



Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service Limited
Strategic Plan
2022 – 2027



Strategic Plan 2022-2027

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Cover image: Frank Wright©

Artist: Frank Wright

Community: Eualaraay nation

Medium: Acrylic paint

Created: 2021

Description: 'My Home, My Land'



My home, my land

The painting with the river and six animals in it is very significant to me as it shows the rivers Namoi and Barwon River.

The six animals in the picture are the Kangaroo/ Bandarr being an animal that our people hunted for their skin and meat which was seen in mobs around the area.

The Emu/ Dhinawan was also an animal hunted for their meat and their feathers used in the dances and the clothing. A very significant animal to me as it's my totem and used in a lot of stories and dances across the land.

The sand goanna/yurrandaali is another animal in area and a local totem to the locals, and it oils used for medication, on spears and many more utensils.

The Echidna/ thigibilla/ bigibilla is an animal from the area that quills, and oil used for a number of things like the spear heads, needles, and meat to eat.

MALIYAN / eagle, the caretaker of the land and an animal very significant to most tribes. The feathers used in dance and in a lot of stories to him making the call on what was happening across the country.

Dragon fly/murrumanamanaa is the scanner/ caretaker of the river and the totem of my family's tribes.

There are 3 campsites in the picture representing the three main places in and around Walgett itself being Namoi reserve near the Emu. The town Walgett is near the tail of the Kangaroo/bandarr and Gingie mission is where the Sand goanna is.

As our people used all the country and moved around so that the land wasn't over used. They moved around the other circles that cover most the land is the coming and movement of the people. I don't know where they camped, this is why I've put them all over, the bigger the circles, the longer the stay.

The blue is the river that is in the Walgett area and the fish in the river are the animals cod, yellow belly, brim that was a source of food.

There are also spirits in the river that represent the spirits of our people that travels and used the rivers.

This is a virtual map of our people and the main animals hunted and gathered in the local area.

To me this is my home, my land.

Frank Wright©
Eualaraay nation
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Acknowledgement to Country

Gulbiyaay

Welcome

Yaama Dhiiyaan-gal bula Birralii-gal

Hello families and children

Gamilaraayga guru-mayuu-ga

To Gamilaraay country

Gamilaraay mari-galgaa gayaa-nha

Gamilaraay people are happy that

Nginaay-nya-ga nhalay gaa-gi yanaay

You all to here have come



WAMS Saying

Welcome Buwaarr, Waan-ildhaay bula
Mari-galgaa-bu Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service
(WAMS) gayaa winangay nhama ngali waan
Traditional Mari-galgaa dhawun-galgaa-da
Bula, WAMS gaay giirruu guwaa-li nhama maaruma-
la gabanma-li bula gaba marigalgaa-bu

The Board, workers and peoples of Walgett
Aboriginal Medical Service (WAMS) proudly
remember that we work on Traditional Aboriginal
lands. Also, WAMS truthfully says that it will make
better health and well goodness of the people.

Frank Wright 2016



From the Chairperson

The Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service Limited (WAMS) is committed to continue to provide holistic, culturally responsive, and high-quality health services to the community.

We know that our current position is due to the way our staff work together with the community and with each other. We lead with the values that we have established to support the achievement of this new strategic plan. We will work with integrity, respect, trust, collaboration, and always place the needs of the community at the centre of everything we do.

Throughout this strategy, we refer to WAMS as a collective for both Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service Limited (WAMS) and Brewarrina Aboriginal Medical Service (BAMS). We work in close partnership, collaboration and shared governance with BAMS and use our combined clinical capability for the improved health outcomes of our communities.

This new strategy for WAMS will guide us through to 2027 and has five key areas.

1. Lead with culture and strengthen partnerships
2. Promote health outcomes in our community
3. Empower and engage the workforce
4. Continue to improve our organisational performance
5. Achieve financial stability

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank our staff for their continued commitment to WAMS and the health and wellbeing of our community.

Thanks to our community and their confidence in us and our services.

Mary Purse
Chairperson



About WAMS

WAMS was established in June 1986 and has been a hub for the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This Strategic Plan generally uses the terminology 'Aboriginal', acknowledging that we are based on Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the distinct identities of Torres Strait Islander people, who are also our patients and staff. Our first Board of Directors moved a resolution to treat all people. Currently, 60% of our clients are Aboriginal.

The Brewarrina Aboriginal Medical Service (BAMS) operates as an outreach clinic of WAMS. Both organisations work collaboratively to deliver high quality health services to the community.

WAMS now has a staff of over one hundred people making it one of the largest employers in Walgett. We have a responsibility to our community and are committed to increasing our suite of medical services and have added facilities to provide dental services, specific support for people with chronic disease and a children's mobile service.

As an Aboriginal Medical Service, we are committed to serving our community and providing opportunities for employment, training and promotion of all staff, and particularly our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. It is essential for our self-determination and expression of our cultural heritage that we are able to fully participate in the health workforce.

Our Vision

Our community will enjoy improved quality of life supported by enhanced health and wellbeing.

There have been significant challenges to the provision of health care in our community. The global COVID19 pandemic disrupted patterns of care and availability of staff and medicines. We are recovering from the pandemic and are seeking new funding and programs that will match the needs of our community.

WAMS ambition is to:

- Strengthen partnerships with purpose
- Deliver leading approaches to health and wellbeing to contribute to better quality of life
- Be an employer of excellence and a great place to work.



Our Values

Our values define how we work and are the 'ground rules' to guide behaviours with our clients, staff and partners.

We have five values that are an important part of bringing the WAMS vision to life and we recognise and encourage these standards.

Integrity

We have integrity.
 We are open, honest, and transparent.
 We will lead by example and will invest in our people and leaders.
 We take responsibility and are accountable for our professional behaviour and relationships.

Respect

We respect each other.
 We hear and value diverse perspectives especially those from our Aboriginal community.
 We are inclusive of all the skills and contributions of our staff.
 We seek to understand our staff and improve our services and programs.

Trust

We trust each other and value each other's skills and contributions.
 We will be dependable and accountable for our organisational responsibilities.
 We will take responsibility for our successes and mistakes.
 We will listen to feedback and seek ways to improve our services and programs.

Collaboration

We collaborate with our clients, staff and community.
 We help our colleagues.
 We are open to new ideas and suggestions.
 We actively share resources, skills, experience and knowledge.
 We work together to implement new ideas, services and programs.

Community-centred

We value and place the needs of community at the centre of our work.
 We provide excellent, holistic, culturally responsive, client centred care.
 We are reflective and open to improvement and change.



Our Strategic Objectives

We have prioritised key areas of our strategic and organisational development. This will help WAMS to continue to be responsive to our communities' needs and aspirations. There are five key objectives in our strategy.

1. Lead with Aboriginal culture and strengthen partnerships

We will lead with Aboriginal culture and understand that culture is a source of strength, identity and community.

Practicing culture is a protective factor for our community and we will always have culture at the centre of the way in which we work.

We will review current partnerships, striving for mutually beneficial partnerships. These partnerships will be true to WAMS strategic vision and ambition and establish a cohesive purpose for our clients and the communities we serve.

2. Promote health outcomes in our community

To be able to promote improved health outcomes in our community, we aim to understand the social determinants that have an impact on health. We will advocate for our community to fight for better outcomes.

WAMS needs to demonstrate clinical excellence through outstanding medical, nursing and allied health services.

We need to invest in new models of care that understand the social determinants of health and the needs of our clients and the communities we serve.

3. Empower and engage our workforce

Our workforce is critical to our ability to deliver services to our clients and the communities we serve.

We have a diverse workforce including both local and fly-in fly-out specialist staff.

We will work towards being an employer of choice in a very competitive market and limited supply of staff.

4. Continue to improve our organisational performance

We support a growing workforce and ensure all internal processes are coordinated and designed for efficiency and effectiveness.

WAMS will improve communications with our staff and stakeholders.

5. Achieve financial stability

We are challenged by an increasing complexity of clients, and community needs. We will establish our services to be financially sustainable so that we can continue to deliver services.

Our budgeting and reporting processes will deliver clear financial processes and transparency.

WAMS will also seek additional funding and investment.



1. Leading with Aboriginal Culture in Partnership

Practicing and sharing our Aboriginal culture is a protective factor for our community and we will always have culture at the centre of the way we work.

Lead with Aboriginal culture and strengthen partnerships

Outcomes	Actions
Lead with culture and understand that our culture is a source of strength, identity and community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite the community to celebrate in culture through sharing of facilities and hosting community and cultural occasions • Provide a safe place where all services are holistic and led through culture as a protective element for our community • Incorporate cultural teaching, art, story, language, history of place and truth-telling, and experience in all early learning and educational programs
Striving for mutually beneficial partnerships. These partnerships will be true to WAMS strategic vision and ambition and will establish a cohesive purpose for the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review all existing relationships with government (local, justice, education, health), community, staff and regulatory bodies to ensure that they are being led through culture and will achieve specific, relevant and timely outcomes • Lead with Aboriginal culture to engage with other organisations to strengthen current partnerships, and establish new partnerships where appropriate, in supporting healthy lifestyles • Existing partnerships will be reviewed to ensure that WAMS strategic objectives and community needs are met • All partnerships will be designed in alignment with <i>Priority Reform 1 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap</i>



2. Health Outcomes

Our community continues to experience challenges to their health and wellbeing – this has been amplified through two years of COVID restrictions that have resulted in community members not being able to access key health services.

Social determinants of health continue to impact the health of our community. Our community is impacted by shortages on housing, rising costs of living, and rising mental health challenges. WAMS is committed to working in partnership with other services to improve the health and wellbeing outcomes.

Improved health outcomes in our community

Outcomes	Actions
Promote improved health outcomes in our community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access to healthcare through outreach and an increasing range of services available through WAMS to serve emerging community needs, supporting life-long health • Dedicate time and effort to deeply understanding the social determinants of health and wellbeing • Invest in new models of care that recognise the social determinants of health and the needs of the local community • Actively work in preventive health
Demonstrate clinical excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve and adhere to all the relevant accreditations and regulations • Implement a clear and observed clinical governance policy and practice • Demonstrate excellence of medical, nursing and allied health services through improved clinical outcomes • WAMS and BAMS will work together to deliver high quality health services
Promote employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in clinical roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in and increase the number of Aboriginal Health Worker and Practitioners roles • Promote and financially support further clinical education for Aboriginal Health Workers and Practitioners
Invest in fit for purpose health infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all health facilities used by WAMS and BAMS personnel are fit for purpose (appropriate facilities and size) as clinical health facilities and support a focus for community engagement on health and wellbeing



3. Our Workforce

We will invest in our human resources and organisational development capabilities to ensure our people are attracted and motivated to work here, fulfilling their potential and recognised for their talents and contributions.

Empower and engage our workforce

Outcomes	Actions
Our workforce is critical to our ability to deliver services to our community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the workforce is able to meet the growing community health needs including mental health through appropriate resourcing, size of workforce and building complementary, multi-disciplinary health teams • Develop a long-term workforce plan that identifies key short and long term areas that will require different strategies • Innovate and partner with learning institutions from secondary, TAFE and universities to build on critical workforce pathways. For example, continue to invest and participate in the RN on Country Program
Work towards being an employer of choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a competitive, compelling employee value proposition to attract skilled professionals • Develop a new business plan, and human resources plan, to support staff to grow and thrive. • Build a high-performance team environment
Build a leading Human Resources capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess our emerging human resources capability in an environment of high employment and competition for resources • A new capability will build organisational development capabilities to ensure our people are attracted and motivated to work at WAMS, fulfil their potential, and be recognised for their talents and contributions. Key human resource priorities for WAMS include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ including an incentive and recruitment strategy ○ Learning and development pathways that are flexible and fair ○ Establish comprehensive recognition and rewards programs that support recognition of our diverse and talented workforce. ○ Renewed and deliberate retention strategies through understanding key reasons for retention through disciplined commencement and exit and stay interviews.



4. Organisational Performance

WAMS has grown to a significant size that supports a large workforce. We will ensure all internal processes are coordinated and designed for efficiency and effectiveness.

Continue to improve our organisational performance	
Outcomes	Actions
Internal policies and practices need to be fit for purpose and efficient.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review all internal processes and redesign to reflect contemporary, efficient, effective, flexible health and social services leading governance practices. • In particular this will include the policies and procedures for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Governance (Board, internal and clinical) ○ Code of Conduct ○ Delegations and Approvals Framework and policies ○ Reporting (Internal and external reporting) ○ Quality and Continuous improvement including compliments and complaints processes
Improve timeliness and accuracy of communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the range of stakeholders for whom access to communications on health services availability, accessibility and changes is imperative • Undertake a Communications Review to ensure that the community is receiving timely, accurate health and WAMS services advice. • Review the mix of communications channels that the community access



5. Financial Stability

WAMS will establish services to be financially sustainable so that we can continue to deliver services to our community.

Achieve financial stability	
Outcomes	Actions
Build our financial resilience and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand key funding models and their future impact • Consider how funding models for individual services could be complementary or cross-subsidised • Seek additional funding and investment into new services and programs.
Build a data capability to support planning and forecasting activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in collection and maintenance of key data sets aligned to <i>Priority Reform Four: Shared access to data and information at a regional level of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap</i> and principles of Indigenous Data Sovereignty • Invest in the relevant technology for a flexible, accessible data solution for health forecasting and developing service provision • Build the skillsets in data analysis to be able to analyse and respond to insights from the data.
Increase the maturity of our internal financial processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop clear policies and guidelines on how each service is budgeted, funding approved, monitored, and reported • Monitor adherence to policies and procedures with an internal audit program and improvement recommendations.



Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

We will monitor our progress against these new strategic priorities and measure whether we have been successful in achieving our intended outcomes.

1. Lead with Aboriginal culture in partnership		
Outcomes	Actions	Measures
1.1 Lead with culture and understand that culture is a source of strength, identity and community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite the community in to celebrate in our culture through sharing of facilities and host community and cultural occasions such as NAIDOC celebrations • Provide a safe place where all services are holistic and led through culture as a protective element for our community • Incorporate cultural orientation and information sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of community events held in the WAMS facilities that support health and wellbeing outcomes • Survey patients for their feedback on culturally appropriate services, accessibility, availability and quality
1. Review current partnerships, striving for mutually beneficial partnerships. These partnerships will be true to WAMS strategic vision and ambition and establish a cohesive purpose for the local community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review all existing relationships with government (local, justice, education, health), community, staff and regulatory bodies to ensure that they are being led through culture and will achieve specific, relevant and timely outcomes for the community • Lead with strong culture to engage in all partnerships supporting healthy lifestyles • Existing partnerships will be reviewed to ensure that WAMS strategic objectives and community needs are met through these partnerships • All partnerships will be designed in alignment with <i>Priority Reform 1 of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review partnerships and report to the board, striving for mutual benefits and a system to negotiate outcomes in our partnerships • Completed Partnership Audit to review and update to reflect new requirements aligned to the National Agreement

2. Improved health outcomes in our community

Outcomes	Actions	Measures
2.1 Promote improved health outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve access to healthcare through outreach and increasing range of services available through WAMS to serve emerging community needs, supporting life-long health Dedicate time and effort to deeply understanding the social determinants of health and wellbeing Invest in new models of care that recognise the social determinants of health and the needs of the local community Continue to actively work in preventive health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcomes measured through the disaggregation of data collected against: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome 1: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy long and healthy lives Outcome 2: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are born healthy and strong
2.2 Demonstrate clinical excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve and adhere to all the relevant accreditations and regulations Implement a clear and observed clinical governance policy and practice Demonstrate excellence of medical, nursing and allied health services through improved clinical outcomes To deliver high quality health services in the region 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achievement of all relevant accreditations and regulations including National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards Develop clinical governance policy and practices Develop shared clinical governance policies and processes

2. Improved health outcomes in our community (continued)

Outcomes	Actions	Measures
2.3 Promote employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in clinical roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of Aboriginal Health Worker and Practitioners • Promote and financially support further clinical education for Aboriginal Health Workers and Practitioners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support training and employment aligned with the six strategic directions of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan 2021–2031 • Increase in the number of Aboriginal Health Workers and Practitioners • Increase in the number of people undertaking training to become Aboriginal Health Workers and Practitioners.
2.4 Invest in fit for purpose health infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all health facilities used by personnel are fit for purpose (appropriate facilities and size) as clinical health facilities and support a focus for community engagement on health and wellbeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a WAMS Infrastructure Masterplan • Attract funding for repairs and maintenance • Attract new funding for facilities to support new health services

3. Empower and engage our workforce

Outcomes	Actions	Measures
3.1 Our workforce is critical to our ability to deliver services to our community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the workforce is able to meet the growing health needs including in mental health through appropriate resourcing, size of workforce and building complementary, multi-disciplinary health teams • Develop a long-term workforce plan identifying key short and long term areas that will require different strategies • Innovate and partner with learning institutions from secondary, TAFE and universities to build on critical workforce pathways, for example, continue to invest and participate in the RN on Country program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support training and employment aligned with the six strategic directions of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan 2021–2031 • Develop a comprehensive workforce plan
3.2 Work towards being an employer of choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work to develop a workforce that maximises the full potential of their workforce through established policies and practices which demonstrate effective employee recruitment, engagement and retention through development of a competitive, compelling employee value proposition to attract skilled professionals to our region. • Develop a new business plan, and human resources plan, to support staff to grow and thrive. • Build a high-performance team environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a comprehensive HR plan to work towards areas of focus for WAMS over the course of the Strategic Plan focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a clear interface between employees and HR to support complaints and improvements • Implement regular workforce health checks and surveys for reporting to the Board and reflecting on • Institute specific workforce metrics for monitoring

3. Empower and engage our workforce (continued)

Outcomes	Actions	Measures
<p>3.3 Build a leading Human Resources capability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess our emerging human resources capability • A new human resources capability will build organisational development capabilities to: ensure our people are attracted and motivated to work at WAMS; fulfilling their potential; and be recognised for their talents and contributions. Key human resource priorities for WAMS include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ including an attraction and recruitment strategy ○ Learning and development pathways that are flexible and fair ○ Establish comprehensive recognition and rewards programs that support recognition of our diverse and talented workforce. • Renewed and deliberate retention strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review requirements for baseline and operational HR capability for WAMS • Hire, train or retain key HR capabilities

4. Continue to improve our organisational performance

Outcomes	Actions	Measures
4.1 Internal policies and practices need to be fit for purpose and efficient.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review all internal processes and redesign to reflect contemporary, efficient, effective, flexible health and social services leading governance practices. • In particular this will include the policies and procedures for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Board Governance ○ Code of Conduct ○ Delegations and Approvals Framework and policies ○ Reporting (Internal and external reporting) • Quality and Continuous improvement including feedback, complaints, incidents and near miss processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, implement and monitor new policies and procedures as appropriate • Organisational performance will be supported by accreditation by QIP according to five standards in governance, management systems, consumer and community engagement, diversity and cultural appropriates and service delivery.
4.4 Improve timeliness and accuracy of communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a Communications Review to ensure that the community is receiving timely, accurate health and WAMS services advice including a review of the mix of communications channels that are currently used to diversify and use modern communications channels that the community access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a communications review to assess the efficacy of current communications of WAMS with both public health and individual client engagement objectives • Develop an external and internal communications strategy to engage with key stakeholders and clients of WAMS with a supporting measurement framework on the effectiveness of communications channels, regularity and engagement.

5. Achieve financial stability

Outcomes	Actions	Measures
5.1 Achieve financial resilience and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand key funding models and their future impact Consider how funding models for individual services could be complementary or cross-subsidised Seek additional funding and investment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish clear metrics and financial reporting, including cash flows and monitoring of organisational financial health
5.2 Build a data capability to support planning and forecasting activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest in collection and maintenance of key data sets aligned to principles of Indigenous Data Sovereignty and sound data governance Build the skillsets and capabilities of staff to be able to analyse and respond to insights from the data Understand the data assets and how they are to be protected and valued in WAMS operational and strategic planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish key requirements and data points for data for WAMS health service and financial planning Establish key data capabilities and recruitment and training opportunities
5.3 Increase the maturity of our internal financial processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop clear policies and guidelines on how each service is budgeted, funding approved, monitored, and reported including identifying opportunities for automation Develop key processes for maintaining or remediating budget issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish clear financial operational guidelines and processes and regularly measure the efficacy of these guidelines through the Internal Audit Program.

WAMS BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Mary Purse
Chairperson



Jenny Trindall
Vice Chairperson



Doreen Peters
Secretary



Caroline Janissen
Director



Iris Hall
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