leader, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, Cohealth.
First Australian: Papua New Guinean / Torres Strait Islander descendant



Sam Paxton
Committee Member

Health role: Human Resources Project Officer, VACCHO
First Australian: Waywurrurru (Victoria)



Melissa Deacon-Crouch
Committee Member

Health role: Senior Lecturer; Nursing & Midwifery La Trobe University
Australian



David Menzies
Committee Member

Health role: Chronic Disease Programs Manager and Team Lead, Health Care Homes, South Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network
Australian



Justice Nelson
Committee Member

Health role: LIME Network Project Officer
First Australian: Jarra/Djadja Wurrung



Executive Officer's Report

I am very appreciative of the close working relationship Weenthunga has with Australia's leading Indigenous health association leaders: Craig Dukes, CEO of the Australian Indigenous Doctors Association; Donna Murray, CEO of Indigenous Allied Health Australia; Janine Mohamed, CEO of the Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives; and Jill Gallagher, CEO of the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation.

During this year, Weenthunga made a concerted effort to gain recognition from the Victorian Government for its unique role as a State-wide association of health professionals spanning the whole diversity of health roles – all committed to contributing to strategies to see better health outcomes for Victorian First Australians – and thus contributing to the Government's objectives. Each of these Indigenous health leaders provided letters of support.

I am also very appreciative of Weenthunga's small team of part-time staff, working from various locations in Victoria under the leadership of Steff Armstrong and I in our two-way working: Sarah, Arkeria, Melanie and Stuart. It was wonderful to see Steff recognised by the Bendigo community with a NAIDOC Award.

Weenthunga is indebted to its Committee of Management – wonderful, committed health professionals with busy work and personal lives who generously give their time.

Lin Oke
Executive Officer



Lin (L) and Brenda (R) with Donna Murray CEO IAHA and Nicole Turner President IAHA

Health and Education Consultant's Report

The networking approach of working two-way has meant that Lin, Sarah and I have had opportunities to showcase Weenthunga's way of working - not only when seeking funding, but also when invited to present at conferences and workshops. We have a strong bond of friendship and trust which demonstrates our shared leadership of Weenthunga. This has supported the network to grow and shape into a small organisation which is well respected. The understandings gained from the "Girls Resilience" report has continued to weave and strengthen the way the program runs in Bendigo. In 2016 -2017 we held three health days. Weenthunga's "Women's Talk" Health Days have continued to respond to the needs of the girls attending. The continued support of La Trobe University Bendigo, St John of God and VACCHO have meant we could hold our events in culturally safe spaces. A reflection on the past year is my pride in the alumni of the program, as during this year at many events a number of the senior students spoke up as young leaders. I wish to thank Georgia Radford, Charmaine Gray, Skye Anderson and Shania Charvat.

I feel blessed to be working with the board, and deeply thankful to the staff - Mel, Stuart, Sarah, Arkeria and Lin - while on leave in 2017.

Stephanie Armstrong
Health and Education Consultant

Weenthunga's Aims and Objectives

The Weenthunga Health Network aims to contribute to strategies to improve the health and well-being of First Australians in Victoria. To achieve this aim, Weenthunga's primary focus is to contribute to:

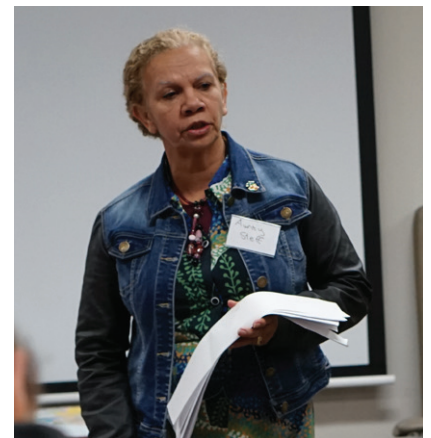
- Improving the uptake of health careers by First Australian school leavers; and
- Improving the knowledge, competencies and collaboration of the Victorian health workforce working with First Australians, better equipping health workers to provide culturally responsive services.

Weenthunga's Staff

Weenthunga's part-time staff work flexibly and make the most of their very small hours of employment.

The Weenthunga staffing team in July 2016 to June 2017 comprised:

- Lin Oke, Executive Officer (0.2)
- Steff Armstrong, Health and Education Consultant (0.5)
- Sarah Stoller, Operations Manager (0.5)
- Arkeria Armstrong, Health and Education Support Manager (0.1)
- Melanie Dooley, Finance Manager (0.1)
- Stuart Peace, Communications and Membership Coordinator (0.1)



Stephanie Armstrong



Weenthunga's Members

Weenthunga's membership has grown steadily to 343 by the end of June 2017 – with 26% of members being First Australians. This is a significant indicator of value when compared to the percentage in Victoria's health workforce, which is estimated to be about 4%.

Weenthunga's members come from a great diversity in health roles, including: Aboriginal Health Project Management; Aboriginal Health Research; Aboriginal Hospital Liaison; Audiology; Chiropractic; Community Development; Counselling; Dental Therapy; Diabetes Education; Dietetics; Exercise Physiology; Fitness Training; General Practice; Health Education; Health Services Management; Health Promotion; Indigenous Healthy Lifestyle Work; Medical Specialty; Medicine; Mental Health Work; Midwifery; Neuropsychology; Nursing; Nutrition; Occupational Therapy; Optometry; Osteopathy; Pharmacy; Physiotherapy; Podiatry; Public Health; Psychiatry; Psychology; Social Work; Speech Pathology. Our members work in a variety of sectors such as Aboriginal Health Services, public and private hospitals, dental services, and community health centres, schools, universities.

Indigenous Health Leadership Dinner

After five years of networking, Weenthunga celebrated their success at the Maurice Rioli Room, Richmond Football clubrooms. A Welcome to Country was performed by Aunty Joy Murphy, Weenthunga's Patron, which introduced a theme of leadership and the need for connection. During the dinner two leadership panels presented. The co-founder of Weenthunga Kelli McIntosh facilitated a panel of esteem speakers: Janine Mohamad, CEO CATSNIM; Donna Murray, CEO IAHA; Craig Dukes, CEO AIDA; and Jill Gallagher, CEO VACCHO. They discussed ideas around strong leadership and what it looks like, how networking and leadership work together, and identity in leadership. The second panel was facilitated by Professor Fiona Stanley, and three young women, who are part of the Girls Resilience Program, spoke emotionally about their resilience and their journey, and what strong Indigenous leadership means to them. A performance by Maurial Spearim concluded a night to be remembered.



Dinner guests



Kelli McIntosh interviewing Donna Murray



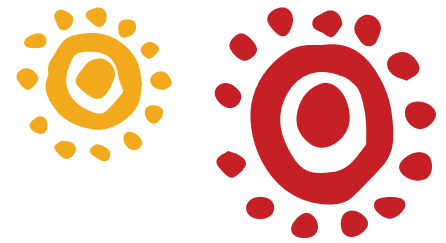
Kelli McIntosh, Lin, Aunty Joy and Maurial Spearim

Invited to Government House Reception

In August 2016, CEO of CATSINaM Janinne Mohamed arranged with Chloe Shorten for the reception of First Australian women leaders in health by Victoria's Governor, Her Excellency the Hon Linda Dessau AC at Government House. Weenthunga's Steff Armstrong and Lin Oke were invited, along with a nursing and midwifery student Georgia Radford, and Maya Coff, a secondary student aspiring to become a midwife. Both girls have been inspired by Weenthunga's "Women's Talk" Health Days. The reception was featured on ABC's Victorian News Bulletin on the 4th



Lin, Steff and Georgia Radford



HIGHLIGHTS OF WEENTHUNGA'S WORK

Health Days

Weenthunga held three "Women's Talk" Health Days between July 2016 and June 2017. The Health Days provide an opportunity for young First Australian women to raise their awareness of living healthy lives and considering a possible future career in health. The three days, held in Bendigo and Melbourne, saw inspiring First Australian women health workers promote an understanding of health career paths, as well as encouraging the girls to consider the benefits of continued schooling, accessing scholarships and undertaking health courses. These days of sharing showed a valuable pathway to supporting the health and wellbeing of members within their communities.

Three key themes occur in many conversations with the girls: seeking identity; anxiety of study and home life; and general health and wellbeing. To address this, we included not only the strong voices of Aboriginal women in health, but also incorporated cultural activities, and yarned about the girl's connection to mother earth as well as their own inner strengths. In two out of the three days, we were honoured to take part in the wellness and earth connection practise, "Wayapa Wuurrk".

Bendigo, July 2016

Presenters: Kerrie Thomsen, Jasmine Galvin, Shannon Drake, Kate O'Callaghan, Joanna Pappas, Jennifer Fielding, Zoe Lock, Jodie Lovett, Kyra Booth, Chantelle Stubna, Stephanie Blyth, Pauline Nolan.

Thanks: Jo Chick, Meg Irwin, Mishel McMahon, Desley Slade, Kevan Horder, Jasmine Vendargon, Jenni Galvin, Melissa Deacon-Crouch, Deb Webster, Skye Anderson, Georgia Radford, Charmaine Gray.

Performances: Northwest of Nowhere, Ilbijerri Theatre Company; Maurial Spearim, Hayley Penrose



Steff, Sally Flemming (teacher), Jess

Melbourne, November 2016

Presenters: Ngaree Blow, Tanya Druce, Mikaela Egan, Tanika Meeks, Catherine Camberlain, Selena White, Sam Paxton, Laura Thomson, Sarah Sheridan.

Thanks: Jenny Royle

Wayapa Wuurrk: Jamie Marloo Thomas and his daughter Phoebe
Cultural activity: Sam Paxton



Tanika Meeks & the girls

Bendigo, June 2017

Presenters: Stephanie Blyth, Jessie Barnes, Ally Charles, Tanika Meeks, Shirley Goodwin, Charmaine Gray.

Thanks: Jo Cahill, Mishel McMahon, David Kerr, Shirley Goodwin, Georgia Radford, Skye Anderson, Shania Charvat.

Wayapa Wuurrk: Allara Briggs-Pattison



Bendigo Scholarship winners

Bendigo NAIDOC Recognition Award to Steff Armstrong



Steff with NAIDOC Award

In July 2016, Weenthunga's Health and Education Consultant Stephanie Armstrong won the Bendigo NAIDOC Aboriginal Recognition Award and Skye Anderson, one of our Bendigo girls, won the Youth Award

Steff was recognised for a range of valuable contributions to the Bendigo community. She has initiated a number of projects relating to connecting with and supporting First Australian senior secondary school girls, showcasing to them a range of health careers. She has spent a lot of time building relationships with key community members, families, local teachers and tertiary educators, fostering networking and collaboration in their work supporting the girls. Steff is a very strong advocate for working two way - First Australians and Australians collaborating and sharing, learning from each other and together being more effective than on their own.



Skye Anderson (L), Steff and supporters

Treasurer's Report

In 2016 - 2017 Weenthunga continued to pursue its two key objectives within the limits of its finances, and has continued to grow its reputation as a small and valuable network. Weenthunga's resources have been used predominately on staff which underpins the strong emphasis on relationships in our vision and mission.

Weenthunga is enormously appreciative of the support generously provided by a number of small philanthropic trusts which makes Weenthunga's work to meet our objectives possible. We would like to thank the Trusts and Funds which have seen value in the detailed applications made to them. The encouragement and interest from the key individuals in these philanthropic organisations is greatly valued by Weenthunga's Committee and staff. We would also like to thank our members who have given personal donations to support Weenthunga financially and we appreciate your assistance to achieve our vision.

In May this year, we were very grateful to receive a grant from The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services to enable us to plan an important Summit later in 2017 on teaching Aboriginal health to all of the medical, nursing and allied health students in Victorian universities, as well as a grant to enable the continuation of the Girls Resilience Program in Bendigo.

The organisation targets our expenditure to achieving successful outcomes. The surplus of \$61,616 for 2016-2017 has heightened our endeavour to pursue other funding avenues to maintain sustainability in the longer term. There are no outstanding liabilities for Weenthunga.

I would like to thank Melanie Dooley for capably managing our finances and financial reporting, and Lin Oke for her direction of Weenthunga.

Carol Mioduchowski
Treasurer

Note: a full copy of the audited financial statements, provided at the AGM, are available on request from members.

Weenthunga Health Network acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government.



Prudent financial management strategy of the Weenthunga Health Network

As there is no certainty in the level of funding obtained each year, Weenthunga endeavours to prudently manage its expenditure to ensure there are sufficient funds retained in reserves to meet core operating costs for 12 months ahead. This has been challenged this year!

As can be seen in the comparative figures for this and the last financial year, Weenthunga has maintained its core staffing but has committed to improved IT services, provided by its host VACCHO, which has enormously improved the staff collaboration working from various locations.



Finance Report

| | June 2017 | June 2016 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Income | 131,259 | 52,499 |
| Expenditure | | |
| Administration | 29,112 | 15,923 |
| Occupancy | 7,916 | 2,806 |
| Promotional expenses | 1,700 | 2,970 |
| Project activities | 17,509 | 13,469 |
| Staff expenses | 113,534 | 113,470 |
| | 169,771 | 148,638 |
| Deficit | (38,512) | (96,139) |
| | | |
| Retained earnings | 61,616 | 100,128 |

Weenthunga's Financial Supporters 1 July 2016

Personal donations from members and others amounted to \$3,233 in this financial year and was put towards various operational costs.

Scholarship and bursary monies to encourage and support secondary and tertiary students in the Girls Resilience Program were provided by:

The Towards a Just Society Fund
A sub-fund of the Australian Communities Foundation



Generous contributions from our supporters in the following Philanthropic organisations have enabled Weenthunga to continue to work towards our key objectives.



Australian Communities Foundation sub funds:

- Towards a Just Society Fund
- Anna Wearne Trust



Being an Associate Member of VACCHO



Weenthunga is so appreciative of being an Associate Member of the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO). VACCHO generously shares information with Weenthunga, and invites the Weenthunga Committee Members to their events for Board members of their Member Organisations, as well as to educational events on governance, strategic planning and related issues. Weenthunga's Executive Officer is included in VACCHO's Members' CEO meetings.

During the year, Sarah Stoller, Weenthunga's Operations Manager, worked in her part-time capacity from a workstation in the VACCHO offices, mingling with the terrific VACCHO staff. Weenthunga now holds most of its meetings at VACCHO. It is a wonderful venue to bring First Australian secondary school girls when we hold a health day.

Weenthunga reciprocates where it can. In our regular eNews we promote VACCHO's Cultural Safety training, other VACCHO events, and vacant positions. This year, Sarah Stoller organised the holding of a Cultural Safety training day in Bendigo, run by VACCHO, for Weenthunga members and others.

Benefitting from attending VACCHO Boards and CEOs Forum

The VACCHO Boards and CEO Forum was held in February 2017 at the Mantra Bell City, in Preston. Weenthunga was represented by Executive Officer Lin Oke, and Committee members Kevan Horder and Brenda McDermott.

There were many interesting topics discussed that allowed members to share experiences on matters relevant to their individual boards. These were supported by guest speakers from Justice Connect, and various government departments.

The forum provided opportunities to learn about the direction of health policy in Victoria, and of the good work being done through ACCHO Boards to improve health outcomes for our people. The forum also allowed for networking with Aboriginal health organisation representatives to gain a greater understanding of current issues in governance.



Sarah Stoller, Operations Mgr and Lin with Jill Gallagher, CEO VACCHO celebrating VACCHO's 20th Anniversary



Brenda, Kevan and Bendigo colleague Rachel at VACCHO Boards Forum

The year ahead 2017-2018

Continuing to Strengthen Weenthunga's Capacity and Effectiveness in 2017-2018

In 2017-2018 Weenthunga aims to increase its effectiveness through:

- Holding a Summit on teaching Aboriginal health to the escalating numbers of health students in Victorian universities
- Establishing an online Network to facilitate ongoing collaboration amongst Victorian Universities, VACCHO and Aboriginal community leaders
- Pursuing other key strategies and solutions identified at the Summit
- Growing our membership
- Gaining core funding from Government
- Offering the Girls Resilience Program to other communities in other locations within Victoria
- Growing and building on our partnership with VACCHO





Weenthunga means 'hear / understand' in Woiwurrung, language of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation

Weenthunga artwork by Shawana Andrews 2010: Connecting through Conversation: the flames represent the campfire, a focal point for sharing knowledge and listening. The circles represent communities, which have an abundance of knowledge to share.

First Australians is our preferred term for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People – regardless of where they live - whilst avoiding the implication of 'non-entities' for everyone else, the Australians.

Front cover image: Participating in a Wayapa Wuurk, a wellness & connection to mother earth session, led by Allara Briggs-Pattison.

Graphic Design: Dixon Patten Jnr (Yorta Yorta, Gunnai)
dixonpatten@gmail.com

Weenthunga Health Network Inc
17-23 Sackville Street
Collingwood 3066

ABN: 95 615 678 762
Weenthunga Health Network Inc has ATO Income Tax
Exemption and DGR status.