

Summary Indigenous Health

(Australian Indigenous Health InfoNet) <http://www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au/health-facts/summary#fni-1>

What is known about the Indigenous population?

There were around 562,681 Indigenous people living in Australia in 2010 [1]. Detailed population information is not available for 2010, but in 2006 there were around 463,900 Aboriginal people, 33,100 Torres Strait Islanders, and 20,200 people of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent [2]. Indigenous people comprise 2.6% of the total Australian population. NSW has the largest number of Indigenous people. The NT has the highest percentage of Indigenous people among its population. For more details on the Indigenous population in each state and territory see the table below.

Table 1: Estimated Indigenous population, by state and territory, Australia, 30 June 2010

State or territory	Indigenous population	Proportion of Australian Indigenous population (%)	Proportion of state or territory population (%)
NSW	165,190	29.4	2.3
Victoria	36,734	6.5	0.7
Queensland	160,514	28.5	3.6
WA	76,218	13.5	3.4
SA	30,382	5.4	1.9
Tasmania	20,086	3.6	4
ACT	4,709	0.8	1.3
NT	68,599	12.2	30.5
Australia	562,681	100	2.6

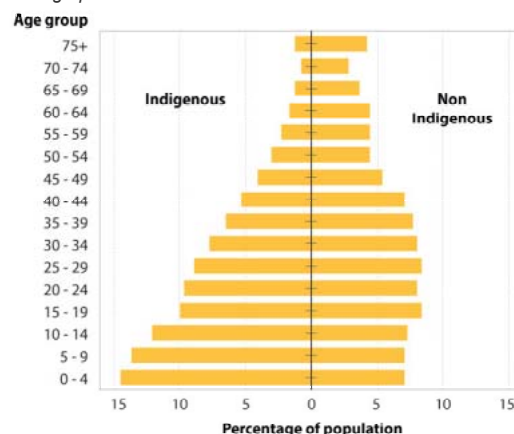
Source: Derived from ABS, 2009 [1], ABS, 2010 [3]

Note: 1. Indigenous population figures based on June 2009 projections, total population figures based on demographic information from December 2010.

Almost 32 out of 100 Indigenous people live in major cities, 21 out of 100 in inner regional areas, 22 out of 100 in outer regional areas, 10 out of 100 in remote areas, and 16 out of 100 in very remote areas [2].

The Indigenous population is much younger overall than the non-Indigenous population [2]. According to the 2006 Australian census, about 37 out of 100 Indigenous people were aged less than 15 years, compared with 19 out of 100 non-Indigenous people. About 3 out of 100 Indigenous people were aged 65 years or over, compared with 13 out of 100 non-Indigenous people. A comparison of the of the age profiles of the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations is provided in the following figure.

Figure 1 Population pyramid of Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations, 2010



What is known about Indigenous births?

In 2008, there were 15,011 births registered in Australia where one or both parents were Indigenous (five out of every 100 births) [4]. Overall, Indigenous women had more children and had them at younger ages than did non-Indigenous women.

Based on the pattern of births in recent years, Indigenous women would have, on average, around 2.5 births in their lifetime, compared with 2.0 births for non-Indigenous women [4]. Approximately 70 out of 100 Indigenous mothers were 30 years or younger when they had their babies, compared with 46 out of 100 non-Indigenous mothers. About 20 in 100 Indigenous mothers were teenagers, compared with four in 100 of all Australian mothers.

In 2007, babies born to Indigenous women on average weighed 200 grams less than those born to non-Indigenous women [5]. Babies born to Indigenous women were twice as likely to be of low birth weight (less than 2,500 grams) than were those born to non-Indigenous women. (Low birth weight can increase the risk of health problems.)



References

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2009) *Experimental estimates and projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 1991 to 2021*. Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics
2. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2008) *Population characteristics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians: 2006*. Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics
3. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2010) *Australian demographic statistics, Dec 2009*. Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics
4. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2009) *Births Australia, 2008*. Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics
5. Laws P, Sullivan EA (2009) *Australia's mothers and babies 2007*. Sydney: AIHW National Perinatal Statistics Unit

STUDENTS AND SPONSORING CLUBS 2010 (Graduates- awaiting Confirmation)

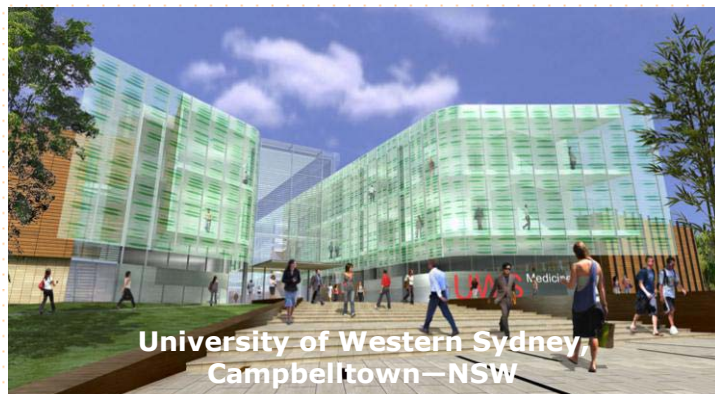
Anthony O'Donnell		Charles Sturt University	Health Science (Mental Health)	NSW Health
Brenda Holt	GRADUATED	Southern Cross University	Indigenous Health Studies	NSW Health
Albert Torrens		University of Curtin	Indigenous Community Health	RC of South Sydney
Kerri Hine		University of New England	Nursing	RC of Morrisett
Courtney Bethel	GRADUATED	University of Newcastle	Nursing	RC of Williamstown
Susan Morris		University of Newcastle	Nursing	RC of Williamstown
Michael Strong		University of Newcastle	Medicine	RC of Orange North
Sean White	GRADUATED	University of Newcastle	Medicine	RC of Parkes
Murray Haar		University of NSW	Medicine	RC of Parkes
Haylee Solomons		University of NSW	Medicine	RC of Fairy Meadow
Edjoni Blackledge		University of NSW	Medicine	RC of Miranda
Tarni Hinton		University of Sydney	Physiotherapy	RC of Gynea
Daniel Mulholland		University of Sydney	Public Health	NSW Health
Wendy Robinson		University of Sydney	Diagnostic Radiography	NSW Health
Kristy Morgan		University of Western Sydney	Medicine	RC of Macarthur Sunrise
Angela Wood		University of Western Sydney	Medicine	NSW Health
Raquel Fraser		University of Western Sydney	Medicine	RC of Illawarra Sunrise
New South Wales				
Cassandra Dodd		Charles Darwin University	Social Work	Pratt Foundation
Kerry Ann Leaver		Charles Darwin University	Behavioural Science	Pratt Foundation
Donna Coulthard		Charles Darwin University	Child & Family Health	Pratt Foundation
Luarna Walsh		Bachelor University	Nursing	Pratt Foundation
Karen Kelso		Bachelor University	Indigenous Health Studies	Pratt Foundation
Northern Territory				
Mia Strasek-Barker	GRADUATED	Griffith University	Public Health	RC of Balmoral
Ines Francia		Griffith University	Pharmacy	Pratt Foundation
Shelly Fraser		James Cook University	Medicine	Pratt Foundation
Alexander Kuhle		James Cook University	Physiotherapy	Pratt Foundation
Rebekah Kuhle		James Cook University	Nursing	Pratt Foundation
Gari Watson		James Cook University	Dental Surgery	ANZ Bank Cairns
Melissa Walker	GRADUATED	University of Southern Queensland	Masters of Mental Health	Susan Faulkner
Bellinda Barker		University Sunshine Coast	Nursing	RC of Toowoomba East
Renae Silver		University of Sunshine Coast	Social Work	RC of Buderim
Melanie Williams		University Sunshine Coast	Human Services	Pratt Foundation
Nicole Willmet		University of Sunshine Coast	Psychology & Exercise Science	Pratt Foundation
Queensland				
Jessica Bowron	GRADUATED	Deakin University	Nursing	RC of Geelong
Annette Leach		Deakin University	Nursing	RC of Boroondara/Barinsdale
Teagen Cornelissens		LaTrobe University	Nursing	RC of Beaumauris
Jade Solomon		RMIT Bundoora	Medical Radiation	RC of Glen Waverley
Veronica Kyle		University of Melbourne	Medicine and Surgery	RC of Manningham
Jessica McConnell		University of Melbourne	Medicine and Surgery	RC of Mornington
Stacey Lancaster		Victoria University	Nutrition	RC of Rosebud
Victoria				
Marlene Sykes		Curtin University	Indigenous Community Health	RC of Margaret River
Margaret Anne Martin		Curtin University	Midwifery	RC's of Cockburn and Applecross
Krystal Cotterill		Curtin University	Physiotherapy	RC of Boulder/ Mundaring
Mary Lane		Notre Dame University	Nursing	Woodside Energy
Daniel Hunt	GRADUATED	University of WA	Medicine and Surgery	RC of Boulder/ Mundaring
Chantel Thorn		University of WA	Dentistry	RC of Ascot
Terrence Morich		University of WA	Indigenous Community Health	RC of Willetton
Western Australian				
Darryl Cameron	GRADUATED	Deakin University	Post Grad Public Health (Part Time)	RC of Murray Bridge
Jeremy Rigney		Flinders University	Nursing	RC of Blackwood
Jessica Beinke		Flinders University	Health Science (Nutrition)	RC of Stirling/Class of 67
Jessie Graham		Flinders University	Master Speech Pathology	RC of Mitcham
Justine Gladman		Flinders University	Medicine	RC of Mildura
Lauren Aitken		Flinders University	Psychology	RC of Brighton
Linda Turner		Flinders University	Nursing	RC of Blackwood/Mr Gibson
Maria Wilson		Flinders University	Environmental Health	RC of Alice Springs
Paul Newchurch		Flinders University	Masters Remote Health Management (Part-time)	RC of Victor Harbor
Susan Darcy		Flinders University	Nursing (Part-time)	RC of Goolwa
Tania Shearer	GRADUATED	Flinders University	Behavioural Sciences	RC of Prospect
Luke Cantley		Flinders University	Social Work (Part Time)	RC of Coromandel Valley/Margaret Mayo
James Cripps	GRADUATED	Sydney University	Grad. Dip. Substance Abuse	RC of Salisbury/ Prof. M Sage
Mark Thompson	GRADUATED	Sydney University	Grad. Dip. Substance Abuse	RC of Waikerie
Aaron Bulner	GRADUATED	University of Adelaide	Oral Health	RC of Hyde Park/ Dentists
Hannah Fyfe		University of Adelaide	Medicine	RC of Alice Springs
Jonathan Newchurch		University of Adelaide	Medicine	RC of Morialto
Kudnarto Watson	GRADUATED	University of Adelaide	Medicine	RC of Adelaide
Lauren Sperring		University of Adelaide	Medicine	RC of Unley/Dr Helen Sage
Lyndsey Cruse		University of Adelaide	Nursing	RC of Flinders Park
Rebecca Boltje	GRADUATED	University of Adelaide	Nursing	RC of West Lakes
Rebecca Richards		University of Adelaide	Psychology	RC of Campbelltown
Tjunkaya Ken		University of Adelaide	Psychology	RC of Walkerville/Dr. Filby
Bodie Rodman		University of SA	Medicine	Prof Michael Sage/RC of Mawson Lakes
Danielle Ghezzi		University of SA	Lab. Medical Science	RC of Unley
Danielle Oatway	GRADUATED	University of SA	Applied Science	RC of Hyde Park
Lenore Chantrelle		University of SA	HR Management (Part-time)	RC of Adelaide East
Melanie Coulthard	GRADUATED	University of SA	Nursing	RC of Charles Sturt Grange
Shereen Rankin	GRADUATED	University of SA	Aboriginal Studies	RC of St Peters
Trevor Richie		University of SA	Occupational Therapy	RCs of Regency Park/Nth Adelaide
Wendy Barth	GRADUATED	University of SA	Nursing	RC's of Group 4, D9500
Meridee O'Neill	GRADUATED	University of SA	Nursing (Part-time)	RC of Norwood
Talisha King	GRADUATED	University of SA	Medical Radiation	RC of Mt Barker/Flinders Medical Centre

SNIPPETS FROM SECOND SEMESTER REPORTS

I moved to Lismore to complete a "rural term". This was a voluntary term, I could have stayed in Sydney and completed fourth year but I thought it would be a nice change and a great experience. Without a doubt, it has been all that and more! The hospital is well equipped for students and there is a large support network as the University of Sydney has been sending their students there for years. I started off doing a 4 week haematology/oncology term. I really enjoy the molecular biology involved when learning about cancer so I was looking forward to the term but to my dismay it was a very tough 4 weeks. I found I spent everyday telling patients that they had cancer, and watched there faces as they came to terms with the news. They then proceed to ask "how long they have left" and you cannot answer the question. It was very sad and I couldn't wait to finish.

Next I had 5 weeks on the renal team. This was a dynamic, busy, fast moving term, it really involves most of the body systems and its quite challenging. I learnt a lot and think I really matured as a student doctor. For the rest of the year I had a GP placement in Casino. Mondays I spent with a GP specialising in obstetrics; every patient was antenatal care so it became very mundane. Tuesdays was with a female doctor in her own practice. She was great, a really lovely lady who even invited me to her farm so I could have dinner and meet her family. In her practice we did parallel consulting which was a beneficial experience, I was never bored and started to think as if they were my patients instead of just sitting there and observing. Wednesdays and Thursdays was at an aboriginal medical practice. I'm a great advocate for indigenous health and loved every minute of working there. We had a few community visits and also visited a minimal security prison, the dynamics in these consultations was different to the norm so it was a rewarding experience.

To finish the year I went with a pediatrician for 5 weeks to Mt Isa. **FANTASTIC!!** I think I found my specialty. I was lucky to join the Royal Flying Doctors service on a few visits to VERY remote towns. There is a huge indigenous population in Mt Isa, so I really was in my element.

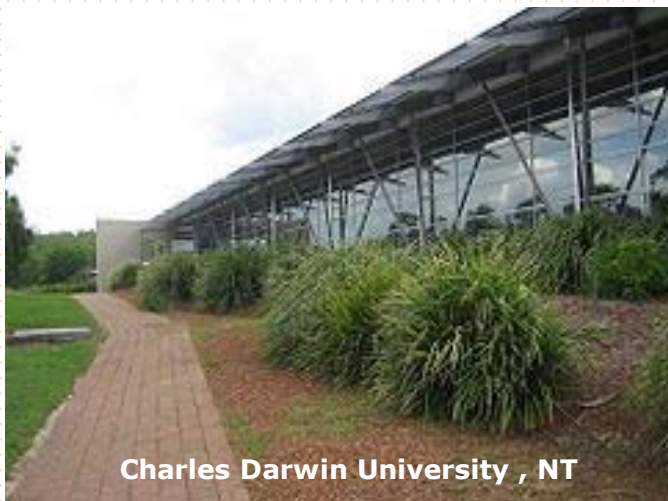


University of Western Sydney
Campbelltown—NSW

Angela Wood—University of Western Sydney, Medicine

In Semester 2 of 2010 I worked part-time and studied a full workload. I also supported my daughter through open heart surgery in August. This year has been a very challenging year for myself and my family and I would like to thank Rotary for the assistance they have given me through the scholarship.

My studies were both exciting and challenging. I was able to apply this knowledge in my workplace and assist Indigenous people with their transition from acute care and high dependency to the community. The position I undertake as an Indigenous Mental Health Worker in the community is invaluable. Many community members do not wish to be involved with consumers who suffer from mental illness. This stigma appears to stem from negative publicity, poor knowledge of the illness, past experiences and fear of the unknown. I work with challenging people (children, adults and older persons) who are homeless, been abused by their family and suffer from mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, depression, suicidal tendencies, borderline personality disorder, bipolar disorder. I assist psychiatrists to make culturally appropriate decisions for indigenous persons, help families of people who suffer from mental illness to understand the signs and symptoms of the illness and how to keep the consumer well. I explain medication in a manner that consumers can better understand instead of western medical terms. I assist with all items to ensure that the consumer is able to return home (food, transport, accommodation) liaise with other services to ensure they are able to cope with living at home (medication, home help, peer support, counseling, case management). I provide education and support to various community groups in regard to Mental Health First Aid.



Charles Darwin University , NT

I am looking forward to this year (2011) and looking forward to completing my Degree and undertaking honours in Psychology. I hope to complete the honours in 2012, commence a Clinical psychology post graduate course which will allow me to become a fully registered psychologist with the APA. I can then practice clinical psychology and hopefully work in Rural and remote Australia where a culturally appropriate psychology service can be established.

Kerry Leaver—Charles Darwin University, Behaviour Science

SNIPPETS FROM FIRST SEMESTER REPORTS

Semester 2 of second year was a challenging semester. I had classes for 5 weeks then went out on clinical placement for 6 weeks, followed by coming back to university for 1 week and then studying before exams began. The first 5 weeks consisted of tests, practical exams, and a group assignment. In conjunction with this I had to take a few days/a week off classes as I had my wisdom teeth out.

I went to a country hospital for my clinical placement. I really enjoyed the experience of working in a rural hospital as I was able to learn so much there. They didn't have the most up to date technology of digital radiography x-ray machines that the major Melbourne hospitals have, though it was because of this I was able to improve my radiographic technique.

There was also a large Indigenous population of people in the town that I went to, so it was good to be able to help Indigenous patients.

Whilst on placement I also had to complete a clinical placement professional development journal where each patient that I x-rayed was documented and assessed by my supervisor. I also choose a patient to complete a case study on, as well as complete other work to hand in when I returned to university after my 6 weeks away.

On return to university the week was full of revision classes, as well as my Psychology exam being moved forward to this particular week. I then had 2 weeks off to study for my 3 other exams.

I passed all of my exams and subjects which was a huge relief and I'm looking forward to beginning my final year of my course.



RMIT Bundoora, Victoria

Jade Solomon—RMIT Bundoora, Medical Radiation



Dear Cheryl,

Re: Australian Rotary Health- Indigenous Health Scholarships

I am writing to sincerely thank you and all involved in the administration of my Indigenous Health Scholarship, through Australian Rotary Health. In 2008 I was awarded the scholarship when I was completing my studies at Queensland University of Technology, later transferring to the University of Newcastle. Since that time I have been fortunate enough to not only receive financial assistance but guidance and support from all involved in this tremendous initiative.

In November 2010 I completed my studies and this week commenced my new graduate position in the Emergency Department of John Hunter Hospital, Newcastle. I am incredibly excited to have secured this opportunity in one of the states most reputable hospitals. I had originally planned to work in a rural location after the completion of my studies, however, I have had to temporarily postpone that plan while I continue to receive treatment for a medical condition I was diagnosed with in January 2010. The John Hunter staff have gone above and beyond to develop a rostering system that specifically accommodates my medical condition in the interim.

I honestly cannot express how grateful I am for the support and assistance the Indigenous Health Scholarship has provided. It is unlikely that I would have had the opportunity to complete my studies without this assistance, especially as my health prevented me from working for numerous months.

I would be more than happy to assist the Australian Rotary Health Indigenous Health Scholarships Program in anyway in the future as a token of my gratitude.

Thank you once again for providing me with wonderful opportunity and allowing me to fulfill my dream of becoming a Registered Nurse.

Warm regards,
Miss Courtney Bethel

Courtney Bethel—Newcastle University, Nursing



Next edition of Message Stick will have the list of new scholarship recipients and sponsoring clubs as well as snippets from the students essays.

Australian Rotary Health Indigenous Health



www.australianrotaryhealth.org.au

Scholarship

If your club would like to help a student become an Indigenous health worker
Consider sponsoring a student with our program

Students Scholarships are valued at

\$5,000 per year

\$2,500

from Rotary Clubs

and

\$2,500

from the Australian or State Governments



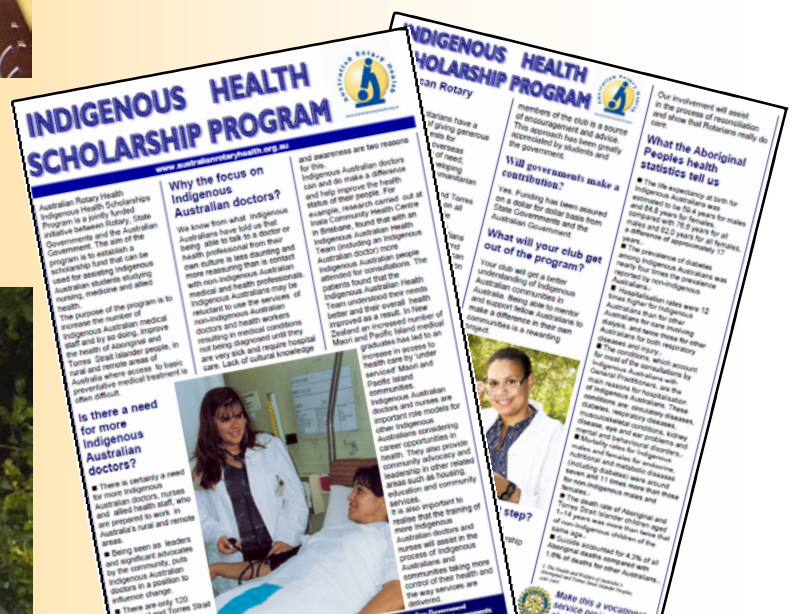
Supporting Students Achieve Their Goal



Making a Healthier Australia Community



Supporting healthier minds, bodies and communities through research, awareness and education



Australian Rotary Health

Please contact Cheryl Deguara

Programs Co-ordinator

Phone: 02 8837 1900 Fax: 02 9635 5042

Email: cheryldeguara@australianrotaryhealth.org.au