

# END OF YEAR REPORT 2022





## Message from the CEO

**Dear Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation Members,**

Welcome to our End of Year Report to Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation (TAC) Members for 2022.

This End of Year Report is a summary of some of our key activities, but by no means does it cover all the valuable work TAC does on behalf of our community.

This year has been a very big year for TAC. Although many of the COVID-19 restrictions eased during the year, we remain vigilant to the dangers the virus presents to our community.

Some highlights from this year include TAC partnering with the Australian Electoral Commission to run a voting centre for the Australian Federal Election in May 2022, and the finalisation of our Strategic Plan for 2023-27 which outlines our goals for the next five years. We intend to focus on a mixture of growth and quality improvement measures.

We have plans to expand our services to meet the needs of our community, including some new services and projects we have not previously been involved in. In summary, we are looking to grow our organisation, but we need to make sure our foundations are solid to effectively manage the expected growth.

I would like to thank all those who contributed to the development of the Strategic Plan, including our local community, stakeholders, clients, and staff.

One of the tasks we have set ourselves in the Strategic Plan is to seek accreditation under the *QIC Health and Community Services Standards*. These are national standards that help us ensure we continue to provide quality services to our community.

We are also proud to announce that in July 2023 Tharawal will be celebrating its 40th year Anniversary, more info to come.

On behalf of myself and the TAC Board, I would like to wish you and your family a merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year. We look forward to being of service to you and our community in 2023.

**DC Wright** AM Hon Fell (WSU)

Chief Executive Officer

Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation





# Social and Emotional Wellbeing

## Tharawal Healthy Lifestyles

Tharawal Healthy Lifestyle programs (Community Kitchen, Community Garden, Good Tucker All Round, Line Dancing, Stepping On, Aqua Class, Exercise Class) run during the school terms. These programs aim to:

- increase knowledge and skills in nutrition,
- promote and increase consumption of fruit and vegetables,
- promote healthy eating to prevent chronic disease,
- help the community remain active, and
- provide opportunities for community members to access healthy food choices.

The programs also raise an awareness that conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, kidney disease and stroke are not inevitable and may be prevented. We aim to promote a healthier lifestyle to help prevent these conditions occurring and to improve the health of those who already have one.


In February 2022, we welcomed back our Group Programs with the appropriate COVID-19 restrictions in place.

## Elders Activities

This year, we continued to support our Elders. We held a number of events, such as our second in-house Elder's Olympics (which was very competitive!), and a fun Melbourne Cup Luncheon.

A highlight this year was a new program called 'Stepping On', which is a 7 week falls prevention program run in partnership with the South Western Sydney Local Health District (SWSLHD).

The program involved a weekly 2-hour session which included talks from TAC health professionals, including podiatrist, optometrist, dietitian, as well as a gentle exercise session aiming to improve strength and balance.





### **Youth Team**

We have gained some great staff throughout the year including a Youth team which have built partnerships within the community to provide:

- mentoring to students (primary and high school)
- cultural workshops within schools
- a weekly youth group program
- holiday programs

### **Mental Health Team & Drug and Alcohol Team**

This year, we provided our Mental Health clients with resources to help them throughout the pandemic (art supplies, pamphlets and food hampers).

TAC has psychologists, counsellors and a psychiatrist who provide support with any difficulties life throws your way. Our team is trained in delivering Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Person-Centred Therapy, Narrative Therapy and Trauma-Informed care.

At TAC, we offer a culturally safe space for you to yarn about mental health difficulties related to anxiety, depression, trauma, grief, psychosis, and relationship breakdowns.

Our wait times to see our psychologists, psychiatrists and counsellors have reduced in 2022.

We continue to run our weekly Drug and Alcohol clinic and offer the Smart Recovery program for the community to access.

We look forward to continuing and expanding our programs throughout 2023.





# Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation

Tharawal Housing Aboriginal Corporation (THAC) continued to have a high demand for housing this year.

To ensure THAC's transparency and independency, allocation of properties are prioritised and determined by the Aboriginal Housing Office pathways list with Housing NSW.

We currently have 106 Social Housing Properties of which there are 9 Affordable Housing properties.

Employment Related Accommodation properties are allocated to:

- students who have come from country areas
- women leaving jail on parole who require support to re-establish themselves, and
- homeless men who require stable housing

*Other highlights for this year were:*

- 'Finding your Way', A pilot program in partnership with the NSW Aboriginal Housing Office. This is a transitional housing program for men who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- We have regained 2 more years funding for the Home to Stay Program.





# Oorunga Wandarrah MACS Centre (OW MACS)

This year we were successful in obtaining a Minor Capital Grant to create a safer play space for our babies (0-2 years). The extension to this area has allowed babies and toddlers to have uninterrupted play, while also maintaining access to the natural materials that are an integral element to child's play.

## School Transition Program

The Transition program allows children to be ready for and have an insight into what to expect when starting Kindergarten.


We are happy to report that our children starting Kindergarten in 2023 have been attending the School Transition Program with two local Department of Education schools.

We believe starting school is an important time when children establish identities of themselves as learners. Our children are also supported with our School Readiness Program in partnership with our visiting Allied Health Team.

## Return of the Allied Health Team (after COVID-19).

This partnership supports developmental outcomes through the collaboration of OW MACS staff and Allied Health clinicians and supports the goals of OW MACS in maintaining high quality early childhood care and improving children's developmental outcomes together with their families.

The service includes:

- information sessions for staff,
  - classroom-based programs (e.g., school readiness) that are co-facilitated by OW MACS staff and clinicians, and
  - Child-centered consultations and referrals for further care.
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# Waranwarin Early Learning Centre (ELC)

Waranwarin ELC had a great year with staff that are excited to make a difference to children and families.

## ***Current Enrolments***


- Long day Care - 66 children
- Outside School Hours - 53 children with 23 regular children in before and after school care, and an additional 30 children from community that may access our vacation care program.
- Wait list - 33 Aboriginal children

## ***Partnerships***

- Ninganah No More, Dharawal Language program visits the centre weekly.
- Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation continues to support the centre and provides resources for our Breakfast Program, Cert IV Early Literacy and Language training for staff.
- SWSLHD – ELC Allied Health Supports, returned October 2022.
- Hearing Australia and Plums and Hats support our children and families for initial ear health screening and basic speech which is connected to hearing.

## **Family Programs**

Family programs have improved immensely throughout 2022, with engagement increasing in all our programs.

- 2 Playgroups per week
  - 3 Deadly Homework Clubs per week
  - 1 Parenting Program per term
  - 1 Sewing Program per week
  - 2 Family Holiday Activities every school holidays
  - 1 Family Camp per year
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## Aboriginal Guardianship Support Model (AGSM)

AGSM has excelled over the duration of the program and has been fully staffed since June 2022.

- Active families - 30
- Families ready to sign-up - 13
- Withdrawals - 2
- Closed service files - 2
- Transitioning to guardianship order - 4
- Established an Advisory Committee made up of Guardians to help guide our work.

## Family Health Connector

Our Family Health Connector role was introduced in August 2022 to help support our families and children.

The Family Health Connector works with families, children, and staff to build and support professional relationships and engagement with health providers. The Family Health Connector is based 2 days per week at OW MACS and 3 days per week at Waranwarin.

The Family Health Connector can refer families to GP Services, Paediatrics, Child Family Health Nurse, Speech, Child Psychology, Occupational Therapy (starting in 2023), Ear Health and more. The Family Health Connector works closely with specialised staff from SWSLHD and has referral pathways to TAC.





# Brighter Futures

The primary focus of Brighter Futures is to keep families together through a range of programs.

The Brighter Futures program is tailored individually to each family to meet their needs in a culturally appropriate way, supporting families, children and young people to thrive and feel safe in their home and work towards keeping families together and improving outcomes.

We are funded to maintain a caseload of 38 families, however, we currently hold a total caseload of 42 families across the program.

When the program is complete and families have successfully met their goals, we can continue to work with them, checking in on their progress to ensure they continue to make progress.

We hope we can make a difference with this program, because our children are already over represented in the child protection space.





# Medical Team

## Medical Service

Tharawal Medical Service continued to operate during COVID-19 restrictions. In response to the pandemic and risk to our community, we continued to provide both telehealth and face-to-face appointments.

Despite an easing of COVID-19 restrictions, Tharawal Medical are still actively promoting COVID-19 boosters with 4th wave numbers increasing. A booster clinic held in mid-December was fully booked.

This year we were successful in receiving a COVID-19 nurse grant, which allowed us to dedicate a nurse to follow up with patients who have been affected by COVID-19.


Our medical service received another 3 years accreditation from Australian General Practice Limited (AGPAL). We were very pleased with the positive feedback received, especially given the challenges we faced because of COVID-19.

Additionally, we were also re-accredited with our GP Registrar training program, GP Synergy, for another 3 years.

We were delighted that Dr Bemand was nominated and received an award for best Supervisor of the year from GP Synergy.

Next year we will be launching our health promotion events for 2023, focusing on keeping our community healthy through education and management of health issues. We will release a monthly calendar to inform our community about what is going on at TAC.

We will be commencing monthly primary and high school health assessment clinics, so please keep an eye out on our Facebook page for more information.





## **Bullabulla and Paediatrics**

The Bullabulla program aims to build healthy families and includes providing access to a range of health and well-being services to our mums and bubs, and helping our people be the parents they want to be.

All Bullabulla clinics, including immunisations, Paediatrics, and Mums and Bubs, continued to operate during COVID-19 restrictions.

Thanks to the community being so diligent, TAC's immunisations rates are higher than the NSW State average, so our kids are being protected.

## **Dental Clinic**

After COVID-19 restrictions, Tharawal Dental Clinic returned to full capacity in February 2022.


### ***Dental Clinic 2022 Statistics***

- Total patients: 976
- Total visits: 2205
- Total treatments: 7494
- Dentures provided by POCHE Centre and Dr Ish: 33

The POCHE Denture van visited in June 2022 to help provide dentures to the community.

Since July 2022, Dr Ish attends the clinic every Wednesday to see patients needing new dentures or needing their dentures repaired.

Tharawal Dental Clinic is accredited by The National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards and has begun the re-accreditation process for 2023.





# Financial Performance

As part of our constitutional requirements, an independent audit of our financials has been undertaken and TAC is happy to report that we are in a strong financial position.

For a more detailed report of our financial position, TAC Members can:

- visit the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations website, or
- contact our Administration team to request a Financial Report to be picked up or mailed to them.

