

Events & Updates



Mingle on Mitchell – Where Community Comes Together!

September and October were full of energy as Geraldton Regional Aboriginal Medical Service (GRAMS) programs – including Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS), Deadly Youth, and Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) – joined the monthly Mingle on Mitchell event in Spalding.

Mingle on Mitchell is all about connection, laughter, and family fun! This community catch-up, run in collaboration with **headspace**, **GRAMS**, and **GSAC**, gives families a chance to get out of the house, share a meal, and enjoy activities like **arts and crafts**, **sports**, and **games**.

It's a relaxed, welcoming space where everyone can come together, make new friends, and celebrate community spirit.

If you haven't been yet, don't miss the next one – bring the kids, bring your smile, and join the fun!

📅 9th October



Northampton NAIDOC Community Event

The GRAMS SEWB Team and Health Promotion Team travelled 51 kilometres north of Geraldton to join the Northampton community in celebrating NAIDOC Week.

This year's theme, **"The Next Generation: Strength, Vision & Legacy,"** set the tone for a day filled with connection, culture, and storytelling. Elders and community members shared powerful stories of their deep-rooted ties to Northampton – stories grounded in respect, humility, and unique cultural experiences that highlight the strength and resilience of generations past and present.

GRAMS extends a heartfelt thank you to **Colleen Drage** Coordinator at NOSCI and the entire Northampton community for welcoming us and allowing us to be part of such a special celebration.

Together, we honour culture, share knowledge, and build a stronger future for the next generation.



📅 September and October

Congratulations to our Monthly Raffle Winners!

September – Immunisation Raffle



GRAMS is thrilled to announce that **Tori Callow** was the lucky winner of our **September Immunisation Raffle!** Tori has taken home a **brand-new fridge** for her and her family!

Throughout September, GRAMS focused on raising awareness about the importance of immunisations. Vaccinations are a vital way to protect yourself, your loved ones, and the wider community from serious diseases.

As part of this initiative, everyone who attended GRAMS and completed their immunisations during September was automatically entered into the raffle. Thank you to all who participated and helped make our community healthier and stronger.

October – Breast Cancer Raffle

October was dedicated to promoting **Breast Cancer Awareness Month** at GRAMS. To help raise awareness, our Health Promotion Team created an educational questionnaire covering key topics such as **common physical symptoms** and the **recommended age for a first routine mammogram**.

We're delighted to announce that **Jeanette Kersting** was the winner of this month's raffle! Jeanette received a **\$250 IGA voucher** – congratulations!

Thank you to everyone who participated and helped spread awareness about breast cancer. Your involvement plays an important role in encouraging early detection and improving health outcomes in our community.

Stay tuned for more exciting opportunities and health initiatives from GRAMS. Together, we can keep Geraldton safe, thriving, and you could be our next winner!

📅 16th October

GRAMS Represents at ARF and RHD National Summit in Darwin



GRAMS proudly attended the National Summit on Acute Rheumatic Fever (ARF) and Rheumatic Heart Disease (RHD) in Darwin.

The summit brought together health professionals, community leaders, and policy makers from across Australia to share knowledge, strategies, and innovations aimed at eliminating ARF and RHD—conditions that disproportionately affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

GRAMS was represented by:

- **Deborah Woods** – Chief Executive Officer
- **Colin Woods** – Environmental Officer
- **Margaret Peel** – Clinical Director
- **Shakiah Forsyth** – Enrolled Nurse

Their participation highlights GRAMS' commitment to improving heart health and reducing the burden of preventable diseases in our region. By engaging in national conversations and collaborating with experts, GRAMS aims to strengthen local programs and deliver better outcomes for the community.

Together, we're working towards a future free from ARF and RHD.

11th October



Women's Wellness Journey



The SEWB team organised a special trip to honour some of the most important women in our community – our mothers, Grandmothers, Sisters, Aunties, and family carers.

The day began with a guided Skywalk tour overlooking the stunning Murchison River and Nature's Window. The group were privileged to hear the significant history of the area from Colleen Drage and Mauretta Drage, both proud Nanda women and Traditional Owners of this beautiful Kalbarri country.

Lunch was prepared by the SEWB team and enjoyed by the river, surrounded by the breathtaking landscape of Kalbarri.

In the afternoon, the women took part in a relaxing art session led by Mauretta,

who shared her knowledge of Aboriginal art and some of the deeper stories and symbols connected to Nanda Country.

To finish the day, each woman received a Women's Wellbeing Pack, thoughtfully prepared by the SEWB team as a small acknowledgement of their strength, resilience, and ongoing contributions to community life.

Attendee testimonials:

"My day outing was just what I needed for my wellbeing and mental health mind. I loved my one-day outing. We had yarning, full of laughter and lunch and it was just what the Dr ordered."

"Lovely day would be great to have another one 6 monthly would be fantastic."

"Was a lovely day out."

GRAMS recognises the tireless effort, care, and cultural strength these women provide every day to keep our community strong. As part of this recognition, the women were invited on a meaningful journey of self-empowerment and cultural connection.



6th - 7th November

WA ACCHS Corporate Services Forum



GRAMS was proudly represented by Jit and Davies at the 2025 Western Australia Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Sector (WA ACCHS) Corporate Services Forum held at Mandoon Estate, Caversham. The two-day event brought together corporate, workforce, and leadership teams from across the sector to share knowledge, strengthen skills, and plan for future growth. The forum opened with a meaningful Welcome to Country from Whadjuk Noongar Elder Uncle Nick Abraham, setting a strong cultural foundation for the discussions ahead.

Forum Highlights

Key sessions across the two days included:

- **WA Health Workforce Strategy 2034** – future planning for a strong Aboriginal health workforce
- **Leadership through culture** – reflections on values and community-centered leadership
- **VET and traineeship pathways** – opportunities for building the next generation of Aboriginal health workers
- **SEWB Framework** – supporting workforce wellbeing and resilience

- **Innovation and technology** – virtual health, AI tools, and improved locum workforce solutions

- **HR, recruitment and compliance updates** – including Medicare billing changes, anti-discrimination laws, and Working with Children Check reforms

- **Risk, governance, and grant-readiness** – strengthening organisational capability

Networking opportunities (including the evening sundowner) allowed attendees to connect, share ideas, and celebrate the sector's ongoing achievements.

Resources & Ongoing Learning

All presentations and materials are available through the AHCWA Member Portal. Staff are also encouraged to join the ongoing **WA ACCHS Lunch & Learn: Corporate Edition**, offering short online sessions on key corporate and workforce topics.

Grams Representation

GRAMS acknowledges Jit and Davies for attending and bringing back valuable insights to support continuous improvement within our organisation.

📅 20th November



Men's Movember Workshop

Our Men's Movember Workshop was a powerful day of connection, learning, and laughter as local men came together to focus on their physical, mental, and cultural wellbeing. GRAMS extends a heartfelt thank you to everyone who attended and helped make the event a great success.

A special congratulations goes to the **TIS Program**, the **Deadly Youth Program**, and the **SEWB Program** for their strong leadership and support in bringing this initiative to life. Their commitment to community health continues to create meaningful opportunities for men to engage, learn, and connect.

The day included an engaging digital wellbeing session led by **Mathew Aitchison from ReadyTechGo**, who guided participants through practical ways to use their devices to support healthier living. Men learned how to track heart health and steps, access online mindfulness tools, connect with community and men's health services, and safely store important medical information and emergency contacts.

We were also treated to fantastic entertainment by **Craig Pickett**, whose performance brought plenty of smiles and helped set a relaxed, welcoming atmosphere for the day.

Participants had the opportunity to update their details with **Lisa Whitby**, ensuring their health information remains current and accurate. **Lisa Collard** provided blood pressure checks and health yarns, giving men the chance to stay on top of their cardiovascular health in a supportive space.

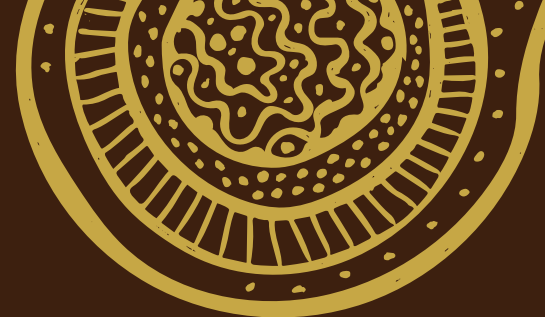
The **Men's Mental Health and Suicide Prevention yarning circle**, led by **Daniel De Luce**, created a safe space for men to talk openly, share stories, and strengthen community support around mental wellbeing.

Physical health was also a strong focus, with **Specialist Musculoskeletal Physiotherapist, Ivan Lin**, highlighting the importance of movement and regular exercise to support long-term health.

GRAMS would like to sincerely thank everyone involved in delivering the event, and especially all the men who attended. Your willingness to show up, participate, and support one another is what Movember is all about – strengthening men's wellbeing through knowledge, culture, connection, and community.



7th December



GRAMS Family Fun Day – A Celebration of Community!

GRAMS hosted its much-anticipated Family Fun Day, and what an incredible day it was! The event brought together families, friends, and community members for a vibrant celebration filled with music, art, fun activities, and plenty of smiles.

Entertainment Highlights

The stage came alive with **amazing performances** from **Razzy Mak**, **The Edwards Family Band**, **Sam B**, and **Red Ochre**, creating an unforgettable soundtrack for the day. We were also treated to a stunning live artistic performance by **Phil Doncon**, who's amazing artwork was on display for everyone to see.

Fun for Everyone

Kids and families enjoyed the **Bounce Castle**, **water play**, **Foam Frenzy** and the hilarious **Dodgy Bro's Dodge Ball**. Both the **360 Photo Booth** and **The Magic Photo Booth** were a hit, capturing memories in style! While food vendors kept everyone fuelled with delicious treats. There were prizes and giveaways throughout the day, adding extra excitement to the festivities.

GRAMS TIS Program Launch

A special highlight was the unveiling of the **GRAMS TIS** program's **new branding**, featuring community shirts and the hugely popular water bottles – both were in high demand!

Acknowledgements

A heartfelt thank you to **Lennelle Papertalk**, our fantastic MC, for keeping the energy high, and to **Mya Cameron** for her beautiful Welcome to Country, which grounded the day in culture and respect.

We also extend our deepest gratitude to the **GRAMS staff** for their hard work and dedication in making this event such a success. Your contributions truly made the day special.

Thank You, Community!

To everyone who attended and supported the GRAMS Family Fun Day – thank you! Your presence and participation made this event a celebration of connection, culture, and community spirit.



Staff Updates

New Staff

Social Emotional & Wellbeing Team



Daniel De Luca
– Community Liaison Officer

Where are you from?

I'm originally from Perth and have spent the last 7 years in the Pilbara (Newman) volunteering for the Aboriginal Male Healing Centre (AMHC), then worked EON Foundation delivering education in sustainable fruit and vegetable gardens in remote schools.

I have spent the last 4 years working as a Community Engagement Officer at Puntukurnu Aboriginal Medical Service (PAMS) and helping 54 Reasons on casual basis, mentoring Martu Aboriginal high school kids from remote schools living at the Hostel in Newman.

What are your hobbies or interests outside of work?

I've always had an affinity with the ocean, and living in Newman that was certainly missing. I'm really enjoying the beach here, and so are our 3 rescue desert dogs who don't seem to miss the harsh red landscape of the Pilbara.

I enjoy travelling to all communities, meeting new people, and learning and understanding the culture and the history of our Aboriginal brothers and sisters.

I love to read and relax sometimes in front of the TV, particularly watching all the sports.

What motivated you to join our team?

Over the last 2 or 3 years, I have been privileged to attend several fantastic conferences and the SEWB conferences, where I had the opportunity to hear GRAMS CEO and her team speak about the work they do here in the Mid-West.

I then said to myself "I would love to be a part of that journey if and when the time came." Being in the Pilbara for 7 years and feeling the pull of being near the ocean, I reached out to GRAMS and I feel that the universe aligned, and here I am in Geraldton. I am very grateful for this opportunity to help wherever I can for this community.

Dental Clinic



Aleksandra Lappa
– Locum Dental Nurse

Where are you from?

Australian but Polish background (parents).

What are your hobbies or interests outside of work?

Kitesurfing and travelling.

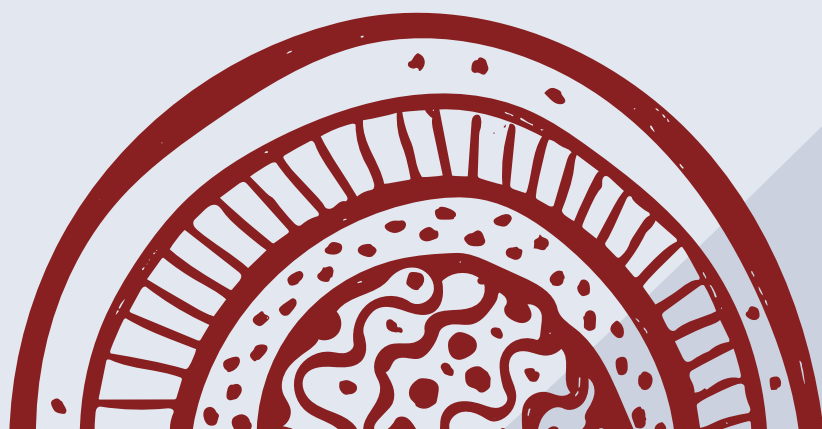
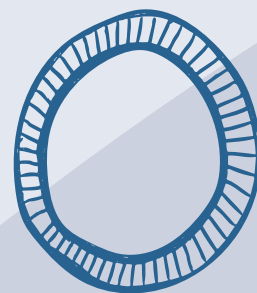
What motivated you to join our team?

I'm loving locum work for its diversity and challenges.

It's the most enriching and rewarding experience in my dental career. I enjoy giving back to the community.

Favourite food?

Dark chocolate.



Staff Awards

Malang Nguyran – A National Honour for Rural Research Excellence



We are proud to share that **Dr Revathy Carnagarin**, Rural Generalist Registrar at GRAMS and WACHS Geraldton, has been awarded the **National Excellence Award in Rural Research** by the **Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM)** at the **RMA25 Conference** in Perth.

This prestigious award recognises Dr Carnagarin's outstanding contributions to rural health research, particularly in cardiovascular and metabolic medicine, and her commitment to improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. With over **82 peer-reviewed publications**, a **PhD in Endocrinology**, and **postdoctoral clinical research training from Harvard Medical School and Dobney Hypertension Centre, Royal Perth Hospital Research Foundation, University of Western Australia**,

Dr Carnagarin brings a wealth of expertise and passion to her work in Geraldton.

Her research has not only advanced clinical understanding but also shaped culturally responsive care models that resonate deeply with the needs of our community. As a scientist, educator, and clinician, she embodies the spirit of rural excellence and community-driven innovation.

Dr Carnagarin shared:

"This award is not just a personal milestone – it's a reflection of the collective strength and support I've received from all the teams I work with: WACHS Midwest, EMHS, SJOG Geraldton, and GRAMS. I'm deeply grateful to be part of a team that uplifts and empowers meaningful change."

Malang Nguyran – thank you to the GRAMS team for being part of this journey. Your support continues to inspire excellence in rural health.

Dr Carnagarin is now looking forward to **extending her research within GRAMS**, focusing on **community-led innovation, culturally safe care**, and **collaborative models** that empower local voices in **rural health**.

Tarleesha Barnes and Rebecca Corbett – Celebrating Nursing Excellence at GRAMS

GRAMS is proud to celebrate the outstanding achievements of two of our dedicated staff members, **Tarleesha Barnes** and **Rebecca Corbett**, who both successfully completed their **Diploma of Nursing** on **12 December 2025**.

Tarleesha Barnes, based at our **Mount Magnet site**, and **Rebecca Corbett**, from our **Geraldton office**, both demonstrated remarkable commitment and determination throughout their studies.

As part of their training with **Marr Moordijt Training Inc.**, both ladies travelled to **Perth** to complete their Diploma – a significant achievement that reflects their dedication to professional growth and community health.

GRAMS is especially proud to acknowledge **Tarleesha Barnes**, who was awarded the **Encouragement Award** in recognition of her perseverance, positive attitude, and commitment throughout her training. This is a wonderful and well-deserved achievement.

GRAMS extends our heartfelt congratulations to **Rebecca and Tarleesha** on successfully completing their Diploma of Nursing. We also commend Tarleesha on receiving the Encouragement Award – a testament to her hard work and resilience. We are incredibly proud of both women and look forward to the valuable contributions they will continue to make to our communities and to GRAMS.



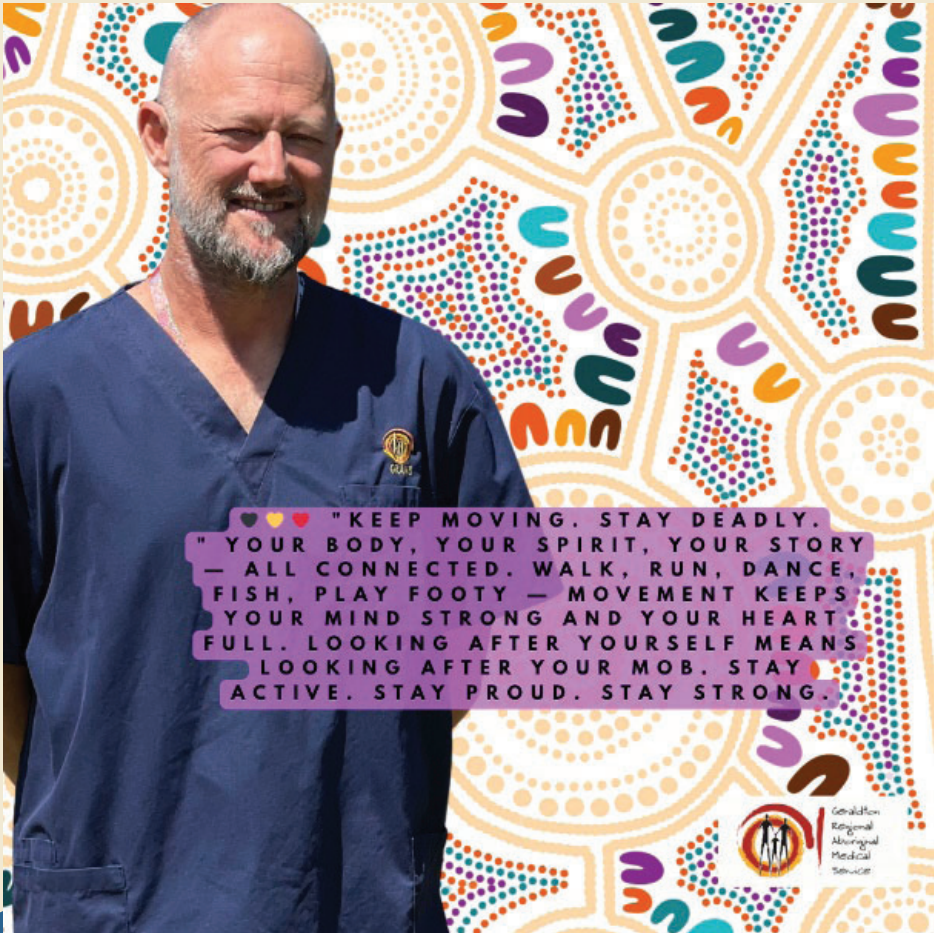
November

November is more than moustaches; it's a global movement dedicated to **improving men's health**.

Throughout November, our focus was on raising awareness and taking action around key issues affecting men, including mental health, suicide prevention, prostate cancer, and testicular cancer.

It encouraged our community to have meaningful conversations, book regular check-ups, and remind men that seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

Let's keep the conversation going about men's health – your health matters every day, not just in November.





SEASON'S GREETINGS



Warmest wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy
New Year from all of us at GRAMS!

As we reflect on the past year, we're truly grateful
for your support and look forward to keeping you
healthy and safe in 2026.



HOLIDAY CLOSURE NOTICE

GRAMS will be closed for the Christmas break on
Friday, 19 December at 3:00PM and reopen on
Monday, 5 January 2026.

Important: To ensure you're up to date with your GP
appointments, prescriptions, medications and have
updated all details on the check list please come in
and see us before we close.

This is part of our commitment to serving you better.
Enjoy the holidays, stay safe and we'll see you in the
New Year!

