

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



AIDA

AUSTRALIAN INDIGENOUS
DOCTORS' ASSOCIATION

Acknowledgement

AIDA acknowledges and pays respect to the Traditional Owners of the lands across Australia on which our members live and work, and to their Elders and ancestors, past and present. We pay respect to the Ngunnawal and Ngambri peoples as the Traditional Owners of the land on which AIDA's office stands.

Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association (AIDA) Ltd.

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About the Artwork Image

The artwork on the cover of this Annual Report is by Reuben Oates.

Reuben Oates lives in the Huon Valley, south of Hobart in Tasmania. His father, Leigh Oates, provided Reuben the inspiration and tools to commence painting in 2004.

Living on acreage his whole life surrounded by pasture and bushland helped influence Reuben's fascination with animals and the land they inhabit.

Reuben is seventh great grandson to tribal warrior, Chief Mannalargenna (Dolly Dalrymple line). He paints representations of animals combined with bright and bold colours to tell stories of travel, human interaction, family, community, culture and connection.

Reuben has been a full time artist for over six years, mainly working with acrylic on canvas. In the past two years he has expanded into large scale mural art. Through his art, Reuben hopes to inspire storytelling and encourage others to interpret and find meaning in his art. He aims to showcase the beauty of nature and the animals within it. He likes to think of his paintings as tributes to Tasmania's incredible wildlife.

Artist's statement

The central circular pattern showcases AIDA as an organisation and community; highlighting the integral role they play in growing, supporting and educating our Indigenous doctors of Australia.

The red and blue patterns stemming from the centre connected by white paths signify our Indigenous doctors and the positive impact they have on health.

The remaining elements in this piece highlight our Indigenous culture in Tasmania and Australia. They shine a light on how our culture has given us the tools and knowledge to come together as a community, share and receive culture and knowledge and use our resources to heal and care for others.

Our Tasmanian Aboriginal 9 nations are represented in the bottom right with 9 individual dot patterns binding together.

Before settlement, Tasmanian was divided into 9 separate regions, states if you will. Within these separate states there were individual tribes and clans carrying out different cultural practices.

By including these 9 nations I wanted to show, even though we may be one culture, one body, there are many individuals and people within one body with something to share and add to the integrity of something whole.

In the top right we have depictions of Tasmanian Indigenous stone petroglyphs which were carved into stone by our ancestors as a form of communication and storytelling.

The multi-coloured scattered dots surrounding these symbols illustrate our bush medicines and how they play a role in modern medicine.

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Our Organisation

The Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association (AIDA) is the **peak professional body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors and medical students.**

AIDA's purpose is to **grow ethical and professional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors who will lead and drive equitable and just health outcomes for all our peoples.** As a member-based organisation, AIDA has a strong **commitment to providing career pathways into medicine for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people,** and supporting the growth of this cohort to bring about **meaningful change to the Australian health system.**

Our vision is that **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have self-determination and equitable health and life outcomes in a culturally safe health system.**

A Message from our President

As you are all no doubt aware we have had a few tumultuous years recently within our organisation and the world at large. We have weathered the world issues of the Black Lives Matter movement, the COVID pandemic and now the national issue of the Referendum, with the diverse range of opinions and stirring of the racism pot. As I write this report before the Referendum goes to the polls I reflect that no matter what the result we still have a long way to go and a lot of work ahead of us to achieve equitable health outcomes and culturally safe spaces for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Coming out of these years, we learnt some very valuable lessons, the biggest being the need to look after ourselves and those around us. We need to remember to be kind, not only to ourselves but also to everyone as we don't know what challenges others are facing.

Within our organisation, we have had some large changes in the secretariat staff and have also made some massive changes in terms of the workforce model. One of the biggest changes is our new leadership team with the appointing of Ms Donna Burns as our CEO. Donna comes to us from her role as the Deputy CEO of the Healing Foundation and brings a wealth of skills and knowledge from her previous roles, including clinical experience from her nursing background. In the short time Donna has been with us she has put in a lot of hard work rebuilding the AIDA secretariat team as well as relationship-building with our external stakeholders.

During COVID we learnt that we can have a different model of working, with having people work remotely online. This new workforce model has been adopted at AIDA to increase the pool of talented people we work with and has enabled our organisation to employ people from across the country.

During this time of growth and progress, under Donna's leadership, AIDA has developed into a team of over 20 dedicated, passionate individuals that I am proud to say are working tirelessly towards supporting the organisational purpose; to contribute to equitable health and life outcomes, and the cultural wellbeing of Indigenous people.

In the last year, we have made the move out of our old home in Old Parliament House, utilising a temporary office whilst working towards a new office/model. Large moves are never easy, and we hope that we as an organisation are past any teething issues and this relocation will allow us to move forward. The decision to move was

based around a number of factors, the biggest being the rising costs and limited growth within the space provided.

During this time of change and growth we have continued to make strides with building positive relationships with external organisations and stakeholders, and continuing to strengthen some of our longstanding collaborations. As part of this we have signed a number of Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with several organisations – some long-standing and some new. These are events that I have been proud to represent AIDA in, marking significant steps forward for our organisation.

The inaugural signing of the MoU with the Australian Medical Association (AMA) has further strengthened our partnership and working relationship. Around 2015 AMA changed their constitution to allow AIDA to have representation at the AMA Federal Council table. During this time, we have worked hard at raising awareness of serious health inequities affecting

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The MoU cements a shared commitment towards addressing these serious health inequities, as well as a strong commitment to tackle racism within the medical sector and improve culturally appropriate care, and culturally safe training for future Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors. This has been a momentous event for both organisations.

We are also proud to say that we have signed an inaugural MoU with The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists

(RANZCOG) marking significant steps forward as our organisations partner with a united aim of improving culturally appropriate healthcare for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and training for clinical professionals.

Earlier in the year, AIDA and the Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand (MDANZ) reaffirmed our long-standing collaboration and shared commitment to First Nations health and growing the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical graduates.

This is the sixth Collaboration Agreement between AIDA and MDANZ, and aims to build on the successes of previous Collaboration Agreements and reaffirms the strong and sustained commitment of both organisations.

In June AIDA formally announced our support for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament on the back of our previous support for the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

This has proven to form a lot of the conversations that we have had with students, members and supporters when out and about.

We understand that these conversations have been tough and that we need to remember that there are diverse opinions, and we need to respect and be kind to one another, as well as those around us. We would like to remind any of our members or non-members that we are here to support you in any way that we can and we have developed a support resource page which you can find on the AIDA website. We encourage any and all of you to please reach out when and if you need to. As I stated above, at the time of writing this report we are yet to go to the polls. No matter the result, we are strong, proud, resilient people who have already achieved great things in the face of adversity and will continue to do so.

As previously mentioned, this past year has been a period of growth and learning for AIDA, and our unique training program in the Clinical Application of Cultural Safety has been no exception. With a new approach, we have delivered the workshops to doctors across Australia, as well as healthcare executives and college Boards. Our ongoing work and development of the cultural safety program drives the conversations and strives to help create more culturally safe spaces for patients and our workforce.

Our non-GP Specialist Trainee Support Program (STSP) continues to grow as well.

The STSP team provides tailored, culturally appropriate collegiate support to our non-GP doctors in training, and guidance to the non-GP colleges around recruitment retention and support for their trainees. The work that has been achieved so far has enabled AIDA to receive funding directly from the Department of Health and Aged Care (DOHAC) which is such a huge achievement.

Within working with the AMA, I am involved in a number of different committees. I have been involved in the National Doctors Health and Wellbeing Leadership Alliance (NLA) with AMA and Drs4drs, and am proud of the collaborative work we have been able to achieve in this space, and look forward to what we can do in the future.

I take great pride in acknowledging our work with CPMC, their support for the STSP and then leading on to MoUs, which are such an important step in solidifying partnerships and support.

As President of AIDA and as a representative of our organisation, we are extremely proud and would love to take the opportunity to congratulate Dr Kelvin Kong on his National NAIDOC Person of The Year award.

I also congratulate and remember all the other members, be they students or graduates, who are working tirelessly to improve

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health through their various roles. We each make a difference.

Our team is currently swept up in the excitement and build up to planning for PRIDoC in Adelaide, from 1-6th December 2024, the theme being *Ngadluku Warra, Ngadluku Tapa Purruna, Ngadluku Purruna - Our Language, Our Culture, Our Health*.

There is the potential of having to split AGM from conference due to the timing, but we will let members know with plenty of advance warning.

I take the opportunity to acknowledge and appreciate the support from our members, as we have moved through some of the challenges with the changes that have been made and we all look forward to AIDA of the future.

Kind regards,

Dr Simone Raye
President



Coming out of these years, we learnt some very valuable lessons, the biggest being the need to look after ourselves and those around us.

We need to remember to be kind, not only to ourselves but also to everyone as we don't know what challenges others are facing.

A Message from our CEO

I am proud to provide you all with my first Annual Report update as Chief Executive Officer (CEO). I was appointed to the role of CEO role at the end of last year, following a lengthy career in health, as a clinician, experience Board Director and leader. Building on these skills and experiences, to lead AIDA, is a career highlight.

The AIDA team is focussed more than ever on our purpose of 'growing ethical and professional Indigenous doctors to lead and drive equitable and just health outcomes for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples'. We have turned this from more than a one-liner or even a strategic priority, rather we have centred it into all we do.

One of the ways that AIDA is working towards this goal is through our unique Cultural Safety training program and have

uniquely named it The Clinical Application of Cultural Safety. We know that you can't decouple the two, and our demand for this unique offering is high. We reinvigorated the program in 2023 – delivering workshops to individual doctors across the country, as well as healthcare executives and medical college Boards. We are thrilled with the continued expansion of this program into the future, including an exciting partnership with the Australian Football League (AFL).

Another proud initiative at AIDA is the Specialist Trainee Support Program (STSP), now in its second year and going strong. We were delighted to receive funding from the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care to continue and expand our work in 2023-24. The overall purpose of STSP is to strengthen recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors currently in non-GP speciality training or wishing to undertake non-GP specialty training to grow the workforce. Since the program was



funded in April 2022, AIDA has provided tailored support to over 40 doctors and worked with all 13 non-GP colleges. In April this year, we also established a Fellows Reference Group to provide insight and guidance from our trailblazers and key fellows of influence across colleges.

AIDA also announced our support for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament, as a way to recognise the formative place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia's history with a key focus on improving health outcomes for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples. The AIDA Conference 2022 in Yugambah Country (Gold Coast) was a fantastic opportunity for members, sponsors and speakers to reconnect after three years.

This year, we are all looking forward to gathering in lutruwita / Tasmania in November. The AIDA Conference 2023 theme is 'Our Sovereign Place in Health,' which acknowledges that Indigenous people have tens of thousands of years of history in health practices, our cultural self-determination and our rightful place within the health system.

We are also delighted to announce that the Pacific Region Indigenous Doctors Congress (PRIDoC) is

coming to Australia at the end of 2024. PRIDoC is an Indigenous-led space for Indigenous doctors, medical students, health researchers, health professionals and allies to share knowledge on issues relating to the health and wellness of the many Indigenous communities and nations throughout the Pacific Region.

With so much to look forward to in the coming year, I am grateful for

the AIDA team who dedicate themselves every day to creating an equitable and safe healthcare system for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Kindness,

Donna Burns
CEO



The AIDA team is focussed more than ever on our purpose of 'growing ethical and professional Indigenous doctors to lead and drive equitable and just health outcomes for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples'

A Message from our Student Director

My name is Kyle Ryan and I have the honour of being AIDA's Student Director for the term 2022–2023. I've had the privilege to chair the AIDA Student Representative Council (SRC) for 2023 where I'm proud to have contributed to a national community that fosters growth of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students nationally.

Working alongside likeminded individuals, who are advocates and strong cultural leaders, has made the mission and aim of AIDA's Student Representative Council come to fruition. Our aim as the Student Representative Council is to engage our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students, promote Indigenous ways of being, doing and knowing, advocate for their needs and wellbeing, improve medical curriculum delivery and improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical student retention and recruitment within medical schools. Through these aims, and our outstanding student representatives, we have a strong national cultural identity as medical students fighting for the same cause.

One of the major highlights of our SRC is the participation in a Cultural Immersion and exchange program in the Northern Territory, whereby 16 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students travelled to East Arnhem Land. This was a partnership with the

Northern Territory Primary Health Network (NTPHN) and we thank them also for this opportunity for our students to travel to communities in homelands such as Yirrkala, Galu'Winku, Bamaga, Nhulunbuy and Gapuwiyak. This program not only benefited our SRC students, but also the communities in which we visited as we were able to promote health education, visit homelands to connect with community and advocate for local health needs. A major highlight of this is the Teddy Bear Hospital that the SRC participated in, where we go to high schools, primary and preschools within the region and promote health education and prevention by facilitating interactive sessions with the children, role modelling to the children that you can succeed and be whatever you want to be, including a doctor; 'you can't be what you can't see.'

During the East Arnhem Land Trip, the SRC experienced site visits and interactions with clinicians at the Arnhem Family Medical Centre as well as meeting with Indigenous health leaders, professionals and consumers. We also got to learn from the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services such as Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation and Laynhapuy Homelands Aboriginal Corporation in addition to a tour of Gove District Hospital. The knowledges and experiences gained from these opportunities

educated the SRC on how healthcare is delivered within rural and remote regions with a high population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

One of the highlights in any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical student's calendar in the annual AIDA Conference, of which this year is being held in niraluna / Hobart, lutruwita / Tasmania. This is where the AIDA SRC will be able to present our experiences with the East Arnhem Land Trip and hope to engage even more students to become interested in rural and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health. It is at these conferences, where we have the opportunity to increase our engagement with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students from across the country. Namely, we hope to host our students in a Student Social Night catered directly to our students, which allows them opportunities to socialise, network and engage with not only their own colleagues, but other AIDA staff and healthcare professionals. This year's conference registrations has seen a higher number of students register compared to last year which speaks of the growth of our organisation as a whole. Due to this growth, AIDA is hoping to improve the way we deliver funding for our students each year to ensure that we support as many students as we can.

Through my role as AIDA's Student Director, we had the opportunity to solidify our partnerships with organisations such as the Australian Medical Student's Association (AMSA). Particularly we were able to renew the Memorandum of Understanding between AIDA and AMSA and improve the deliverables and goals. This renewed Memorandum of Understanding is more strategy focused rather than focusing on specific operational deliverables each year. This allows our AIDA SRC and AMSA to work together collaboratively each year to set out relevant and necessary goals that are specific to each year's SRC. This will hopefully foster more meaningful collaboration between these two organisations. In the spirit of our strong partnership with AMSA, the AIDA SRC plays a pivotal role in policy and media release development which is co-designed between AMSA and AIDA. The AIDA SRC, as part of their roles, are expected to review and provide valuable feedback to improve national advocacy policies produced by AMSA. This helps shape the advocacy and recommendations presented to peak organisations and bodies nationally and ensures an Indigenous lens is consistently underpinning advocacy goals and aims.

One of the bigger collaborations we had was also through AMSA, but with the Rural Health Summit, with me also being the Co-Convenor for the summit for 2023. AIDA was a first-time sponsored partner for this summit which aims to promote rural health and advocate for more students and healthcare practitioners to take interest in this area. Here AIDA was able to

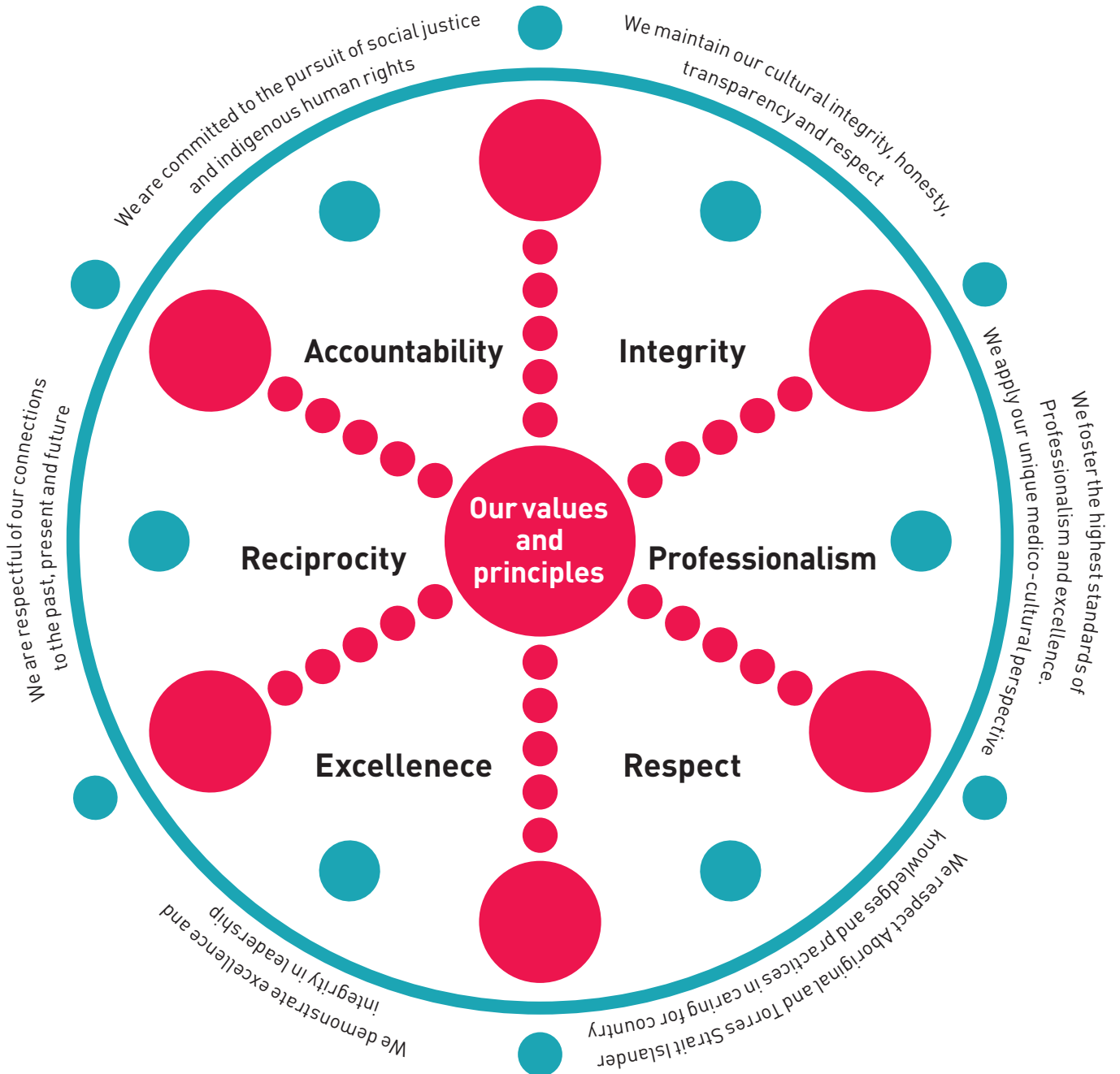
successfully engage with medical students from all across the country and in particular those who attended Flinders NTMP medical program in the Territory. In particular, a huge success of this summit was that we had increased number of students attend, and also it was the first ever National Medical Student Conference held within the Northern Territory and I am proud that AIDA was a part of that.

As for the year to come, there are many plans on the horizon to continuously improve the way the AIDA SRC functions and interacts with the wider AIDA organisation. I hope in the year to come we can create more of a foundation for interaction with our local medical societies, as this is where our Indigenous medical students interact mostly day to day, so that we can create more culturally safe

spaces across our medical schools. I also hope that we may improve our social media presence, to let people know that we are accessible, who we are, and have the platform to advocate and share anything relevant to the SRC and Indigenous medical students nationally. There also needs to be more data collection and analysis around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical student recruitment and retention into medical schools, as currently data is not centralised and not easily accessible. This will allow more evidence-based advocacy for the future. Additionally, we further hope that the Cultural Immersion Experience in East Arnhem Land has set the scene for future immersion programs across the country so that we may continue the work started in this space.



Our Values and Principles



AIDA's purpose is to **grow ethical and professional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors** who will lead and drive **equitable and just health outcomes** for all our peoples.

Our Vision

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have self-determination and equitable health and life outcomes in a culturally safe health system.

Our Principles

- We are respectful of our connections to the past, present and future
- We maintain our cultural integrity, honesty, transparency and respect
- We apply our unique medico-cultural perspective
- We demonstrate excellence and integrity in leadership
- We respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges and practices in caring for country
- We are committed to the pursuit of social justice and Indigenous human rights
- We foster the highest standards of professionalism and excellence.

Our Board



President – Dr Simone Raye

Dr Simone Raye is President of the Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association (AIDA) and a proud Bardi Jabbar Jabbar woman from the Kimberley. As a medical student, Simone was closely involved with the initial meetings that led to the formation of AIDA. She continues to work as a GP in Darwin and do healthcare advocacy work, plus provide mentoring and support to Indigenous medical doctors nationally.

“We are strong, proud, resilient people who have already achieved great things in the face of adversity and will continue to do so.”



Vice President – Dr Jonathan Newchurch

Ngai nari Jonathan Warritya Newchurch, Ngai yaiya miyu Kurna Narungga anangku, Ngai Mikawomangga warni.

My name is Jonathan Second Born Male Newchurch, I am an Indigenous man of Kurna and Narungga. I was born on the Mika plains, now known as the suburb of Woodville.

I am a proud yaiya miyu (Indigenous man) of both Kurna and Narungga heritage. My roots run into the heart of Kurna Yarta (land), where I was raised in Tarntanyangga, known to many as Adelaide. My connection to this land and its traditions not only shapes my personal identity but greatly influences my professional journey in the medical field.

I hold a medical degree from Adelaide University. I went on to complete General Practice training, where my experiences took me across varied landscapes – from rural and remote clinics to the pivotal role in Aboriginal Medical Services. These diverse exposures enriched my perspective and solidified my commitment to providing holistic and culturally sensitive care.

Eager to expand my horizons further, I delved into training in GP Anaesthetics. The intricacies of this domain provided a fresh challenge and allowed me to refine my expertise. My thirst for knowledge then led me to the realm of Pain Medicine. Working in public and private pain clinics, I've witnessed the intricate relationship between physical pain and emotional well-being, fostering a deeper understanding and empathy towards those I serve.

Currently, I channel my experience and knowledge as a Principal Investigator in Clinical Trials. Here, I engage in research, striving to bridge the gaps in medical understanding and seeking novel solutions to health challenges.



Dr Glenn Harrison

Dr Glenn Harrison is a Wotjobaluk man from Western Victoria. Glenn undertakes clinical duties as a Senior Staff Specialist / Consultant in Emergency Medicine at Royal Melbourne Hospital and Epworth Geelong.

Dr Harrison wants to develop the Indigenous workforce, expand specialty training opportunities and improve Indigenous health outcomes and equity.



Dr Olivia O'Donoghue

Dr Olivia O'Donoghue is descendant from the Yankunytjtjara and the Narungga Nations people. Olivia is an RACGP Fellow currently living and working in South Australia. Olivia has significant experience living and working in urban and remote Northern Territory, including Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services. Olivia has worked as a Cultural and Medical Educator in the general practice training space since 2014, including six years with Northern Territory General Practice Education (NTGPE).

Olivia is the currently the Medical Educator for the Indigenous General Practice Registrar Network (IGPRN). IGPRN is a national network that provides clinical education, exam preparation support, mentorship, advocacy and cultural support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander GPs in training.

Olivia is also currently the first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Censor for the RACGP representing National Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health on matters pertaining to the quality assurance processes for education, training, policy and assessment. Including support and advocacy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors undertaking RACGP training.

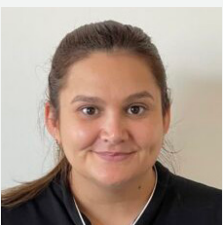
Olivia has previously been on the board of AIDA in 2009 and 2017.



Dr Tammy Kimpton

Dr Tammy Kimpton is a Palawa woman from Tasmania. She is a rural General Practitioner and Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of General Practitioners, working at Scone Medical Practice and has VMO rights to Scott Memorial hospital.

Tammy has been a previous AIDA Board Director and returns for the 2022–23 term.



Dr Crystal Williams

Dr Crystal Williams is a Wiradjuri woman and co-founder of the First Nations Dermatology Clinic at Royal Melbourne Hospital located on the unceded land of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nations and provides a visiting specialist service to the Northern Territory on unceded Larrakia land.

Dr Williams has an interest in digital health to overcome barriers to specialist care and is committed to disruptive activism and speaking out against racism within medical and training institutions to create safer hospitals for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

She has a special interest in family violence and our responsibilities as medical professionals to create medical systems that advocate for the safety of women and children.



Dr Natalie Pink

Dr Natalie Pink is a Nyikina woman (familial ties to the Kimberley), born on Kurna land and lived most of her life in SA. Natalie's first career was as a paramedic before completing medical school with her younger sister at Flinders University, graduating in 2017.

Since completing medical school Natalie has worked in Adelaide, Darwin and rural/remote locations in SA. Currently Natalie is a GP Academic registrar at the University of Adelaide and works clinically at Nunkuwarrin Yunti.

Natalie is a fellow of ACRRM with advanced specialised training in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.

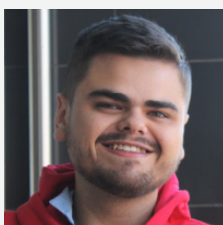


Dr Jean Pepperill

Dr Jean Pepperill was born in Alice Springs, but grew up in Brisbane, before the siren call of the red earth lured her back to the NT. She worked in the arts and the media and had just finished a stint in Brisbane completing a Bachelor of Science degree when she found herself back at her dad's kitchen table in Alice Springs, contemplating what the future could hold.

Jean had been tempted to be a nurse, and also to work in pathology, but after a volunteer placement doing lung function testing on patients in Brisbane, she found she was most interested in why people were sent to do a lung function test.

After graduating from Flinders NT Medical Program, Jean has continued to work in Alice Spring as a doctor supporting her own community. She is currently an accredited psychiatry registrar with the Royal Australian New Zealand College of Psychiatrists and has interests in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health and trauma.



Mr Kyle Ryan

Kyle Ryan is a Yuggera Ugarapul man from Inala, Queensland.

Kyle is currently a third year medical student at The University of Queensland. Alongside this, Kyle's other roles include Indigenous Officer for his local medical society and the Australian Medical Student's Association's Indigenous Advocacy Chair. Kyle hopes to be able to enhance healthcare education for all medical students and to create a more culturally safe space within medical schools.

The work Kyle does, is ultimately for his communities and Kyle will always acknowledge their strength and determination for better outcomes and representation.

Our Key Achievements

Strategic Priority 1: Grow Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Doctors

AIDA's first strategic priority involves promoting medicine as a career choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors, developing and advocating for best practice recruitment, retention and support strategies to be implemented across the medical training continuum and supporting students and doctors.

AIDA's Specialist Trainee Support Program (STSP) is a key initiative by AIDA in developing this priority. Through STSP, AIDA supports the growth of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander non-GP specialists by developing and advocating for best practice recruitment, retention and support of our doctors in non-GP training.

We are proud to say that in 2022, AIDA secured 12 months of funding for activities from April 2022 to April 2023. This enabled AIDA to create a strong foundation in its first year and attract further funding to extend activities to 30 June 2023. In the Federal budget announced in May 2023, the Commonwealth committed to continue and increase funding for STSP in the 23-24 financial year.

AIDA has undertaken a range of activities to complement college activities and improve recruitment and retention to specialty training. This has included peer support, professional development, education and mentoring via face-to-face workshop and virtual networking forums. We also provide culturally appropriate advice and support including performance coaching

to over 40 doctors and medical students as well as 'Yarn Ups' on college training, webinars on career planning, cv writing and job interview preparation, and advice to individual doctors and students.

A highlight of the year was that AIDA performance coached five doctors seeking selection to specialty training and all were successful – congratulations to the new trainees, we are so proud to see your success!

A key strength of the program has been collaboration with the non-GP college consortium led by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists (RANZCR).

The first year of funding was secured by RANZCR on behalf of the college consortium and then subcontracted to AIDA to undertake activities. We thank RANZCR and all colleges involved for their support of AIDA to successfully establish STSP. All 13 non-GP colleges are now participating in quarterly cross-college meetings.

At the meetings staff share their strategies and their learnings to support one another to drive change within their respective colleges to improve recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors.



Attendees at the inaugural AIDA STSP Trainee Workshop held on Yugambeh Country, 7-8 October 2022

The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander fellows has almost doubled since the first report in 2019 from 108 identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specialists to 204 specialists in 2023.

College reporting

This year all 15 specialty colleges provided a third iteration of their self-assessment report against 15 best-practice standards set by AIDA and the Council of Presidents of Medical Colleges in 2019. AIDA produced the third report of self-assessments titled 'Growing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical specialists' which is available on our website.

The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander fellows has almost doubled since the first report in 2019 from 108 identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specialists to 204 specialists in 2023. However, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors comprise just 0.3% of all medical specialists in Australia.

Greater accountability is required by colleges for trainee selection and successful progress of our doctors through training. This year AIDA established a Fellows Reference Group with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Fellows and key doctors of influence from 14 of the 15 specialty colleges. AIDA thanks all Fellows and doctors involved for their time and expertise in informing a review of the standards which commenced in 2023 and will be finalised in 2024.

The review aims to simplify the reporting process for colleges, removing objectivity of self-assessment with greater measurability of college activities.

Growing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ophthalmology workforce

This year AIDA continued our third year of successful partnership with the Fred Hollows Foundation. The partnership was formalised in 2019 with funding from Fred Hollows to AIDA to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ophthalmologists in Australia and promote adequate specialist trainee support structures within specialist medical colleges.

Activities over the last year have included promotion of ophthalmology to students and doctors including two well-attended Yarn Ups. We've also provided targeted support to trainees and prospective trainees to assist them with their preparation, application, selection, and training in ophthalmology.

The partnership has enabled AIDA to invest in strong relationships with the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists (RANZCO) and their philanthropic arm, the Australian and New Zealand

Eye Foundation (ANZEF). The outcomes of this relationship have included concerted collaboration to generate interest in ophthalmology, improve selection and support to trainees – including financial support to remove financial barriers.

Over the last year, AIDA has provided guidance to ANZEF in the development of a comprehensive scholarships program including a \$30,000 scholarship for each Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander trainee towards the cost of training over the five-year program.

AIDA looks forward to the continued partnerships and great outcomes for the year ahead.



Strategic Priority 2: Shape health outcomes

AIDA's second strategic priority is to shape health outcomes – we do this by driving collaboration nationally and internationally to improve Indigenous health and life outcomes, fostering relationships with key national health and medical organisations and leading and influencing change across the health care system.

AIDA has continued to foster key relationships with national health and medical organisations, including MDANZ, AMSA, CPMC, and RANZCR as part of our priority to drive collaboration nationally and internationally to improve Indigenous health and life outcomes.

We have continued to engage regularly with MDANZ, as we entered into the sixth Collaborative Agreement to build on the success of our long-standing partnership. AIDA has been working closely with the MDANZ student support network forums to promote culturally safe student support.

AIDA and AMSA have maintained a strong relationship with reciprocal participation and engagement at organisational forums. Further to this, AIDA and AMSA have been redeveloping our MoU to strengthen commitment and align activities to better support Indigenous medical students.

We have continued to work regularly with the Council of Presidents Medical Council (CPMC) with attendance at meetings and contributing to strategic conversation. Most recently, AIDA presented to CPMC about the impact of Stolen Generations on healthcare seeking and the need for improved cultural safety across all medical fields.

We also continued our partnership with a consortium of 12 non-GP specialty colleges led by RANZCR to deliver the Specialist Trainee Support Program (STSP). AIDA held four full day meetings with colleges throughout the year and all 15 specialty colleges participated in the meetings to strengthen their recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors.

Leading and Influencing Change in the Healthcare System

AIDA released a position statement on the Voice to Parliament Referendum in June 2023, with the associated media release promoting the opportunity that the Voice to Parliament can provide in addressing the continuing health inequities experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. AIDA also released a policy position paper on Incarceration at the AIDA Conference in October 2022.

To support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Fellows representing AIDA on college Committees and support policy positions on issues impacting future workforce growth and inform AIDA program development, AIDA established a Fellows Reference Group. Meetings were held in April 2023 and May 2023.

In recognition of the significant expectations on members and cultural load, AIDA has established a precedence of remunerating Fellows participating on the Fellows Reference Group. AIDA has also provided guidance to colleges to scope potential of remunerating college committee participants to encourage greater uptake of committee positions.

We continue to provide our membership with opportunities to engage on committees including but not limited to Blood Borne Virus and Sexually Transmitted Disease DoHA committee and parliamentary roundtable such as Climate Change and Health, and Health workforce roundtable in SA Health.

AIDA is actively working with key agencies such as AHPRA, Rural workforce agencies (e.g. Rural Health Workforce Qld) and specialist colleges as well as partnering with AHPRA through their Medical Trainee Survey committee to ensure data collection is culturally safe, contemporary and captures the real experience of medical students, doctors and doctors in training.

We have also proudly contributed to the following policy consultations: National Health Reform Agreement Addendum; Service Registrars

and Career Medical Officer Framework; Early Years Strategy; Youth Justice and Child Wellbeing Reform.

Our representation during this period includes, but is not limited to:

- National Health Leadership Forum;
- Closing the Gap Joint Working Group Committee;
- Coalition of Peaks Working Group;
- Department of Health and Aged Care National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Medical Workforce Plan;
- Department of Health and Aged Care Medical Workforce Reform Advisory Committee (MWRAC);
- Department of Health and Aged Care Service Registrar and Career Medical Officer Working Group;
- Department of Health and Aged Care National Medical Workforce Strategy Steering Committee (NMWSSC);
- Department of Health and Aged Care Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee on COVID-19;
- Department of Health and Aged Care - Ministerial Advisory Committee on Blood Borne Viruses and Sexually Transmissible Infections (MACBBVS);
- Department of Health and Aged Care Distribution Working Group;
- Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Primary Healthcare Advisory Committee;
- Australian Medical Association Taskforce for Indigenous Health;
- Australian Medical Association Federal Council;
- Australian Medical Association Council of Doctors in Training;
- Australian Medical Association Equity Inclusion and Diversity Committee AHPRA – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander;
- Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC);
- Australian Medical Council – Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori Committee;
- Australian Medical Students' Association (AMSA);
- AHPRA Strategy Group;
- Transition to College-Led Training Advisory Committee (TCLTAC);
- Co-chair of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander GP Transition Advisory Group
- Council of Presidents of Medical Colleges (CPMC);
- Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand (MDANZ);
- Leaders in Indigenous Medical Education Reference Group;
- Partners for Justice in Health.

AIDA also presented at AHPRA forums, CPMC forums, and other stakeholder events like the MDANZ Data Forum to discuss the opportunities and barriers to adequate data collection and reporting on the Indigenous medical workforce.

AIDA continues to engage and build relationships with traditional healers and community leaders with cultural workshops being embedded into our annual AIDA conference. Similarly, when hosting networking events in various locations, AIDA engages with traditional owners to perform 'Welcome to Country'. Cultural protocols guide the development of all programs and local activities including online forums and in-person events.

Our directors proudly participated in a cultural healing session with the Ngangkari Healers at Life House Cancer Care Centre in Sydney and continue to build partnerships with those connected to the land and our culture so we can continue to honour and celebrate it.

Strategic Priority 3: Best practice care and cultural perspective

AIDA's third strategic priority entails providing our unique medico-cultural perspective, promoting the transformation of the healthcare system to be culturally safe, promoting the significant contribution of traditional knowledge, medicines and practices, while contributing to improved health outcomes for all Australians.

Between 2022-2023 AIDA engaged with all 15 specialty medical colleges through AIDA's Specialist Trainee Program and promoted AIDA's support to Trainees including networking and professional development opportunities and tailored culturally appropriate one on one support.

AIDA participated in the Medical Board of Australia's Medical Training Survey Consultative Forum. A key achievement of AIDA's role was advocating for separate questions in relation to experiences of racism which were included in the 2022 survey.

We delivered 10 Cultural Safety workshops with a total of 157 participants and also partnered with and/or engaged and provided information on our Cultural Safety program to 36 medical colleges, universities, and organisations. 79 individuals purchased tokens for the online Cultural Awareness course, and 1,200 tokens were purchased for colleges and organisations.

The point of difference in AIDA's Cultural Safety program is the facilitation of the program by Indigenous Doctors. AIDA procure these facilitators as contractors, and currently have 16 registered with AIDA as facilitators.

Our Cultural Safety program was reviewed by Indigenous doctors with a focus on the Clinical

Application of Cultural Safety to ensure that our Cultural Safety program is contemporary and culturally sound.

Through the STSP, AIDA delivered four webinars for supervisors on providing culturally safe supervision and addressing racism. Approximately 200 doctors registered in each session.

Improving health outcomes of Aboriginal mothers and children in South Australia (SA)

In 2022, AIDA was invited to partner with South Australia's Department of Health and Wellbeing Aboriginal Health Division, participating in the testing phase from July 2022 to June 2023 of their Continuity of Care Protocol Project.

The project's goal is to improve the health outcomes of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal mothers of Aboriginal babies and children aged 0-4 years by developing culturally safe and responsive Continuity of Care Protocols (CCP) to be implemented across SA Health's maternal and infant health care services.

AIDA's contribution included consulting with AIDA members to gain their cultural-medico expertise pertaining to the CCP Program Workforce.

Members provided advice on:

- the growth, retention and utilisation of Aboriginal Health Practitioners for care of Aboriginal mothers and children
- the accountability and responsibility of health care structures and systems
- SA Health's proposed Accountability Framework based upon an accountability-based peer panel inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors. The panel would oversee and moderate cultural safety and responsiveness of professional bodies within the SA Health System.

AIDA's project work culminated into the development of a final report consolidating the voices of AIDA members and making recommendations to SA Health pertaining to Continuity of Care.

AIDA has extended their partnership with SA Health and agreed to partake in the formal testing phase of the Project until 2024. AIDA's role within this next phase of the project will be to Chair the Continuity of Care Protocols Working Groups in addition to, leading the Continuity of Care Protocols Program Workforce Working Group. An expression of interest will be sought from AIDA members to undertake these roles until July 2024.

Strategic Priority 4: Communicate and celebrate

AIDA aims to share our knowledge and expertise, celebrate our achievements and strengthen our connection to community through our communication.

Our social media campaigns and engagement have seen impressive growth across all platforms including a ubiquitous increase in following. We are also proud to have had media coverage on several national platforms including The Guardian, Sydney Morning Herald, Daily Mail as well as many regional outlets. Cumulatively, this means AIDA has been mentioned 149 times across monitored media during the reporting period with a potential reach of 665.44k up to 4.63 million.

AIDA's Ward Round member and stakeholder newsletter has been overhauled and seen increased click rate and engagement as well as increased platforming of members and their successes and we have been proud to continue to promote new projects and collaborations via social media, newsletter our website and beyond.

We hosted stakeholder events in Canberra, Perth, Darwin and Gold Coast and enjoyed bringing our members together to celebrate our achievements, yarn, and connect.

We developed a Membership and Engagement Strategy to support the strategic growth and engagement of members and we proudly partnered with Northern Territory Primary Health Network (NTPHN) to take 18 members of the SRC to East Arnhem Land for a cultural immersion trip. This incredible opportunity was built to provide students with experience of working in rural and remote medicine.

AIDA sponsored the 2023 NAIDOC Week Awards Ceremony, in recognition of AIDA alumni and member Professor Kelvin Kong's nomination (and selection) as Person of the Year.

AIDA attended and sponsored the Lowitja Institutes 3rd International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference in June 2023 and when and where appropriate AIDA engages Traditional Owner groups at all AIDA events.

We have created a new "Opportunities" page on the AIDA website to promote opportunities to members as the number of

opportunities increases and we continue to promote these through the Members portal and via social media platforms.

AIDA has continued our participation on the Consultative Forum for the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency and the Medical Board of Australia's Medical Training Survey. Responses by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander are invaluable and continue to highlight the urgent need to transform the culture of medicine and address and eliminate racism, bullying, harassment and discrimination.

We are proud to have had a presence at a number of conferences including MDANZ, CPMC, JCU and many more.

Strategic Priority 5

AIDA's fifth strategic priority focuses on our members by demonstrating professional advocacy and support, providing leadership and development opportunities, connecting with and supporting our members.

The 2022 AIDA Conference, which celebrated 25 years of AIDA, was held in the Gold Coast in October 2022 with over 300 attendees and 29 sponsors. The Conference offered relevant workshops including Conceptualising mindfulness from an Aboriginal perspective, Telehealth in Indigenous Paediatric populations during Covid-19, Diabetes management in Indigenous populations, Surgical Skills RACS workshop and Yarning about doctor and trainee burnout. Significant keynote speakers also attended including Adam Goodes, Dr Anita Heiss.

As part of the STSP, AIDA held 38 online professional networking and development opportunities and two face-to-face workshops for specialist trainees and doctors wishing to undertake specialty training. Virtual opportunities included 20 lunchtime drop-in sessions, six evening 'Yarn Ups',

three evening virtual catch ups, five career development webinars and four professional development webinars for supervisors.

AIDA also held several stakeholder events including networking events for members and key stakeholders in Perth and Darwin. These events provided opportunity for members to network in person and meet the current AIDA Board members and the CEO. Any feedback received from members regarding the networking events was factored into the date, time and location of the events and captured for future reference.

During this reporting period AIDA conducted several outreach engagement activities including a visit to Yirrkala community in the NT and bringing together bringing 18 student members from the SRC for a cultural immersion trip to East Arnhem Land in the NT.

AIDA's Board conducted a variety of outreach visits to health centres and schools in Darwin, Nhulunbuy, Yirrkala, Melbourne, Perth and Canberra.

AIDA is contributing to the development of the National Health and Climate Strategy, in recognition of the strong connection to Country for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and we continue to engage and build relationships with traditional healers and community leaders including meeting with Ngangkari Healers in Sydney.

AIDA sponsored the 2023 NAIDOC Week Awards Ceremony, in recognition of AIDA alumni Professor Kelvin Kong's nomination as Person of the Year and we engaged with the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation and a State Affiliate to progress relationships.

AIDA is contributing to the development of the National Health and Climate Strategy, in recognition of the strong connection to Country for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples...



Strategic Priority 6

AIDA's sixth strategic priority centres on sustainability. We aim to do this by demonstrating best practice governance and management, Care for Country, and investing in AIDA's future.

The planning of events including a focus on Caring for Country and endeavouring to be as environmentally-minded as possible.

During this reporting period, AIDA were successful in securing a multi-year funding agreement with the DoHaC. The STSP was successful in securing funding for 2023-24 with an increase; almost doubling in funding through DoHaC.

AIDA continued to grow the Cultural Safety Program running 10 workshops with a total of 157 participants. AIDA also partnered with and/or has engaged and provided information on our Cultural Safety program to 36 medical colleges, universities, and organisations. 79 individuals purchased tokens for our online Cultural Awareness course and 1,200 tokens were purchased for colleges and organisations. AIDA is working towards the Cultural Safety Program being self-funded and not reliant on grant funding to deliver.

As of 30 June 2023, AIDA reported a slight increase in donations from the 2022-23 financial year.

As of 30 June 2023, AIDA reported a slight increase in membership numbers resulting an increase in membership fees.

AIDA staff and Board were supported to undertake the following professional development and training:

- Governance
- Media
- Australian Institute of Company Directors Course
- Financial fundamentals
- Leadership lift
- Monthly leadership coaching

During this reporting period, AIDA had staff turnover and a change in Board members. A new CEO was appointed in November 2022 and staff numbers increased from 9 to 21 as of 30 June 2023. 60% of AIDA staff identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander with 50% of the leadership team identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. AIDA continues to review policies and procedure and is currently going through a major review process.

In March 2023, AIDA moved offices from Old Parliament House to JAGA Workspace in Canberra.

During this reporting AIDA underwent a review of our performance and competency framework and are currently in the process of revising our current frameworks, processes, and positions descriptions. This work is scheduled for completion in February 2024.

Investment strategy

AIDA has secured the following partnerships during the reporting period:

- Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (RANZCOG), focused on promoting academic cooperation and exchange for the benefit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander trainees and fellows.
- Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand (MDANZ) and AIDA reaffirmed a longstanding partnership, entering into the sixth Collaborative Agreement, with a commitment to growing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical graduates.



A Yarn with Student Member

Final year Medicine student Loyola is passionate about supporting other Indigenous students by tutoring through the Indigenous Tutorial Assistance Scheme (ITAS) at Flinders University.

Loyola has ties to Mabuig and Badu Islands, and she reached out to the Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association (AIDA) to share her summaries with AIDA student members for free.

"I wanted to make these resources so students have everything they need. Aboriginal

and Torres Strait Islander Students have a lot of obligations and we don't have seven days a week to be studying," said Loyola.

"I don't think making our lives all about medicine is very helpful for our circumstances, our spirit and our connection to culture so it means a lot to me to help people."

The self-described 'visual learner' compares the study notes to a 'succinct cheat-sheet that frees up peoples time to help life be balanced'.

"There are a lot of sociological barriers for us [Indigenous people] in the first place and there are a lot of barriers to stay in medicine, financially, commitment to family and mob, that may interrupt commitments to medicine. I think it's really important for mob to be able to have that balance," said Loyola.

"If we are driven into the ground, it's very difficult to want to stay in medicine and we know we need more First Nations doctors."

The image displays a collage of medical templates. On the left is a 'History' template with sections for Patient Information, 'So can you tell me about what's brought you into the hospital/CP/ED today?', and various symptom characteristics like Site, Onset, Character, Radiation, Associated Symptoms, Timing/Duration, Exacerbating/Alleviating Factors, and Severity. On the right is a 'Physical Examination' template with numbered sections for Introduction (hand hygiene), Hands (inspection for discoloration), Wrist (radial pulse), and Neck (tracheal position, lymph nodes, JVP). A large central orange circle contains the text 'Custom History/Physical Exam Template'. At the bottom right, a brown oval states 'For all Health Disciplines: Medicine, Nursing, Allied Health'. Small icons for 'Chest Inspection' and 'Leg & Feet Inspection' are also visible.



Coming out of these years, we learnt some very valuable lessons, the biggest being the need to look after ourselves and those around us.

We need to remember to be kind, not only to ourselves but also to everyone as we don't know what challenges others are facing.
