

**Media Release**  
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**GRAMS Strives for Tobacco-Free community**

As part of its vision for a tobacco-free Mid West, Geraldton Regional Aboriginal Medical Service (GRAMS) sent two of its staff to the Oceania Tobacco Control Conference in Hobart in October.

GRAMS Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS) officers Leroy Comeagain and Vicky Martyn attended the conference, with the theme 'From Vision to reality: A tobacco free Oceania'.

The duo have returned feeling fired up to make a difference in their community.

They said they'd gained many great ideas to incorporate into their current program, while also having the chance to share their stories with other TIS teams from across the country.

"This annual conference provides such valuable information and opportunities," Ms Martyn said.

"One great opportunity is to link in with other TIS officers and build relationships where we can stay in touch and share further ideas."

Mr Comeagain said the conference highlighted several key pieces of interesting information.

"Apparently, lung cancer related to smoking now kills more women than breast cancer and, in Australia along, the health, social and economic impacts to individuals and communities is \$31 billion dollars," he said.

"The conference also provided us with a whole raft of ideas on helping people to quit.

"We were urged to enlist non-smokers in the community to help spread the quit message to smokers, and to concentrate heavily on youth rather than older smokers to have a greater impact."

The duo also learned the benefits of staging 'brief interventions' to start the quit conversation and to ask the question 'what would make you quit?' to help people on their journey to stop smoking.

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