

**SAWCAN**

**2022 - 2023**  
**ANNUAL**  
**REPORT**

South Australian West Coast ACCHO Network (SAWCAN)

# WELCOME TO ANNUAL REPORT 2023



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**We are proud of our collaborative efforts and the positive impact we have made in improving health and wellness outcomes for Aboriginal peoples across our regions.**

Together, we are stronger and more capable of achieving large-scale solutions for our communities.

## Polly Paerata Executive Manager

SAWCAN formally commenced in 2020 as a partnership consortium consisting of five ACCHOs on the Eyre Peninsula and Far West Coast of South Australia:

- Port Lincoln Aboriginal Health Service
- Yadu Health Aboriginal Corporation
- Tullawon Health Service
- Oak Valley Health Service
- Nunyarra Aboriginal Health Service



# Our founding Directors

The SAWCAN Directors is comprised of the CEOs of each of the Partner organisations.



Cindy Zbierski, CEO of Nunyara  
Aboriginal Health Service.  
Inaugural Chairperson of  
SAWCAN



Carolyn Miller, CEO of Port  
Lincoln Aboriginal Health Service.  
Director of SAWCAN



Joanne Badke, CEO of Tullawon  
Health Service.  
Director of SAWCAN



Sharon Yendall, General  
Manager of Oak Valley  
Maralinga.  
Director of SAWCAN



Zell Dodd, CEO of Yadu  
Health Aboriginal  
Corporation.  
Director of SAWCAN

Sadly, we said goodbye to Sharon Yendall, General Manager at Oak Valley Maralinga and Zell Dodd, CEO of Yadu Health Aboriginal Corporation. We sincerely thank both Sharon and Zell for the leadership, strength and expertise they brought to not only their respective communities, but also to SAWCAN.

We wish them well in their future endeavours. Their substantive Director roles will be automatically transferred to their organisations' incoming Chief Executive Officers.

# The SAWCAN consortium work collaboratively to:

- Build capacity within the region to achieve improved health and wellness outcomes for Aboriginal peoples
- Demonstrate a strengths-based approach to achieving large-scale solutions
- Share and co-operate with each other to utilise mutual skills, experience and specialist knowledge
- Leverage opportunities by advocating as one voice
- Become a central point of contact that provides advice and direction to external parties on Aboriginal-specific funds and programs coming into our region where it relates to health and wellbeing
- Act as a point of truth-telling and a support to each other

## Launch of the SAWCAN Strategic Plan

After many months of work, SAWCAN were proud to launch their Strategic Plan for 2023-2028 in March 2023. This work was led by the Directors and Executive Manager, Polly Paerata with the support of Coolamon Advisors. We thank Jennifer Bennett and Katrina Fanning for their hard work and commitment to this process.



The plan identifies four Strategic Outcomes that we will focus on over the next five years.



For more information, or for an electronic copy of our Strategic Plan please reach out to [sawcan@sawcan.org.au](mailto:sawcan@sawcan.org.au)

We give our sincere thanks to the Fay Fuller Foundation, Cages Foundation and Dusseldorp Forum, whom without their investment and belief in our way of doing business this would not be possible.



# Our regional project work

We continue to work on some large regional projects across the Eyre and Far West Coast region. These projects include:

## Aboriginal Disability Alliance

Commencing in 2020 and funded through Department of Social Services, this is SAWCAN's longest-standing regional program. The project focusses on four core objectives:

1. Improved understanding of our services and regions
2. Increase community understanding and awareness of the NDIS
3. Improve access to the NDIS for Aboriginal people, their families and carers
4. Creating sustainable, culturally-appropriate disability services (future-proofing the project)



Since the program's inception, we have:

- Supported 126 Aboriginal peoples across our region to access the NDIS
- Worked with 211 families to help them to understand how to use their NDIS plan
- Partnered with various agencies (including government and non-government) to hold 13 community information sessions
- Advocated on behalf of 89 NDIS participants to support NDIS plan and funding changes
- Held 45 information sessions with external service providers whom we work with, or who support Aboriginal peoples living with a disability
- Conducted 76 internal staff training sessions to build capacity and awareness across our ACCHOs in the NDIS space
- Facilitated 84 peer support meetings (for NDIS workers) to support in the sharing of information, good news stories and ways of working that can be adopted in other communities

We have also had the privilege of working with the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO), First Peoples Disability Network and the Coalition of Peaks to inform national policy changes.



# Our regional project work

## Elder Care Support

Funded through NACCHO, the Elder Care Support (ECS) program aims to support Elders across our region in accessing My Aged Care services (both in home support and residential care) and increase community awareness and understanding of aged care services.



The three key aims of the program are to:

1. Reduce barriers experienced by Aboriginal people across the aged care journey
2. Increase the number of Aboriginal people accessing Aged Care services
3. Increase the number of Aboriginal people receiving Aged Care on Country

This is a brand new program for SAWCAN and the region and we are excited to be able to offer this support to our communities in the 2023-24 financial year.

Leading this program on behalf of the region is Shellander Champion.

## Community Connections Program

Funded through the Department of Human Services, the Community Connections program aims to help Aboriginal Peoples living across the Eyre and Far West Coast region to access culturally appropriate supports to increase their independence and build stronger social and community connections.

This year we were able to successfully recruit support workers at Nunyara, Port Lincoln, Yadu and Tullawon to work with their most vulnerable and isolated community members to connect them with services and community groups. We are pleased to report that this program was able to support 146 peoples across our communities during this period.

Unfortunately, we have chosen not to continue with this program post-30 June 2023 due to a rigid program model that affected our ability to provide flexible services to our communities. Communities should be aware that their local ACCHO will continue to provide these connection and support services to their communities despite this program no longer being funded.



# Our regional project work

## Strong Bubs, Strong Families

The Strong Bubs, Strong Families is a new regional program that commenced in March 2023. It focusses on improving the quality, timeliness and access to culturally safe systems and resources Aboriginal children (prenatal to two years of age) and their families.

Leading this program on behalf of SAWCAN is Mary-Anne Williams who is a Registered Nurse / Remote Area Nurse. Over the next three years, we will be:

- Increasing local ACCHO workforce capacity to screen, assess and refer children at key developmental milestones using the ASQ-TRAK tools and resources
- Co-designing the development of a series of culturally specific resources with local communities to support parents with child development
- Supporting local ACCHOs to deliver support groups for positive parenting and supporting the wellbeing of the family as a whole
- Supporting local ACCHOs to improve internal systems and processes to facilitate better collaboration between health and education systems

## Continuity of Care Project

Over the past eighteen months, SAWCAN has been working in partnership with SA Health to review and develop a continuity of care model to support Aboriginal mothers, non-Aboriginal mothers of Aboriginal babies and children aged 0-4. The main aim of this piece of work is to take a systems approach to how continuity of care can be improved for this cohort. To date, our participation has been via attendance at state-wide meetings to share experiences of Aboriginal mothers, non-Aboriginal mothers of Aboriginal babies and children aged 0-4 in our region in order to inform change. We are excited to announce that in the coming financial year our region will be funded to test various activities that support continuity of care with the hope that we will be able to provide vital information which will inform the formal implementation of this program (ear-marked for 2024-2025). In early 2024, community members will be able to seek the services of a new worker (title yet to be defined) who can support Aboriginal mothers, non-Aboriginal mothers of Aboriginal babies and children aged 0-4 in their care journey within the ACCHO, hospitals and mainstream GP services.

## South Australian West Coast ACCHO Network (SAWCAN) Annual Report

# What's next?

The 2023 -2024 financial year is going to be a busy one! SAWCAN and its partner organisations are expecting an influx of new programs and initiatives designed to better support our communities. The challenge for all of us is to be able to find suitably trained workforce who wish to work in these spaces. Our new projects include:

- Tackling Indigenous Smoking
- Culture Care Connect – suicide prevention
- Research and data
- Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder community awareness and education

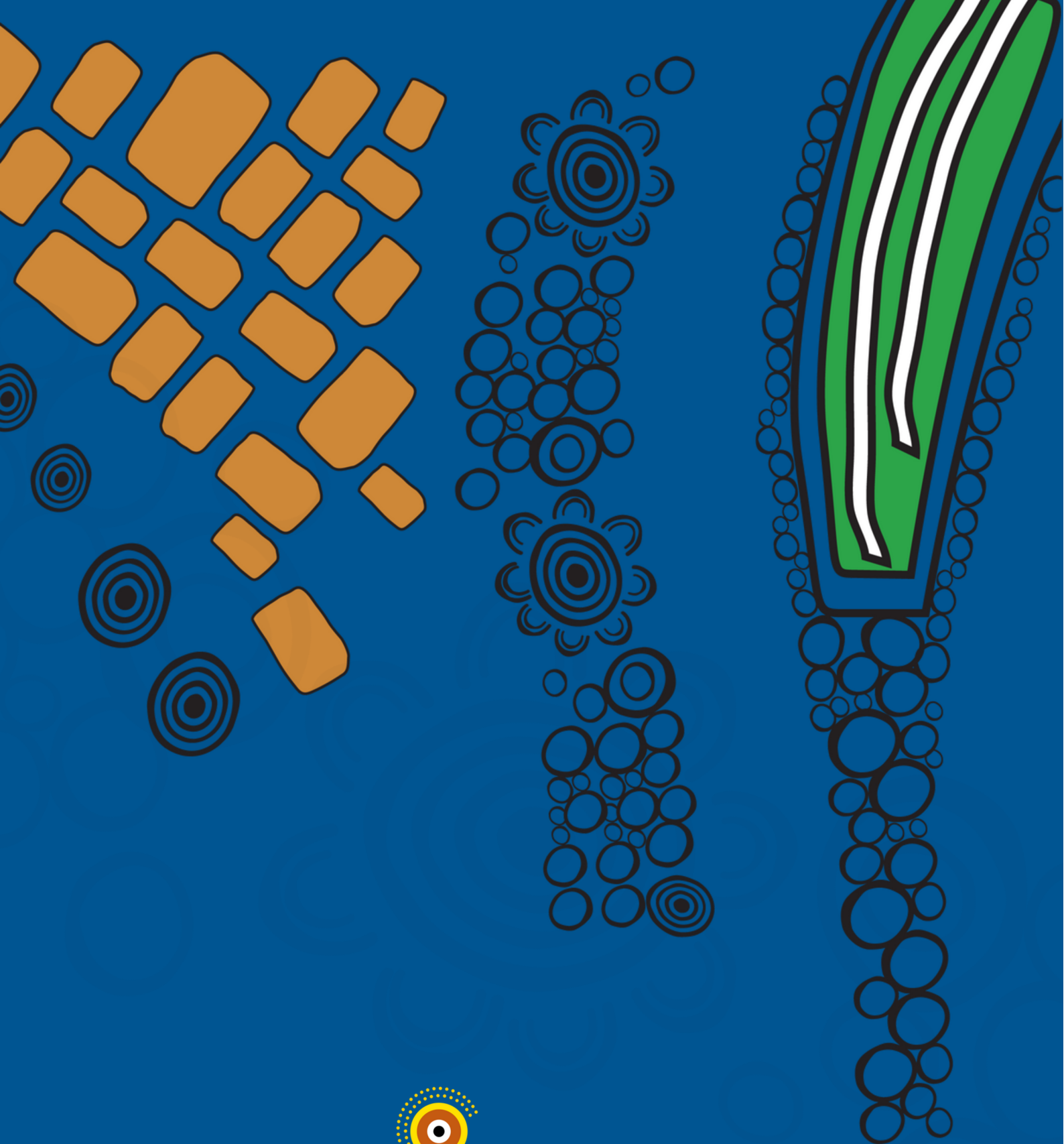
From a SAWCAN perspective, we will also have a significant focus on improving our internal systems to ensure that we can continue to grow and support the communities in bringing resources, programs and services to the Eyre and Far West Coast.

## Thank you

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we thank our SAWCAN staff for their hard work and dedication throughout the year. Our growth and successes would not be possible without you.







**SAW CAN**

[www.sawcan.org.au](http://www.sawcan.org.au)