



ILLAWARRA  
ABORIGINAL  
MEDICAL  
SERVICE

Illawarra Aboriginal  
Medical Service



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023|24

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ABORIGINAL  
MEDICAL  
SERVICE



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#### MAIN BUILDING

150 Church Street  
Wollongong NSW

#### COMMUNITY SERVICES

355 Keira Street  
Wollongong NSW

#### THE LITTLE HOUSE

351 Keira Street  
Wollongong NSW



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

6

**SECTION 1:  
OUR ORGANISATION**  
*8 / EIGHT*  
**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.**  
*9 / NINE*  
**OUR STORY.**  
*10 / TEN*  
**MESSAGE FROM  
THE CHAIRPERSON.**  
*12 / TWELVE*  
**MESSAGE FROM  
THE CEO.**

14

**SECTION 2:  
COMMUNITY SERVICES  
TEAM (CST)**  
*16 / SIXTEEN*  
**SORRY DAY.**  
*18 / EIGHTEEN*  
**IAMS ONE MOB  
DANCE GROUP.**  
**KOORI SMART  
RECOVERY PROGRAM.**  
*19 / NINETEEN*  
**WOMENS GROUP.**  
**ELDERS LUNCH.**  
**AUSTRALIAS BIGGEST  
MORNING TEA.**  
*20 / TWENTY*  
**HEALTHY DEADLY  
KIDS PROGRAM.**  
*22 / TWENTY-TWO*  
**INDIVIDUAL EPISODES  
OF CARE.**  
**STAFF'S EPISODES OF  
CARE WITH CLIENTS.**

26

**SECTION 3:  
DENTAL SERVICES  
TEAM**  
*28 / TWENTY-EIGHT*  
**DENTAL SCHOOL  
SCREENINGS (MOBILE  
DENTAL UNIT)**  
*29 / TWENTY-NINE*  
**HEALTHY DEADLY  
KIDS (HDK)**  
**MOUTHGUARD  
PROJECT 2024**  
*30 / THIRTY*  
**ACCREDITATION  
2024-27**  
**STATISTICS**  
*31 / THIRTY-ONE*  
**MEET THE TEAM  
STATISTICS**

32

**SECTION 4:  
HEALTH  
SERVICES  
TEAM**

38

**SECTION 5:  
NAIDOC  
DAPTO  
SHOWGROUND**

50

**SECTION 6:  
FINANCE  
MANAGEMENT  
LETTER**





# SECTION 1: OUR ORGANISATION

**8 / EIGHT**  
**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

**9 / NINE**  
**OUR STORY**

**10 / TEN**  
**MESSAGE FROM  
THE CHAIRPERSON**

**12 / TWELVE**  
**MESSAGE FROM  
THE CEO**







Artwork by Jasmine Sarin

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**"WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE DHARAWAL PEOPLE WHO ARE THE TRADITIONAL OWNERS OF THE LAND WHICH WE WORK ON. WE ALSO PAY RESPECT TO OUR ELDERS BOTH PAST AND PRESENT."**

The space of 40 years has seen the IAMS come a long way. The IAMS would like to acknowledge the staff that work tirelessly, our clients that continue to be supportive while we continue to improve

our services, as well as our funding bodies that provide us the funds to ensure our services and programs are possible

## OUR STORY

The initial service provided the local community with a doctor one day a week, through an arrangement with Redfern Aboriginal Medical Service.

In June 1984 the IAMS was incorporated, and with this came the first success in obtaining funding grants. The Service moved to a small house in Church Street, Wollongong, and despite a few set backs and financial challenges, by June 1986 it was able to purchase essential equipment, and employ a receptionist, an administrator, and a doctor five days a week.

In 1987 the IAMS gained financial assistance from NSW Health Department, and with the assistance of further grants, was able to supply a dental service two days a week, as well as employ a Drug and Alcohol Worker, Public Health Worker, and Assistant.

This expansion meant the Service was fast outgrowing its premises. Numerous applications for funding to purchase new premises were submitted, with no success, until 1994, when a grant was finally obtained from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission. This grant enabled the purchase of the block of land next door to the Church Street premises, and the construction of a new, purpose-built facility, at the cost of \$1.8 million.

In January 1998 the IAMS opened its new premises at 150 Church Street to the Illawarra community. The Service continued to expand, with the introduction of a wide range of new services (such as Substance Misuse, Psychology and Counselling, Men's Health) and the further enhancement of existing services.

Such enhancement led to the need for the Substance Misuse Service to move to separate premises not far from the IAMS site, on Keira Street. However, by late 2004 these premises became unsuitable for this fast developing service, and larger premises were sought in Dapto for both the Substance Misuse Service, as well as many of the other services provided by the IAMS. This led to the IAMS being able to offer services from both the Wollongong and Dapto branches.

Unfortunately the Dapto branch was closed in 2020 and all health, community, dental and transport services now operate from the Wollongong IAMS site on Church Street.

**Present**  
Today, the IAMS continues to strive towards developing and enhancing new and existing services in an ongoing endeavour to better the overall health and social wellbeing of the Illawarra Indigenous community.





Dear Members,

**D** Thank you for your attendance at today's Annual General Meeting and for the consistent involvement and engagement with our service. Without the engagement, input and feedback from our community we would not be able to successfully achieve our strategic and organizational objectives.

We have now reached a milestone for the organization as we are now the largest it has ever been. We have witnessed exceptional growth in respect to our staff development, our diverse range of services offered, the increase in community attendance and stable Medicare generation.

This is an outstanding achievement and is an amazing reflection of the hard work, commitment and dedication provided by

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

our staff, Board of Directors, and allied health professionals.

We have successfully obtained additional funding from DSS to allow us to offer even more services, around the areas of Domestic Violence and Sexual Health. This funding will be ongoing and will allow us to offer a holistic approach to healthcare in a culturally safe environment.

A huge thank you to our funding bodies such as Department of Health, NSW Health, Department of Communities & Justice, Rural Doctor's Network, Coordinare, NACCHO, AH&MRC, National Indigenous Australians Agency and all of our partners for allowing us the achieve such fantastic results.

I would also like to thank KPMG and Crowe, who have done a fantastic job with maintaining our financial obligations and ensuring our reporting requirements are on time and accurate.

Again, I would like to thank all the staff, the Community, the Board of Directors, our Allied Health professionals, and our funding bodies for allowing us to achieve such amazing results for the Illawarra Aboriginal Community. Yours Sincerely,

Scott Morgan  
Chairperson  
Illawarra Aboriginal Medical  
Service





# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Dear Members,

**D**This year has certainly been a big year, but it was also a very rewarding year for both the organisation and especially for our community.

I would like to say a big thank you to all staff that have been working so hard to make sure we are delivering the best possible service to the community.

The IAMS has achieved so much over the past year, and you will read about it in this year's annual report

Our staff have been working hard within the community through our school base programs Healthy Deadly Kids, Koori Smart, Sista girls, circle sentencing and many others

We held two large community events that were a great success. The first being Sorry Day which was held in May and the second was our NAIDOC event in October at Dapto Showgrounds. The organization received a great community turnout, fantastic feedback and we are really looking forward to our next community event.

This year we have seen through our clinical services

Community members seen: 5,623

Episodes of Health Care: 20, 595

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Checks: 655

GP Management Plans: 291

Transport Services: 2,115

I would like to thank our Board of Directors, staff, Allied Health Workers, funding bodies and especially thank you our community for your ongoing support.

Yours Faithfully,

Kane Ellis CEO  
Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service





## SECTION 2: COMMUNITY SERVICE TEAM

**16 / SIXTEEN**  
**SORRY DAY**

**18 / EIGHTEEN**  
**IAMS ONE MOB**  
**DANCE GROUP**

**KOORI SMART**  
**RECOVERY PROGRAM**

**19 / NINETEEN**  
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**INDIVIDUAL EPISODES**  
**OF CARE**

**STAFF'S EPISODES OF**  
**CARE WITH CLIENTS**







SORRY DAY MURAL 2024



The CST team has been kept on their toes with many new clients and the groups growing in numbers each week. Caseloads have been intense with many clients having complex needs.

The CST is always looking for ways to bridge the gaps within the community to provide better outcomes for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community members.

During this reporting period there has been a change of staff with Ivan Morris

resigning on the 25th March 2024, Mik Lindsay AOD resigned on the 9th of February 2024.

Kacy Toomey, who was previously in the Programs Officer position moved to the AOD position on the 4th of April 2024.

Sharon Twyford commenced employment in the AOD position 11th April 2024 working three days a week.

Tyson Demos commenced employment as the Coordinator for the Healthy

Deadly Kids program in February working 4 days a week.

Bobbi Law commenced employment part-time as the Healthy Deadly Kids Facilitator 3 days a week.

The Community Services Team has had a very busy six months and are looking forward to the new programs starting up in the following six months.

### **SORRY DAY**

Sorry Day was held in May this year, it was a little bit different in the way that we held the Sorry Day event. It was a more relaxed day with community designing a mural and designing their own artworks as part of a healing day.





## IAMS ONE MOB DANCE GROUP

The IAMS One Mob dance group attended the St George Indigenous round on the 30th of June where they performed at Jubilee Stadium one of the home grounds for St George Illawarra Dragons. This was a very exciting time for the dancers as they had never performed in front of such a large crowd, it was a first for many of the performers to showcase what they had learnt over the weeks of practising.

## PROGRAMS

### KOORI SMART RECOVERY PROGRAM

The Koori Smart recovery program had a total of 413 participants in this reporting period.

Koori Smart participants designed a mural for the Corrective Services Foyer. Many guest speakers have attended the Koori Smart program to assist our clients.

Koori Smart clients are always ready to go fishing.



## WOMENS GROUP

The Women's groups (sista girls) program had a total of 312 participants. Several guest speakers have attended both groups during this reporting period to assist clients, these have included: ALS (Aboriginal Legal Service), Women Illawarra (Domestic Violence support), Centrelink, Illawarra Drug and Alcohol Service (IDAS), Wesley Mission, Services NSW. The women have learnt many art techniques over the period which have included weaving, painting, scratch boarding.



## ELDERS LUNCH

In April an Elders lunch was held in conjunction with DCJ who provided lunch for the Elders to discuss how they can work better with community. This has been successful, and the Elders have stated that they would like to meet up every three months to discuss concerns.







### HEALTHY DEADLY KIDS PROGRAM

Tyson and Bobbi have been very busy with the Healthy Deadly Kids Program attending schools with an average of 35-40 primary school students each session.

There have been more bookings with local schools for the next six months.

Healthy Deadly kids is a nine-week program which includes the following:

- Introduction
- Mental Health
- Nutrition
- Physical Activity
- Smoking and Vaping
- Dental
- Bullying & Social Media
- Graduation



# CST INDIVIDUAL EPISODES OF CARE



DOES NOT INCLUDE CLIENTS WHO ATTEND PROGRAMS

## ALCOHOL + OTHER DRUGS (ROLE 1)

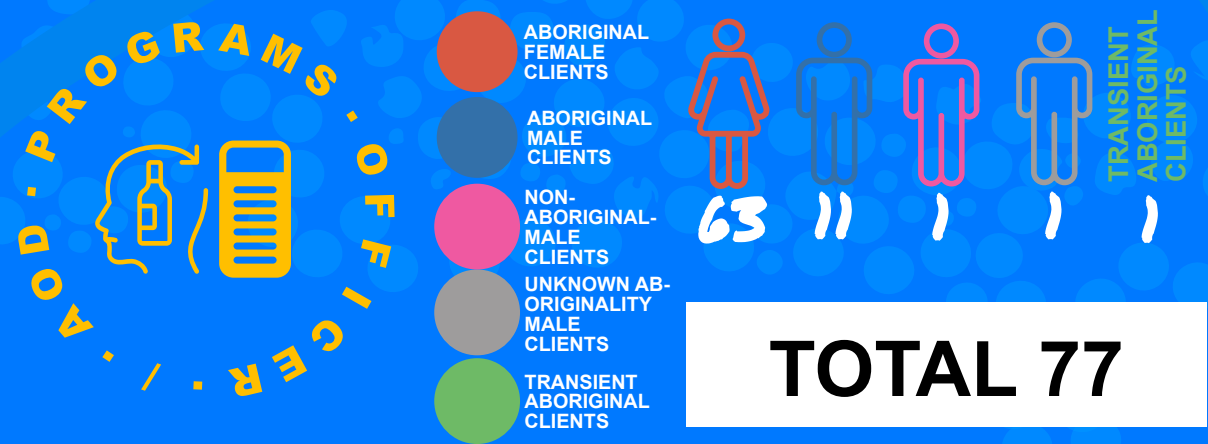


## ALCOHOL + OTHER DRUGS (ROLE 2)

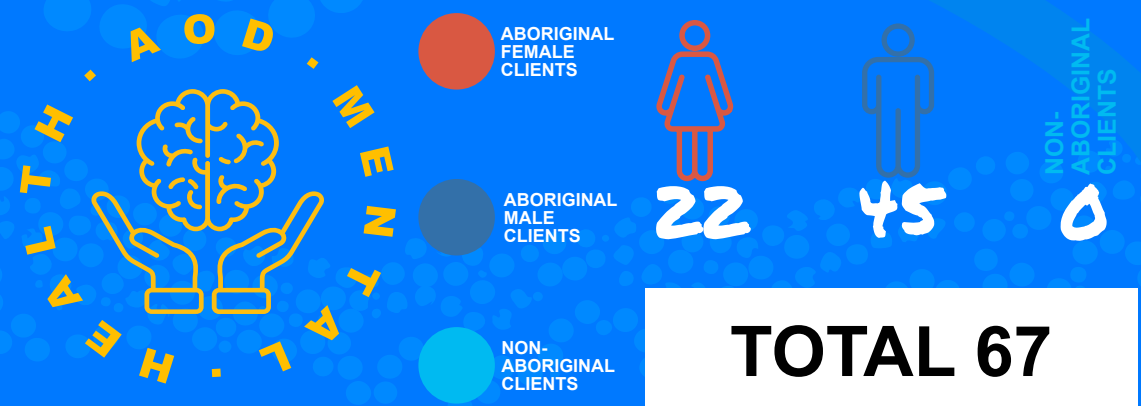




PROGRAMS OFFICER / AOD



AOD (MENTAL HEALTH)



SOCIAL + EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING





## SECTION 3: DENTAL SERVICES TEAM

**28 / TWENTY-EIGHT  
DENTAL SCHOOL  
SCREENINGS (MOBILE  
DENTAL UNIT)**

**29 / TWENTY-NINE  
HEALTHY DEADLY  
KIDS (HDK)**

**MOUTHGUARD PROJECT  
2024**

**30 / THIRTY  
ACCREDITATION 2024-27**

**STATISTICS**

**31 / THIRTY-ONE  
MEET THE TEAM**

**STATISTICS**



# TEAM · DENTAL · SERVICES

## DENTAL SERVICES TEAM

DENTAL SERVICES



### DENTAL SCHOOL SCREENINGS (MOBILE DENTAL UNIT)

The dental team have been busy this year out and about attending preschools, primary schools, and high schools to provide educational talks and dental screenings.

We have received a one-off funding grant from COHS which a mobile dental unit was purchased. Dental can now provide more preventative dental treatments at the schools with checks, cleans and fissure seals.

The DST team works closely with our Aboriginal Health Practitioners from HST team for Otitis media school screenings so we can attend schools together to help improve Indigenous Oral health and Ear health in our community.



### HEALTHY DEADLY KIDS (HDK)

Dental have also been working along with the Healthy Deadly Kids team to attend

primary schools to teach students the importance about oral health and to make it fun and educational with a power point presentation and games after. The HDK team helps deliver weekly sessions

on health and wellbeing topics. These include oral health, mental health, and nutrition just to name a few.



### MOUTHGUARD PROJECT 2024

Mouth Guard project ran at the start of the year before sport season started

DST happily made around 10 Koori coloured fitted mouthguards for the

youth in our community who plays in a contact sport. Protecting your teeth while wearing the Aboriginal flag colours is showing pride and strength for our culture. The kids absolutely loved them and couldn't wait to show them off on the fields.

Ark Health happily donated some materials to help with this project. We thank them for their ongoing support and partnership with this annual project.

### ACCREDITATION 2024-2027

The DST team has been awarded full Dental Accreditation for another 3 years to October 2027.

Achieving accreditation demonstrates a commitment to the provision of excellent dental care and continuous quality improvement within the

practice environment, patient safety, and quality of care.



Accredited to the National safety and quality health service (NSQHS) standards, as part of the quality innovation performance limited (QIP) Private Dental Practice Accreditation program. Accredited to October 2027.

### DENTAL WAITLIST

Dental have a dentist 5 days a week which means no waitlist. Our clients can get an appointment within a month, and we prioritise our pain clients to get in quicker with emergency spot appointments.

## MEET THE TEAM



Sarah McKay  
**DENTAL SERVICES  
TEAM MANAGER**



Sunil Surapaneni  
**DENTIST**



Nini Li  
**DENTIST**



Carla Gualtieri  
**ORAL HEALTH  
THERAPIST**  
(maternity leave  
from August 2024)



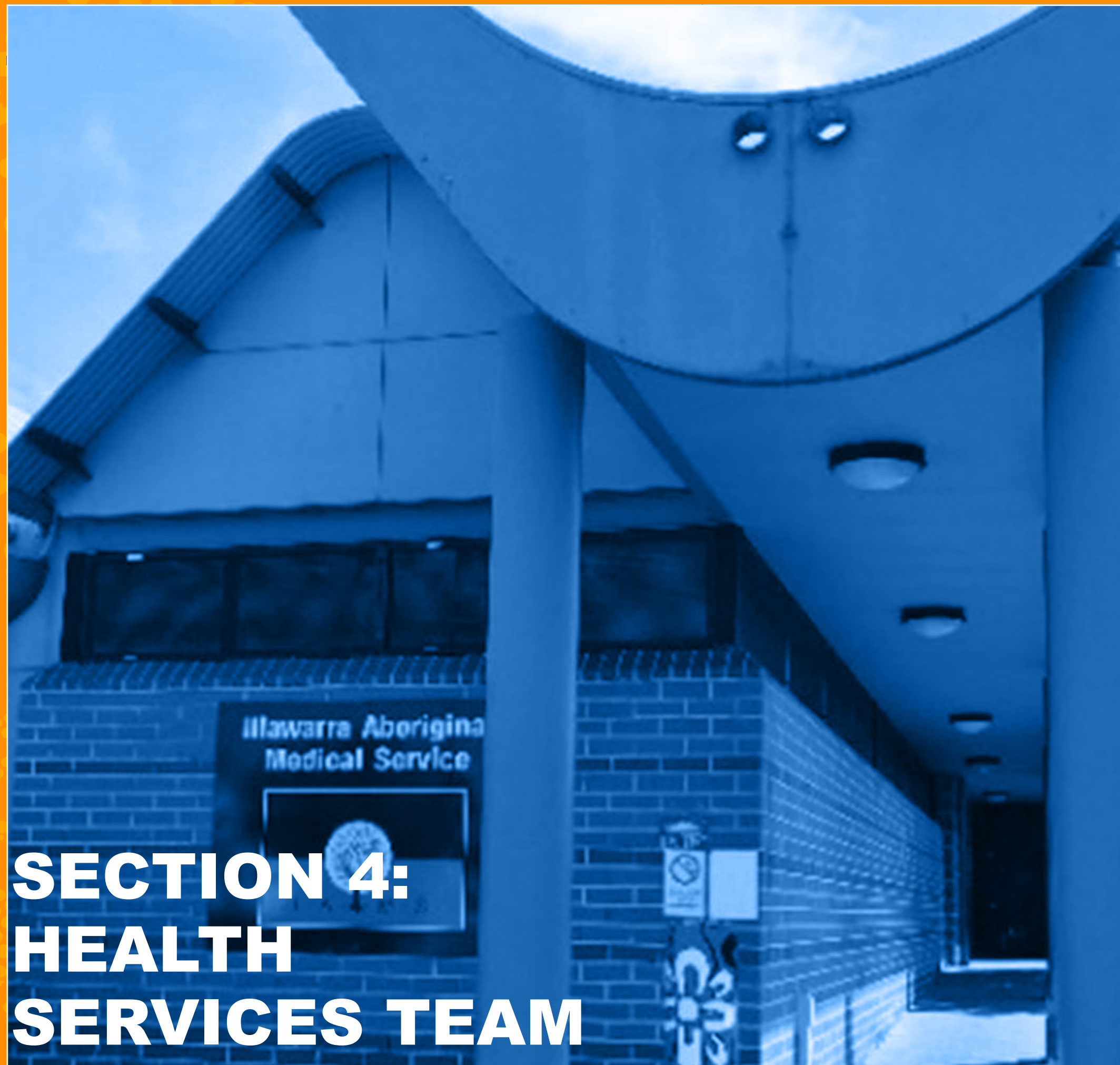
Elle Evans  
**DENTAL  
ASSISTANT**



Latisha Coslovich  
**DENTAL  
ASSISTANT**







# SECTION 4: HEALTH SERVICES TEAM

## HEALTH SERVICES TEAM

IAMS RECEPTION



As we reflect on another year at the Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service, we are filled with gratitude for the resilience and strength of our community.

Our dedicated Health Service Team has worked tirelessly to provide comprehensive, culturally appropriate healthcare to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, consistently aligning our efforts with our vision of health equity and our mission to empower our community through holistic health services.

Our team's work embodies our commitment to cultural safety, respect, and community engagement. We believe that health is more than just the absence of illness; it encompasses physical, mental, and social well-being.

As such, we have focused on a range of initiatives, from mental health support to chronic disease management, ensuring that our programs reflect the unique needs of our community.

Our team consists of five skilled General Practitioners who deliver primary care services tailored to the unique health requirements of our Aboriginal community. This year, we celebrated a significant milestone: Dr. Rowena Ivers marked her 20 years of dedicated service with IAMS.

Her commitment and expertise have made a profound impact on our community, and we are grateful for her contributions over

the years. Complementing our GP's, we have two Aboriginal Health Practitioners who provide culturally informed care, bridging the gap between traditional and contemporary health practices. The nursing team, comprised of four registered nurses, offers essential support in managing chronic conditions and promoting preventive health measures.

Our reception staff, consisting of three dedicated receptionists,



ensure a welcoming environment and facilitate smooth access to our services. Alongside our core medical team, we take pride in offering a variety of mental health services, including safe yarning, counselling, depo management and psychology support, highlighting the crucial role mental well-being plays in overall health.

Our Integrated Team Care Program (ITC) is designed to enhance the

coordination of care for patients with complex health needs, ensuring they receive comprehensive support. Transportation services further enhance our capacity to serve our community, making healthcare accessible to those who may face barriers in reaching health services.

This year, we have also expanded our allied health offerings through eight visiting clinics, which include:



**DIABETES EDUCATOR:**  
Providing education and support for diabetes management.



**EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGIST:**  
Promoting physical activity as a key component of health and well-being.



**NUTRITIONIST:**  
Offering guidance on healthy eating and nutrition.



**AUDIOLOGIST AND AUDIOMETRIST (HEARING AID):**  
Conducting hearing assessments and providing hearing aids and support.



**OPTOMETRIST (BRIAN HOLDEN):**  
Ensuring access to eye care services, including vision assessments.



**NDIS APPLICATION SUPPORT:**  
Helping patients navigate the National Disability Insurance Scheme to access necessary services.

Through our collaborative approach, the Health Service Team at the Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service remains committed to improving health outcomes, fostering resilience, and empowering our community towards a healthier future. We look forward to continuing our work in the coming year, with a focus on enhancing our services and ensuring that every member of our community receives the care they deserve.

#### Clinical Team Services

- GP consultations
- Transport Services
- Health Assessments & Plans
- Smoking Cessation
- Otitis Media School Screening
- Immunisations
- Eye & Ear Health
- Womens Health
- Chronic Disease Support (Integrated Team Care Program)
- Health Education
- Wound Management
- Mental Health Services
- Antenatal & Postnatal Care
- Psychology & Counselling



#### MEDICARE INCREASE OF 10.8%

2021-2022 total \$545,865.25  
2022-2023 total \$895,880.25  
2023-2024 total \$992,966.90

#### FAILED TO ATTEND APPOINTMENTS INCREASED BY 14.6%

2021-2022 total 2262  
2022-2023 total 3092  
2023-2024 total 3546





## SECTION 5: NAIDOC 2024

# NAIDOC 2024 DAPTO SHOWGROUNDS



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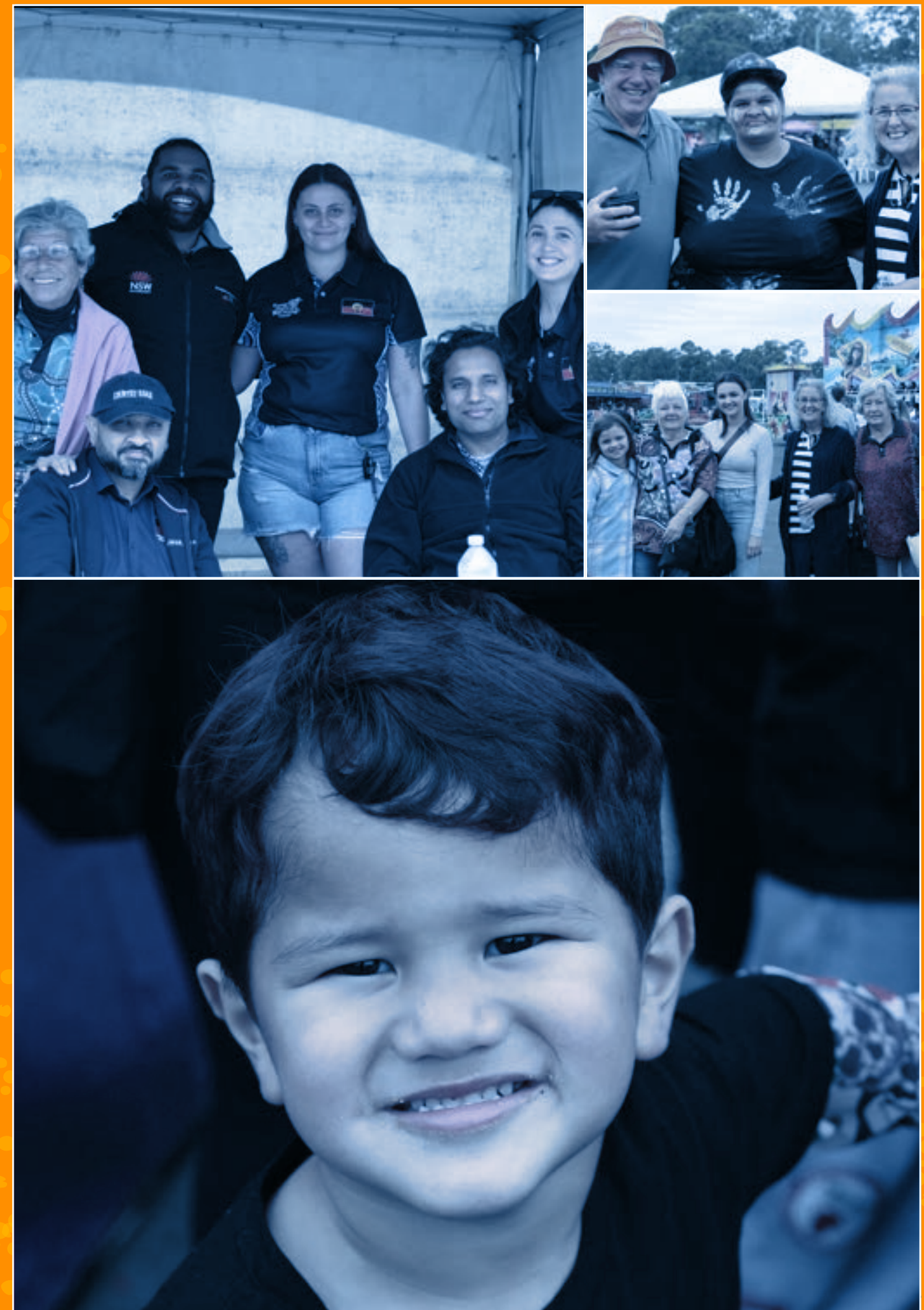
























# SECTION 6 FINANCE MANAGEMENT LETTER

**52 / FIFTY-TWO**  
**AUDITORS INDEPENDENT**  
**DECLARATION**







Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service

ABN: 23 886 179 327

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Auditors Independence Declaration under Section 339.50 of the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 to the Directors of Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2024, there have been:

- (i) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 in relation to the audit; and
- (ii) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Crowe Audit Australia

CROWE AUDIT AUSTRALIA

Gabriel Faponle

Audit Partner  
Registered Company Auditor No. 513644

Dated at Dubbo on the 1st day of October 2024

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Independent Auditor's Report

To the Members of Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service

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www.crowe.com.au

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service (the Corporation) which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2024, the statement of comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the declaration by those charged with governance.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the Corporation is in accordance with the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006, including:

- (a) giving a true and fair view of the Corporation's financial position as at 30 June 2024 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- (b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the Corporations Regulations 2001.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the Company in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We confirm that the independence declaration required by the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006, which has been given to the directors of the Corporation, would be in the same terms if given to the directors as at the time of this auditor's report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

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### Other Information

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information is the Directors' report and the Detailed Operating Statement accompanying the financial report.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report, or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

### Responsibilities of the Directors for the Financial Report

The directors of the Corporation are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing the ability of the Corporation to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the Corporation or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

### Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Corporation's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the directors.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Corporation's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the



audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Corporation to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the directors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during the audit.

*Crowe Audit Australia*

**CROWE AUDIT AUSTRALIA**

*Gabriel Faponle*

**Gabriel Faponle**  
**Audit Partner**  
**Registered Company Auditor No. 513644**

Dated at Dubbo on the 1st day of October 2024





Illawarra Aboriginal  
Medical Service



ILLAWARRA  
ABORIGINAL  
MEDICAL  
SERVICE