First of its kind in Australia: A partnership between an acute metropolitan hospital and RAHC.

In 2014 a new and unique partnership was established between Western Health (WH) and Remote Area Health Corp (RAHC) to develop a pilot project. Five registered nurses from the Emergency department (ED) undertook a six week secondment in a Health Care Facility in remote Indigenous Communities in the Northern Territory.

The pilot program gave valuable insight into the persistent challenges that remote communities face to access primary healthcare services and the importance of providing effective, culturally sensitive and clinically competent health professionals.

In reciprocation our staff have gained a valuable experience that embraces Western Health’s purpose for “best care” for all WH patients.

This program aligns with the hospitals commitment to “Closing the Gap” in Indigenous health and wellbeing.

RAHC has been providing short term placements for health care professionals to remote Indigenous Communities since 2008. The remote workforce in the NT is significantly strengthened through RAHC’s existence and many health centres and programs now depend on RAHC to supply their staffing needs to supplement the permanent workforce.

WH is committed to sourcing nurses and midwives to meet the demand.

The success of the pilot has lead to continuation of the partnership until 2018. WH is supporting the partnership through:

- Extending the program to eligible midwives registered nurses and across all WH sites.
- Recruitment of 3 nurses and 1 midwife for placement in 2015-16 and up to 8 per year in 2017-18.
- Commitment through the development of a Memorandum of Understanding.
- Providing special leave enabling leave at short notice with no loss of employee benefits for WH staff.
- Returning staff encouraged and supported to undertake further placements.

We are proud to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of lands and waters of Australia and pay our respects to Elders, past, present and future. We further acknowledge and thank the Aboriginal Communities that welcomed us onto their lands and into their culture and families.

With thanks to the nurses who left their home and families to work with Indigenous Australians in their remote communities as part of this partnership. Special thanks to Julie-Anne Martin, Jacqueline Watkins, A/Prof Alex Cockram, A/Prof Denise Patterson (WH), Genevieve Lewins and Elly Fontes (RAHC) for making the partnership a reality.

CONTACT
nmwu@wh.org.au / (03) 9393 0127
enquiries@rahc.com.au / 1300 697 242

Poster Designed by Jacqueline Watkins and Amanda Culpan