

Winnunga News

OCTOBER 2015

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CEO Update

Winnunga has received formal notification that we have been re-accredited with the Quality Improvement Program. Congratulations to all staff for the contribution which each of you makes to our service. It is only through your commitment that we maintain our accreditation and continue to be recognised throughout Australia for our success and leadership as an Aboriginal Managed Health Service.

Winnunga continues to respond to very high numbers of clients with a substance abuse issue. At a recent National Roundtable on ICE arranged by NACCHO, I again urged all Governments and relevant Departments and agencies to respond with urgency to the epidemic of ICE usage within Aboriginal communities including here in Canberra. Drugs and alcohol continue to cause serious damage in our communities and it is clear additional resources and new and innovative solutions must be found.

Winnunga developed two comprehensive budget submissions which I have lodged with the ACT Government. In the submissions we again stress the fundamental importance of the comprehensive support which the Social Health Team (SHT) provides to members of our community who find life hard at times or who are living with major and challenging issues. In the submissions we have asked for additional resources to allow us to expand the SHT in order to address some of the significant amount of unmet need in our community. I am proposing to meet with all relevant members of the Legislative Assembly to reinforce the importance of this initiative to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and hopefully to obtain their support.



Ms Julie Tongs OAM, CEO



Steven Freeman—Some News

Almost six months to the day Steven Freeman, a young Aboriginal man on remand at the Alexander Maconochie Centre (AMC) was beaten so savagely that he was admitted to ICU and placed in an induced coma for a week, ACT Police have announced they have identified three possible assailants. The Police have also made a call for the public to assist them with their inquiry.

From the information available to the community, most of which has been obtained from the Canberra Times because of the failure of the AMC and the ACT Government to keep the community informed about this matter, it clearly raises questions of major concern. Why was Mr Freeman, a remandee, placed within an hour of his admission with sentenced prisoners? Why was there no assessment of the risk of leaving him alone and unsupervised? How can it possibly be, as reported by the Canberra Times that the security camera in Mr Freeman's cell could be deliberately disabled to facilitate this crime? Why have the AMC and the Minister refused to make any comment about this matter or of the steps they have taken to ensure it cannot happen again? It would be sad indeed if the silence of the Government and the prison is a response to legal advice aimed at seeking to minimise the consequences to the Government of this major failing in its duty of care.

Adam Goodes - Farewell to a Hero

Adam Goodes, dual Brownlow medallist and one of the greatest AFL stars of all time has retired. Dogged over much of his last year by overt racism expressed through taunts and constant booing it is a matter of enormous regret that Adam did not receive the farewell that such a great champion deserved.



Appointed Australian of the Year for his outstanding leadership within and on behalf of the Aboriginal community Adam Goodes has been an outstanding role model not just for young Aboriginal men and women but for the entire community.

Claims by some, including senior members of the AFL hierarchy and commentators, that the booing suffered by Goodes was not racist but was simply part of the tapestry of the game were put to the lie when David Jones appointed Adam Goodes as a store Ambassador only to be flooded with the same vicious and hate filled racism that Adam suffered on the football field.

As Winnunga has commented previously if a person of Adam Goodes' standing and achievement is subjected openly and publicly to the sort of racism that is there for all to see it is distressing to think of the abuse and racism that ordinary Aboriginal boys, girls, men and women must be being subjected to.

Boomanulla Oval progress report

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Interim Advisory Group (IAG) has released the results of a survey it conducted into community views about the use, importance and future of Boomanulla Oval. The IAG is to be congratulated for consulting the community in this way.

The survey provides an important insight into the continuing importance of Boomanulla Oval to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community of Canberra and the region. The special relationship which Aboriginal people have with the Oval and its significance as a place which they have come to regard as "theirs" should guide the future use and management of Boomanulla.

Winnunga CEO Julie Tongs has previously advised the Winnunga Board has asked her to prepare, at the appropriate time, an expression of interest in the possible management by Winnunga, of Boomanulla Oval. It is understood that the ACT Government is proposing to invite submissions for the future management of the Oval during November 2015.

Winnunga Dental Clinic

Our team offer preventative and restorative dental treatment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients in the most caring, compassionate and professional manner. Winnunga Dental Clinic operates 5 days a week, and is staffed by Dr Padma Yarlagadda (Monday Wednesday & Friday) and Dr Aradhna Rastogi (Tuesday & Thursday). Our dental assistants are Taeya Olsen who completed her Certificate 3 in dental assisting last year, Kylee Shea who is currently training and is expected to complete her Certificate 3 next year, and Lynne Davis who is currently studying a Certificate 4 in dental assisting. Andrew Darby is our Prosthetist and attends Winnunga on Thursdays between 1pm and 2pm to look after the needs of patients with dentures.



The dental clinic has a waiting list for treatment and clients can have their name added by completing a short Questionnaire at reception.

AMA Position Statement

Australian Medical Association (AMA) Position Statement on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (2015)

*Aboriginal
community
control must
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The AMA has in its 2015 position statement again drawn attention to the slow progress in closing the gap in life expectancy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people and states that 'much more needs to be done to close the unacceptable gap in health outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians'.

The AMA notes 'Recent data has identified stubbornly high levels of treatable and preventable conditions, high levels of chronic conditions at comparatively young ages, high levels of undetected chronic conditions and higher rates of co-morbidity in chronic disease.'

'Higher prevalence of risk factors for chronic disease - diabetes, mental health conditions, smoking, overweight and obesity and harmful drinking levels also persistently contribute to poor health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people'.

The AMA position statement provides a framework for addressing these outcomes. The first principle proposed by the AMA is that 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a leading role in identifying and responding to the nature and challenges of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health...'

In support of this foundational principle the AMA recommends:

- That Aboriginal community control must be supported and appropriately resourced in recognition of its demonstrated effectiveness in providing appropriate and accessible health services ... and its role as a major provider within the comprehensive primary health care context
- That all health services provided specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be designed, developed and controlled by the communities they serve in collaboration with mainstream processes
- That Indigenous health services should be increasingly provided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Winnunga appreciates the consistent recognition by the AMA of the primacy and importance of Aboriginal controlled and managed health services in addressing the major gap between health outcomes and status of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

Winnunga remains concerned, however, that the principles espoused by the AMA, while paid lip service by Governments, tend to be honoured in the breach.

Children and Young People's Act Proposed Amendments 'Will Have a Harsh and Unacceptable Impact on Aboriginal Children and Families'

The proposed amendment would reduce the maximum length of an initial care and protection order from two years to one year for children

Winnunga has joined with other community based organisations in calling on the ACT Legislative Assembly to defer proposed changes to the Children and Young People's Act.

Alcohol Tobacco & Other Drug Association (ATODA) ACT, Domestic Violence Crisis Service (DVCS) and Mental Health Community Coalition (MHCC) ACT have cautioned the changes could have serious and negative unintended consequences for children in care and their parents.

The proposed amendment would reduce the maximum length of an initial care and protection order from two years to one year for children aged two or under at the entry to care.

The principal concern with the amendment is that the parents of children who have been placed in care and protection will not have sufficient time to change their circumstances to ensure their children will be safe if returned to them.

Winnunga supports claims made in the submission by ATODA, DVCS and the MHCC that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families are disproportionately involved in the care and protection system and also that they disproportionately experience violence, alcohol and other drug and mental health issues.

The consequence is, in the words of the submission that the proposed amendments 'will have a harsh and unacceptable impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, parents and families'.

This must be recognised, given the history of removal of Aboriginal children from their parents in Australia. If the proposed legislative change goes ahead, more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children will be removed from their parents and placed into long-term care until they are eighteen years old.

The long term orders will be less subject to review. Parents will have less contact with their children. Fewer care and protection orders relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children will be revoked. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents who have had their children removed will have less incentive to engage in treatment or support for alcohol and other drug and or mental health problems and domestic violence.

Over and above the quite unacceptable possible consequences of the proposed changes particularly for Aboriginal children and their families, there has been no meaningful consultation by the ACT Government with the Aboriginal community. Nor is Winnunga aware that any of the more than three hundred parents of Aboriginal children currently in care and protection in the ACT have been asked for their views about the proposed changes or have been personally advised of the implications for them or their children.

Winnunga calls on the Legislative Assembly to not proceed with the proposed changes and to ensure that in future the Aboriginal community and in particular members of the community directly affected by changes to the law that could see them lose any chance of ever being reunited with their children are personally consulted.

Fact: There needs to be meaningful consultation by the ACT Government with the Aboriginal community on any proposed changes to legislation that will adversely impact on our community

The location of aged care housing will impact on the operations of service providers

Housing for Older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Residents

Winnunga welcomes the recent announcement of progress in plans to build five independent living units for senior members of the Canberra Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island community. This is welcome news and hopefully will be the first step in diversifying the range of housing options available to the local Community. Winnunga would nevertheless like to see broader consultation with the local Aboriginal community, and in particular relevant service providers, on initiatives of such significance as this. This is particularly important in situations where a decision such as the location of aged care housing will impact on the operations of service providers.

It will almost certainly be the case that the residents of the planned housing are clients of Winnunga and who will wish to remain so. The housing, which is planned to be built in Kambah is a fair distance from the Winnunga Health Centre in Narrabundah and travel to and from the Centre will almost certainly present a challenge for the residents. If the project does proceed on the Kambah site Winnunga hopes that the Government has or will develop plans for supporting the travel of residents to and from facilities such as Winnunga.

It's Official: Jonathan Thurston is the Best Footballer in the World

Jonathan Thurston, four times Dally M winner, Captain of the Premiership winning Cowboys and Clive Churchill medal winner for best and fairest in the grand final must now clearly be regarded as the greatest player the game has seen—both on and off the field. Not only has he achieved something no other footballer has in the history of the game, but also JT has not forgotten where he has come from. His commitment to community - particularly the mentoring and work with kids is to be commended for.

It was wonderful to see another Aboriginal man, Justin Hodges as captain of the opposing grand final team the Brisbane Broncos, along with all the other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander players in the competition. The numbers of Aboriginal stars in all codes of football in Australia, including in women's rugby and in national teams such as the Kangaroos and Wallabies is a fantastic testament to the skill, dedication and athleticism of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sports men and women. It is quite possible that we will see a day in the not too distant future when the Kangaroos will be an all Aboriginal team.



Fact: JT was born on 25 April 1983 and started his football career with the Bulldogs in 2002 before moving to the Cowboys in 2005. JT plays halfback, five eighth and goal kicker.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are 34 times more likely to be admitted to hospital and 11 times more likely to be killed as a result of a violent assault than non-Aboriginal women

Domestic Violence Against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women Needs Greater Attention

Australian of the Year Rosie Batty has been heroic in her advocacy of the need for a greater and more urgent approach to the scourge of violence against women in Australia. The Prime Minister has recently responded by declaring that domestic violence perpetrated by men against women in Australia is 'a national disgrace'.

In so many social and health indicators in Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are shockingly over-represented on the negative side of the ledger. This is especially so when it comes to violence against women. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are 34 times more likely to be admitted to hospital and 11 times more likely to be killed as a result of a violent assault than non-Aboriginal women. These statistics are deeply disturbing and there is no evidence of which Winnunga is aware to suggest the situation in the ACT is also not grave.

Winnunga would, in light of the known level of violence being perpetrated against Aboriginal women, welcome a greater focus and special attention being given to this most offended against and vulnerable group of women.

Over Representation of Aboriginal Children in Care and Protection Demands Urgent Action-SNAICC

The national conference of the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC) was recently held in Perth. The conference was attended by over 1000 people from around Australia involved in issues related to the welfare and support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

The conference passed a number of resolutions and demanded that urgent action be taken to address the massive over-representation of Aboriginal children in the care system. The conference called on all Governments across Australia to agree to set a COAG closing the gap target to address the over-representation of Aboriginal children in the child protection system. Winnunga CEO Julie Tongs made a similar call in August this year, prior to the SNAICC conference, when commenting publicly on the number of Aboriginal children taken into care in the ACT. An Aboriginal child born in the ACT is 20 times more likely to be placed in care than a baby born to non-Aboriginal parents. Julie Tongs referred to this level of forced removal of Aboriginal children as a national disgrace.

The conference also repeated the almost universally accepted truth that for the best results in the delivery of services designed to address the consequences of generations of disadvantage and discrimination experienced by Aboriginal people, that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander models of service and care delivered through a holistic, integrated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander managed and led approach was essential.

Winnunga supports this approach but remains concerned while it is generally acknowledged by Government's across Australia (including in the ACT) to be the model which they also endorse, that it is an endorsement that too often is not translated into practice.

Fact: Aboriginal children born in the ACT are 20 times more likely to be placed in care than non Aboriginal children

Winnunga Boxing Club/Gym

What we are about

The Winnunga Boxing Club exists to provide health, fitness, discipline, technique building and to foster a sense of comradery among its participants. The boxing club provides participants with a welcoming environment, where they can sweat away their stress and focus on physical and mental wellbeing.



Winnunga gym members are a diverse group, with a cross section of Indigenous and Non Indigenous members ranging in age, sex and skill level. The gym has been operating since 2004, starting in a small room at Boomanulla and gradually moving to its current location, which is attached to an old aircraft maintenance hangar in Fyshwick. The Winnunga boxing group has run several

successful boxing tournaments in previous years, which have drawn considerable crowds and boxing community involvement.

What we offer

Winnunga boxing offers a friendly and safe environment, not just for those who have boxed before, but for anyone interested in learning more about the sport, and for anyone who is eager to improve their overall fitness. Classes are based on prior experience – there is a general class for beginners and people focusing on fitness, and an advanced class, for participants with a history of boxing/individuals interested in competing at an amateur level.



Boxing classes are open to everyone, whether you are Indigenous or not. Age and gender are not important as existing members are a mix of young, old, male and female. Everyone is welcome, come by and have a look if you are interested, or call the Winnunga Gym phone on 0409 863 934, and someone from the coaching or admin team will answer any questions you have.

Where and when?

The Winnunga Gym is located at 255 Canberra Ave in Fyshwick, opposite the Canberra Academy of Dramatic Art. Beginner classes are run Monday, Wednesday and Thursday starting at 5pm and finishing at 7pm. These classes generally consist of between 20 to 30 participants.

Competitors/Advanced classes run Monday to Friday, 5pm to 7pm. Competitor classes are smaller ranging from 10 to 15 participants.



Sweat away
stress and
focus on
physical and
mental
wellbeing

Fact: Winnunga Boxing Club/Gym has been volunteer run since its inception in 2004

Canberra Hospital's new Building 15

The Canberra Hospital's (TCH) new Building 15 opens in mid October. Due to upgrades of services beneath Hospital Road, the drop off bay at the front of Building 15 will be unavailable until the road re-opens in early 2016. Building 15 will be accessible from the pedestrian footpath which can be accessed from the Main Entrance drop off area on Hospital Road, or from the Southern Car Park. Visitors and patients who require accessible parking are advised to use the Southern Car Park for their convenience.

Accessible parking is available in the multi-storey car park

Services moving to new Building 15 at TCH

A number of services at TCH are moving to the new Building 15 in October 2015 as part of the Health Infrastructure Program. Building 15 is located immediately next to the multi-storey car park, providing more convenient access. Accessible parking is available in this car park. Below is a list of the services that are moving, as well as their moving dates and new locations.

Services moving to the new Building 15 from 16 October 2015:

- Occupational Medicine Unit
- Medical Physics Radiation Engineering
- Medicine—Renal
- Medicine—Neurology
- Acute Nutrition
- Acute Psychology
- Acute Physio
- Acute Speech Pathology
- Acute Occupation Therapy
- Rehabilitation, Aged and Community Care (RACC) Exercise Physiology
- RACC Speech Pathology
- RACC Occupational Therapy
- Acute Social Work
- Aboriginal Liaison Office
- RACC Geriatrics
- RACC Radar and Nurses
- RACC Psychology
- Pastoral Care

Services moving to Building 6, Level 2 from 16 October 2016:

- Surgery—Neuro Surgery
- Medicine—Rheumatology
- Surgery—Stomal Therapy
- ICT Refresh & ICT support
- Allied Health Educators

Staff Profile

Name: Roseanne Longford

Position: HR

Who is your favourite singer?
Adele and Meatloaf

What do you do on the weekends?

Go shopping with my daughters, gardening and have my family over for meals.

What is your favourite food?

Crumbed lamb cutlets and T Bone steak and most food that is not good for you.

What do you like most about working at Winnunga?

In the ten years I have worked for Winnunga I am proud to be part of the growth of Winnunga to meet Aboriginal community needs.



What is your pet hate?

Injustice and unfairness

If you could invite any two people to dinner, who would they be and why?

Barrack Obama and Michelle Obama. I believe they would be very interesting to talk to being the first black president and first lady of America.

Touch Football at Winnunga

If you are interested in playing touch football and would like to learn more, please call Winnunga on (02) 6284 6222 and ask for Marley or Reeion. Alternatively you can see a Winnunga doctor for a health check and ask to be referred to the Social Health Team for the touch football program.



We're on the web!
winnunga.org.au

Fact: Aboriginal people are 1.5 times more likely to be overweight or obese than non-Indigenous people. Winnunga will be implementing a program in 2016 specifically focusing on healthy weight.