



**MDAS**  
MALLEE DISTRICT ABORIGINAL SERVICES

# Koori NEWS

JULY 2020



## COVID-19 PLEASE KEEP LOOKING AFTER OUR MOB

### A MESSAGE FROM OUR MDAS HEALTH TEAMS

COVID-19 restrictions are easing in Victoria, but our Mallee communities need to keep paying attention and looking out for each other to keep ourselves safe and well.

We are a high-risk group because of our higher rates of pre-existing medical conditions such as diabetes, heart and lung disease, so it's important that if we have coronavirus symptoms we get tested early.

We have been lucky that our Mallee communities have not had to face large numbers of coronavirus cases yet.

But that can change quickly. If you feel unwell, you should stay home, and if you have any symptoms of coronavirus you should get tested.

Please follow the guidelines and don't go out unless you need to. Take care of Elders and keep them home, if possible. Please practice social distancing and hygiene all the time – It's important.

This has already been going on a long time. And it will go on for a lot longer. Everything we are doing now

will help keep our mobs safe from COVID-19.

There are a lot of unknowns with this virus, but we do know that we must remain strong and that we all can do our bit to keep everyone safe.

Please contact MDAS Health if you have any concerns or questions at all.

**Danielle Dougherty**  
Director of Health Services

**Samantha Brennan**  
Health Manager  
MDAS Mildura

**Zah Thebe**  
Health Manager  
MDAS Swan Hill-Kerang

*Pictured: MDAS CEO Andy Charles, Director of Health Services Danielle Dougherty and Swan Hill Health Manager Zah Thebe*

*Pictured: Jenny Blackman and Leonie Garner at reception in Swan Hill - our amazing reception teams across MDAS have helped to keep the wheels turning during COVID-19*



### In this issue...

**WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS PAGE 2**

**COVID TESTING COMES TO MDAS PAGE 3**

**ALL THE WINNERS FROM OUR SHAWL ART COMPETITION PAGE 3**



## EARLY YEARS EXCITING NEW VENTURE!

In Swan Hill, Early Years are embracing a fantastic new opportunity to work in collaboration with Young Adventurers Early Childhood Services and see the old kindergarten building turned into a vibrant and active early learning space (child care) for the next 12 months while the new Young Adventurers site in Campbell Street is being developed.

This new arrangement will allow more families to access early childhood services and significantly reduce time on waiting lists, as well as making great use of a purpose-built early years' space on a daily basis.

Any queries with relation to Young Adventurers services should be directed to Marg Hartshorn on 0488 545 225 or via email [admin@yamaail.com.au](mailto:admin@yamaail.com.au).

Stay tuned for our upcoming Playgroup plans via the MDAS website and Facebook page.

<https://youngadventurers.com.au/> us about getting yours!



## WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARDMEMBERS

### WE ARE PLEASED TO WELCOME TWO NEW MEMBERS TO THE MDAS BOARD.

Jason Kirby was appointed to the board in April and Aunty Deb Chaplin attended her first board member in May.

**JASON KIRBY** is a current and active Mildura community member assisting mentoring to all ages. He has been a teacher's assistant for over 5 years at primary schools, and a mentor to students of all ages through TAFE. He is proud to have coached and mentored the Mallee Tigers Football Team for

three years, and has also been a player for 13 years.

**AUNTY DEB CHAPLIN** is a familiar face to most community members in the Swan Hill and Kerang region, through her community work, and her role as the Swan Hill District Hospital's Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer for many years. Aunty Deb is also often called upon to perform Welcome to Country ceremonies in the local community.

Thank you Jason and Aunty Deb, for your willingness to contribute to and lead your communities.

## MENINGOCOCCAL B VAX FREE FOR UNDER TWOS

### ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CHILDREN UNDER TWO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR FREE "CATCH UP" VACCINATIONS FOR MENINGOCOCCAL B DISEASE.

Immunization against Meningococcal B is recommended for high-risk groups, but until now has been available only for purchase under prescription. From July 1 it will be on the vaccination schedule for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies in Victoria.

it will be offered to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families as part of the routine vaccination schedule from now on, but for parents of children up to two years who miss out, a catch-up program is available,

which is also free of charge.

Meningococcal B is a major cause of meningitis, or inflammation of the brain and spinal cord, and also causes septicaemia, which is an infection of the blood. Infection rates among our kids under two are about four times higher than in non-Indigenous children, so please get in touch with MDAS Health staff if you would like to know more.

Pictured: Kym Egan brought her little one River Johnson to get up to date with vaccinations with MDAS midwife Yvonne Barnes



## CULTURE RESPECTED IN BREAST SCREEN

### WHAT A BRILLIANT WAY TO MAKE A STATEMENT ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF BREAST SCREENING!

We were so excited with the entries from women from across the Mallee into our competition to design a special screen print about breast screening.

The designs were to be used to print shawls for our campaign with Breast Screen Victoria later this year.

There were some stunning artworks – and we chose one winner from each area:

- Simone Spencer from Mildura; (bottom left)
- Sandra Kropinyeri from Swan Hill (below right, top) and;
- Tahlia Wise from Kerang (below right, bottom)

Each artist received a \$1000 prize for use of the design – and their work will be printed on the shawls to be given out to women who come into the Breast Screen Victoria bus when it visits in August and September.

Thanks to everyone who entered – and if you are a woman over 50 make sure you book in for a Breast Screen...and go home with your beautiful new shawl!



## ON THE SPOT COVID-19 TESTING

### ON-THE-SPOT COVID-19 TESTING HAS BEEN INTRODUCED AT THE MDAS MEDICAL CLINIC IN MILDURA.

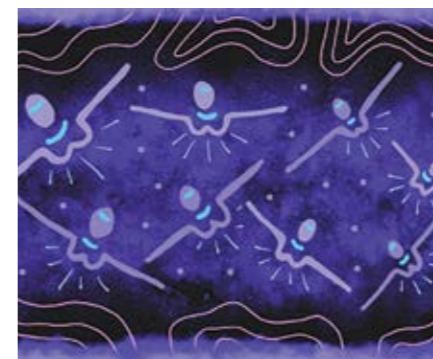
This new point-of-care testing is understood to be the first of its kind in Mildura and makes a positive or negative result available within 45 minutes, rather than waiting up to four days for a result to come from pathology tests.

The on-the-spot COVID-19 testing machine has been made available to MDAS by The Kirby Institute, a

global research institute dedicated to the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases.

The machine will continue to be useful long after COVID-19 eases, as it will be used to test for sexually transmitted diseases (STIs) such as gonorrhoea and chlamydia. Again, results will be known within 45 minutes, and it's hoped that with STI testing able to be done as part of a health appointment, it will remove some of the stigma around testing.

Pictured: The MDAS testing team - Alex McWilliam (practice nurse); Rebecca Wilson (Aboriginal Health Practitioner); and Celia Fox (Practice Nurse)



## DON'T FORGET DIABETES

### WITH EVERYTHING GOING ON AT THE MOMENT, IT'S EASY TO FORGET THE THINGS THAT CAN MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE TO YOUR LONG-TERM HEALTH.

It's National National Diabetes Week from July 12 – 18. Have you had your health check done? Do you know your diabetes risk?

A lot of the time, Type Two Diabetes is preventable. Things like keeping a healthy weight and kicking smoking can make a huge difference in the long run.

And we can help. So speak to any of our health promotions team in Mildura, Swan Hill or Kerang and we can get started!

# Around MDAS

## WELLBEING

### FACEBOOK "LIVE" WITH DARLENE

Social distancing made it difficult for Darlene Thomas, from our Social and Emotional Wellbeing team to get out to do her usual school programs during COVID-19. But some challenges turn into opportunities...Darlene went online for her weekly wellbeing session and she's now connecting with people who are reaching out...because having a yarn makes you feel better!

If you haven't caught up with Darlene yet, Wellbeing LIVE is on our Facebook Page each Tuesday at 4pm.

Or you can catch up through our facebook page later if you cant make the live session.

## DEADLY THIS MONTH

### PAMELA MCCORMACK

#### MDAS COORDINATOR FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES RECEPTION AND SECRETARY ON THE MDAS BOARD.

Pam recently completed her diploma of leadership and management.

#### Tell us about your MDAS journey so far:

"My journey through MDAS has been a positive aspect on my life. I became a MDAS Board Member in 2011, and I first started working with MDAS in 2014 as a Trainee Customer Service Officer. I have completed three important Certificates throughout my time here at MDAS which are Cert II Business, Cert IV Leadership & Management and now my Diploma Leadership and Management.

#### Was it challenging? what kind of support did you receive?"

"I have to admit I have had some difficult challenges throughout studying which I thought I wouldn't complete because of losing my mum and having my three children while studying. Also trying to work full-time as a Leader, managing staff and trainees was a

challenge. But I had support from my manager Andy Charles, SuniTAFE teachers MDAS Staff and my family."

**Will you do more training?** "Now that I have completed my Diploma in Leadership & Management it has given me inspiration to further study and achieve more for the future so that I can provide the best service that I can for Community and to make my children proud. There are a lot of opportunities here at MDAS, whether you want to gain employment, be on the Board, assist in volunteer work and more."

**If you've got plans for your career – talk to your manager or our MDAS HR team.**



## OUR SERVICES

### FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

#### CARE AND CULTURE

Aboriginal Children Specialist Advice Support Service (ACSASS)

Aboriginal Family Led Decision Making (AFLDM)

Cultural Support Planning (CSP)

Kinship Care

Home Based Care (Foster Care)

Therapeutic Residential Care

Therapeutic Residential Case Management

First Supports

Kinship Reunification

#### FAMILY AND YOUTH

Family Services

Integrated family services

Stronger Families

Family Preservation

#### YOUTH SERVICES

Early School Leavers

Youth Support Program

Youth Justice

Koori Connect

Koori Night Patrol

Youth Justice Robinvale

#### HOUSING SUPPORT

Crisis Support

Aboriginal tenants at risk of eviction

Transitional support

AOD Robinvale

#### FAMILY VIOLENCE

Meminar Ngangg Gimba – Refuge

Meminar Ngangg Gimba – Outreach (Mildura/ Robinvale/ Swan Hill/ Kerang)

Meminar Ngangg Gimba – Cultural Healing Group Work

Men's Family Violence Case Management

Men's Family Violence Cultural Behaviour Change Group Work

Men's Family Violence Cultural Healing Group Work

Adolescent Family Violence Case Management

Adolescent Family Violence Culture Healing Group Work

#### SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

Koori Women's Diversion (Mildura)

Mental Health Demonstration Project (Mildura)

Alcohol and other Drugs Treatment Service

(Mildura Swan Hill/ Kerang Robinvale)

Bringing them Home

(Mildura Swan Hill/ Kerang Robinvale)

Aboriginal Communities Gambling Awareness program (Mildura)

Family Wellbeing program

(Mildura Swan Hill/ Kerang Robinvale)

Local Justice Worker program

(Mildura) (Swan Hill Under Family services)

Dual Diagnosis Model of Care

(Mildura Youth 12 - 25) (Swan Hill Adult 16 - 65)

SEWB Mental Health Access (Swan Hill)

Clinical & Therapeutic Mental Health (Swan Hill)

Mental Health Community Support Service (Swan Hill & Mildura)

#### HEALTH

GP

Nurse

Aboriginal Health Workers

Outreach Workers

Chronic Disease Management

Maternal Child Health

Nurse Health Checks

Transport

#### SPECIALIST SERVICES

Drug And Alcohol Worker

Psychologist

Maternal And Child Health Nurse

Podiatrist

Cardiologist

Urologist

Paediatrician

Optometrist

Cardiologist

Audiologist

Physiotherapist

Personal Trainers

Road to deadly Health

Deadly choices (school programs)

MDAS Health program

Nutrition & Public Health Advisor

#### AGED AND DISABILITY

Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP)

Home and Community Care Program for Younger People (HACC-PYP)

#### CLINICS

Well Women's Clinic

Immunisation Clinic

#### TACKLING SMOKING AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLES SERVICES

Quit Smoking Support

#### EARLY YEARS

Maternity Services (Swan Hill & Mildura)

Maternal and Child Health (Swan Hill & Mildura)

In Home Support program (Swan Hill & Mildura)

Cradle to Kinder (Swan Hill & Mildura)

Koori Supported playgroups (Swan Hill & Mildura)

Koori Preschool Assistant program (Mildura)

HIPPY (Home Interactive Program for Parents and Youngsters)(Mildura)

Connected Beginnings (Mildura)

### OPENING HOURS

Mon - Thur 9am - 5pm

Friday 9am - 4pm

### MILDURA

120 Madden Avenue

5018 4100

### ROBINVALE

77 Perrin Street

5026 1848

### SWAN HILL

70 Nyah Road

5032 8600

### KERANG

9 Nolan Street

5450 3019

### TO HAVE ITEMS INCLUDED IN THE MDAS NEWSLETTER

Please contact Terry or Jacinta Gange, NewsAlert PR Mildura

0498 490 672 or email hello@newsalertpr.com.au

[www.mdas.org.au](http://www.mdas.org.au)