



RUMBALARA COMMUNITY
NEWSLETTER



Stay on top of **your health** with **immunisations!**

Our Medical Clinic is dedicated to keeping our community healthy and protected. Be sure to stay up to date with your immunisations to safeguard yourself and others.

Exciting news! Our flu vaccination clinic will be launching soon, just in time for the 2024 flu season. We're eagerly awaiting the arrival of our influenza vaccinations, expected by March 28, 2024.

Stay on top of your health! Keep an eye out for further details, coming your way shortly.

Remember, immunisations are essential for maintaining your well-being. Let's prioritise our health together!

Medical Clinic **Update**

In January and February, we provided a total of 3,985 episodes of care to our community members. Within this period, we administered 180 immunisations and conducted 79 health checks. Additionally, we facilitated 741 transports to ensure access to essential services for our community.

79

ABORIGINAL &
TORESS STRAIT
ISLANDER HEALTH
CHECKS (715)

180

IMMUNISATIONS

3,985

TOTAL EPISODES OF
CARE JANUARY &
FEBRUARY

741

MEDICAL
TRANSPORT

Meet Merinda



I take great pride in my heritage as a Gunai Kurnai/Yorta Yorta woman. Originally from the Gippsland Latrobe Valley, I relocated to Shepparton around 18 months ago to be closer to my immediate family. Over the span of nearly two decades, I've dedicated myself to the health sector and community work. For the past 17 months, I've had the privilege of contributing to Rumbalara.

My journey within the healthcare field has been diverse. Starting as a Medical Receptionist, I transitioned to roles as an Aboriginal Health Worker and later as an Aboriginal Health Practitioner, which I completed in 2017. From there, I moved into management, accumulating almost 12 years of experience in leadership roles. I completed a leadership and management course to enhance my skills in this area.

In 2020, I was honored with the Order of Australia medal for my unwavering dedication and commitment to Aboriginal health and community service.

For me, working within and for any Aboriginal community isn't simply employment; it's a cultural responsibility and a passion ingrained in me by my elders. Everything I do is influenced by the stories and wisdom they've shared with me. I am motivated by the struggles they endured, particularly in advocating for Aboriginal medical clinics. I aspire to honour the memory of those elders who played a crucial role in shaping me into the person I am today. My mother frequently reminds me that I embody the true essence of a child raised by the community.

My vision for the future of Rumba clinic is to realign with its core purpose, ensuring it remains Aboriginal-led for our community. In the near future, we aim to increase the presence of Aboriginal individuals within the clinic, including Aboriginal Health Practitioners, Aboriginal Health Workers, Aboriginal Nurses, and possibly an Aboriginal Doctor. Additionally, we seek to incorporate Aboriginal art to infuse the clinic with cultural significance, ensuring it does not feel overly mainstream but rather reconnects with our heritage.

Merinda Harrison-Drake

Manager of Clinical Services
Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative

PIR (Public Intoxication Response) Team

Aleista, Shelley, Sandy, & Carmel from our PIR (Public Intoxication Response) team shadowed the Ngwala PIR and CMT (Community Matters Team) team as they moved around Fitzroy, Collingwood and Abbotsford. This was an opportunity to network and build relationships with another PIR team, as well as share operational ideas.



BECOME A FOSTER CARER ...

By becoming a foster carer at Rumbalara you can play a part in ensuring that if our children need foster care that they can remain on Yorta Yorta country helping them to maintain important connections to family, community, and culture.

Contact Us



(03) 5831 2010



fostercare@raclimited.com.au



RUMBALARA

Australian Family

Partnership Program

(AFPP)

The Australian Family Partnership Program (AFPP) at Rumbalara is continuing to support first-time parents in our community.

The AFPP team is made up of Liz Eliason (Nurse Supervisor), April Atkinson, Wendy-Sue Atkinson and Jannali Fermor (Family Partnership Workers), Jen Woods and Cindy Batey (Nurse/Midwife Home Visitors).

Our team of Nurses/Midwives and Family Support Workers meet families during pregnancy, and work together with the family providing strength based support during pregnancy, parenting and beyond. During the time with AFPP, families are supported to identify their own goals, be empowered in pregnancy, birth and parenting, and graduate the program when their bub turns 2yrs old.

Graduation is an opportunity to reflect on the journey, and celebrate all the achievements of the families. On February 29th 2024 we held a graduation party for 6 of our families who recently completed AFPP. This was such an exciting time as we celebrated all the successes of the past 2.5 years of working together. Even though its hard saying goodbye to families we are so proud of each mum, dad and family member, and are thankful for being a part of such an important time of their lives. Congratulations and Happy Graduation to all our strong parents.

If you know someone pregnant with their first bub who would benefit from having some extra support, check out our website or contact anfpp@raclimited.com.au for more info.

There are no age restrictions to joining AFPP; it is open to those carrying a bub that identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, living in Campaspe, Moira or Greater Shepparton area.



Reflecting on the achievements of 2023, Connected Beginnings is proud to share the completion of several impactful programs.

Education and Health Day

A day dedicated to promoting both educational and health-related awareness among our community members.

Hearing Checks

Regular assessments were offered to ensure early detection of hearing impairments in young children.

Early Years First Aid

Equipping caregivers with essential first aid skills tailored for the early years.

Dental 'Open Hour'

Providing convenient access to dental services for families in our community.

School Packs

Supporting children with necessary supplies to enhance their educational journey.

Guthupka Welcome to Country

Embracing Indigenous culture with a traditional welcome ceremony.

Medical 'Open Hour'

Providing additional opportunities for medical consultations within our community.

Yalka Yarning Sessions

Offering parental education and fostering connections with Elders.

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Early Years Health Checks Program

Regular health assessments were conducted, ensuring the wellbeing of our youngest members.

- Additionally, incentive packs were provided to children to ease any apprehensions associated with appointments, in collaboration with our Early Years doctor.
- **Early Years Dental Checks Program:** Similar to the health checks, this program offered dental assessments with the added support of incentive packs for children.
- **Swimming Lessons:** Encouraging physical activity and water safety through structured swimming sessions.
- **Early Years Christmas Party:** A festive celebration tailored for our early years community.

Cooking Sessions

Promoting healthy eating habits and enjoyable activities for children and families.

Community Cookbook

Compiling recipes and tips from our community for healthier meals.

Kid-Friendly Medical and Dental Spaces

Creating environments designed to ease children's anxieties during appointments.

Community Safe Milestone Book

Documenting and celebrating developmental milestones in a safe and inclusive manner.

Early Years Christmas Party

Continuing the tradition of spreading joy during the holiday season.

Connected Beginnings remains committed to the holistic wellbeing of our community, nurturing healthy beginnings for our youngest members and fostering strong connections among families.



★ ★
**CONNECTED
BEGINNINGS
HIGHLIGHTS**



GET IN TOUCH



MINJAARA ATKINSON
Connected Beginnings Worker
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WELCOME

OUR NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Following our recent Annual General Meeting (AGM), we extend a warm welcome to our new Board members - Neville Atkinson, Joanne Atkinson and Graham Briggs.

The Board is comprised of the following individuals: Marie Barbance, Eric Egan, Aunty Pam Pederson, Neville Atkinson, Joanne Atkinson, and Graham Briggs.

We also welcome our new Chairperson, Marie Barbance and Vice Chair, Joanne Atkinson.

Rumbalara upholds various governance responsibilities outlined within a comprehensive framework.

These responsibilities encompass adherence to common, company, and statutory laws, along with regulations, stakeholder expectations, and societal norms.

The governance areas we prioritize include, but are not limited to:

- Board Governance
- Cultural Governance
- Finance, Risk & Audit
- Quality and Compliance
- Clinical Governance



**MARIE BARBANCE-
CHAIRPERSON**



**JOANNE ATKINSON -
VICE - CHAIRPERSON**

JOIN OUR WORKFORCE

If you are interested in working for Rumbalara, please go to our website www.rumbalara.org.au or call us on 5820 0000 and speak to our People & Culture team.



Chief Health Officer Visit

On March 5th, 2024, the Victorian Chief Health Officer, Clare Looker, visited the GV Public Health Unit in Shepparton. The visit highlighted the Local Public Health Unit's significant advancements in community health and future collaborative projects.

GV Public Health extended an invitation to Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative to showcase our innovation. Shannon Drake, a proud Wamba Wamba/Jaara woman, presented the idea of establishing an innovative Rumbalara Aboriginal Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Unit. Shannon's presentation emphasised the significance of a community-controlled approach, cultural heritage integration, and focus on addressing health disparities in Aboriginal communities.

This initiative aligns with Rumbalara's goals to improve public health outcomes and stands as a model of empowerment and evidence-based practice. The Chief Health Officer's visit recognised the states desire to be informed and understand the significance of local Public Health Unit's achievements and Rumbalara's innovative efforts to improve the health outcomes within this region. Shannon's presentation outlined a promising blueprint for Aboriginal-led public health initiatives, advocating for culturally appropriate, sustainable services that are designed and delivered by Aboriginal Community controlled organisations.

This event marks a pivotal moment in the journey towards health equity and culturally integrated public health strategies, illustrating the power of collaboration and community control in fostering meaningful health outcomes.

Shannon Drake

Project Lead - **Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes**



International Womens Day

What a fantastic time we had at the Rumbalara Women's Day Lunch! Our Events team, with the help of JL Productions & Hire, put together a beautiful lunch.

A big shoutout to our amazing guest speakers and generous sponsors for making this event possible. Your support means the world to us!

Around 60 of us came together to mark this special day, all thanks to our dedicated business support team led by Erin Briggs, our 'Senior Project and Events Coordinator' in Corporate Services.

Check out some of our photos from the event!



Pictured: Sue Jackomos & Laura Stevens - Workforce Development (WFD) Team at GoTafe Orientation Day

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Empowering Our Workforce

The Workforce Development Team was established to build the skills, knowledge and capacity of our staff to meet our Community needs through Training and Education.

Our aim is to build and promote Rumbalara as an employee of choice and highlight career pathways to our young people.

Chronic CARE TEAM

Chronic Care is excited to introduce two new members to our team! First, we're thrilled to welcome back Julie-Anne Bamblett to the role of Chronic Care Coordinator after her twelve-month leave. Julie-Anne has returned to Rumbalara Health Service after completing a successful Grad year in Bachelor of Nursing. As a proud Bangerang Woman, Julie-Anne is dedicated to supporting our community on their health journey. You can reach out to Julie-Anne at Rumbalara Health Service on 58200035.

Additionally, we extend a warm welcome to Jika Lovett, who joins us in the role of Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS). Jika, a proud Gunditjmarra Gungarri Kamilaroi Man, brings extensive experience in working with the community. He's eager to connect, build stronger relationships, and support Mob in quitting smoking and vaping. Don't hesitate to give Jika a call at Rumbalara Health Service on 58200035. We're thrilled to have Julie-Anne and Jika on board to serve our community!

GET IN TOUCH!



4,748

NO OF TREATMENTS PERFORMED

603

CLIENTS ATTENDING THEIR APPOINTMENTS

201

CLIENTS WHO FAILED TO ATTEND THEIR APPOINTMENTS

DENTAL CLINIC UPDATE

The beginning of 2024 has been very busy for the dental clinic. The Melbourne University student program commenced in January, which entails final year dental students to work within Aboriginal Organisations to help understand and reduce the oral health disparities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

Outreach clinics have commenced, and we have made visits to Cummergunja and Seymour communities. All our four chairs are operational 4 days per week and 2 on Fridays, which reduces wait times for appointments.

Three of our current staff members are currently undertaking Certificate III in Dental Assisting and will be fully qualified Dental Assistants by the end of the year.

If you are unable to attend your appointment, please contact the clinic on 58 200080 or reply NO to the text message you receive.

To ensure the best possible service delivery and practice, the dental clinic has multiple audits that are conducted regularly.

For the months of January and February, the following audits were conducted:

- Overall infection control: 98%
- PPE observational audits: 98%
- Secure storage of medications: 100%
- Sterilisation records: 100%
- Tracking of sterilisation records: 100%
- Observation chair wiping: 96%

Please remember to have your annual dental checkup, children should have their first dental check at 2 years of age.

If you would like to make a dental appointment or just come in for a yarn about your needs, please contact the clinic on 5820 0080

WOONGI UPDATE

WULUMBARRA MARRIN-BIDJA WORKSHOP RECAP

We are thrilled to share with you the enriching experience we recently had at the Wulumbarra Marrin-Bidja Workshop. Hosted on the ancestral lands of Kaliethban Mooroopna, this workshop provided us with a profound opportunity to delve into our cultural heritage and traditions.

Cultural Immersion and Learning

The workshop brought together 12 participants from our group, eager to engage in activities and discussions centered around Cultural Fire practices. Throughout the day, we were privileged to listen to elders and community members who generously shared their stories and wisdom, illuminating the significance of fire in Indigenous culture. It was a day of profound learning and connection as we explored the deep-rooted ties between our people and the land.

Gratitude and Reflection

As the workshop drew to a close, we departed with hearts full of gratitude for the knowledge gained and the connections forged.

We left feeling more deeply connected to our culture and committed to preserving and honouring it.

Join Us in Future Events

The Wulumbarra Marrin-Bidja Workshop was a testament to the power of community and cultural exchange. We are immensely proud to have been a part of it and are excited to extend an invitation to you to join us in future events.

About Woongi Men's Group

At Woongi Men's Group, our mission is to reconnect with culture and foster stronger community bonds. We are dedicated to building strength within our men to serve as positive role models within our community. We meet every Thursday, offering transportation within Shepparton and Mooroopna, with lunch provided.

Get Involved

If you share our passion for cultural enrichment and community empowerment, we invite you to reach out to the Woongi unit at 0358 225 640. Join us on this journey of growth, learning, and camaraderie.

APOLOGY TO THE STOLEN GENERATION



Pictured from left is Shannon Balfour, event organiser Leanne Sangster, Robert Sangster, Nartarsha Napanangka Bamblett, Gordon Bamblett, Sophie Howell, Tina Ripper, and Shannon Berry. Photo: Deanne Jeffers

We had a heartfelt commemoration on Tuesday, February 13th, 2024, marking the Anniversary of the Apology to the Stolen Generation. The community came together at Woongi Unit on Knight Street in Shepparton from 12:30pm to 2:30pm for a special event filled with reflection and unity, accompanied by a delicious BBQ lunch. It was a meaningful gathering where all were welcome to join.

Want to read more?

Scan the QR code to take you straight to the article.





RUMBALARA
ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE LTD.

Rumbalara Family & Engagement Services

KOORIE SUPPORTED Playgroup

REGISTER NOW

Koorie Supported Play Group invites Parents, Grandparents and Caregivers with children from 4 years and under to come and join in our friendly, culturally safe environment for you and your child. Come and share your ideas - we'd love to see you at our Play Group!



Tuesday's - 10:00am to 1:00pm
St Andrews community centre
15A St Andrews Rd, Shepparton



Wednesday's - 1:30pm - 3:00pm
Gowrie St Primary School
169-173 The Blvd, Shepparton



Thursday's - 2:00pm to 3:00pm
Mooroopna Park Community Hub
45 Maclsaac Road Mooroopna



Friday's - 10:00am to 1:00pm
Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-Operative
Harmony Centre 20 Rumbalara Rd, Mooroopna



Our Activities include: Morning Tea, Painting, Music, Story-telling, Playdough, and a lot more!

**Transport Provided - Please contact Erica prior to the event*

To Register - Phone: 58312010 | Erica Bell: 0456555428

Harmony Day at Rumbalara

Harmony Day at Rumbalara was a delightful BBQ celebration that brought the community together on March 21st.

We extend our gratitude to the Housing Team whose efforts made this event possible. Rumbalara takes pride in its diverse staff representing various nationalities.



FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

scan the QR codes



Heart Of Community | Holistic | Integrated | Respectful

We commit to work in partnership with individuals, families and community, to support them in achieving an optimal quality and standard of living. Through active partnerships we will strengthen Health & Culture. Our People, Our Way!

Artist: Alkina Edwards

BECOME A MEMBER

It takes just a few minutes to join Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative and get culturally appropriate care and support whenever you need it. As a community-controlled organisation, becoming a member allows you to contribute and have a say in how we operate.

To register as a member online, you must have a valid email address and your Certificate of Aboriginality.

Once your application is processed, it must be approved by the Board. You can expect a response within 6-8 weeks.

HOW TO APPLY

➤ Apply online - www.rumbalara.org.au

📍 Drop into Corporate Services and fill out a form

📄 Download the membership form from our website - email your application to contact@raclimited.com.au



EXISTING MEMBERS

To get the latest information and organisational updates, please let us know your email address.

Call the Corporate Office on 5820 0000 or email the Communications Team at chanoa.seala@raclimited.com.au or natalie.visentin@raclimited.com.au