

Aboriginal Health Unit – NAIDOC Health Tent

Description

In 2015 the Aboriginal Health Unit coordinated the annual NAIDOC Health Tent Project for the 11th year running. The Health Tent provides opportunistic health screening, health promotion and early intervention to those who registered on the day.

Inside the Health Tent, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal health staff distribute free health resources and culturally appropriate health information that focuses on risk factors that contributes to poor health outcomes.

Objectives and Aims

The objective of the Health Tent is to contribute to the reduction of the impact of chronic disease within the Aboriginal Community residing within the Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District (NBMLHD). This is done through:

- Raising awareness of chronic disease risk factors and preventive action
- Provide a culturally sensitive and opportunistic screen program
- Provide timely referral pathways where relevant
- Provide an opportunity to develop/maintain relationships between the Aboriginal community, NBMLHD staff and external service provider

Background

The NAIDOC event is organised by Penrith Council. The Health Tent is coordinated by the Aboriginal Health Unit with the valuable support of many departments within the LHD as well and non-Government partners.

- Health Promotion
- Public Health
- Drug and Alcohol service
- Nepean Diabetes Service
- Community Health
- Oral Health
- Cancer Council
- Marrin Weejali
- Penrith Women's Health Centre
- Breast Screen Australia



Results

- 215 people registered on the day, 149 of the registered participants identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (69%).
- Staff from public health administered 104 flu vaccinations, 66% were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
- Type 2 Diabetes screening (blood sugar, BMI and lifestyle survey) was conducted on 235 participants.
- 63% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants identified diabetes in their family history.
- 18% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders participants reported being diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes.
- 58% of tent participants were overweight or obese.
- 132 of participants were residence of an LGA covered by NBMLHD.
- Brief intervention to quit smoking was provided to 65 people.

Service Outcomes

- Increases communication and builds trust between health staff and the Aboriginal community.
- Improved health literacy and understanding of behaviours among Aboriginal people to increase control over their own health.
- Increase in Aboriginal people accessing maternal services, oral health, connecting care and drug and alcohol services.
- Increase in vaccination among Aboriginal people in NBMLHD.

Fast Facts on Aboriginal Health

- 93.5% of Aboriginal five-year olds are fully vaccinated in the NBMLHD
- 57.4% of Aboriginal people in NSW are overweight or obese
- 37% of Aboriginal adults in NSW smoke, this is twice that of the non-Aboriginal population

Fast Facts on NAIDOC

- Between 2012-15 a total of 857 people have registered with the Health Tent project
- 17 different health stations are available within the tent
- More than 50 NBMLHD staff are involved in the delivery of the Health Tent project
- NAIDOC stands for National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee