

Culturally Sensitive Aboriginal RTW Service NEWSLETTER

August 2021 | Issue #4



WorkFocus Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to elders both past and present.



July recap

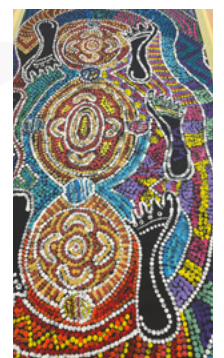
NAIDOC Week 4-11 July

WorkFocus Australia was privileged to still be able to celebrate NAIDOC Week in certain parts of the country, demonstrating that we weren't allowing COVID-19 to stop us celebrating the oldest culture on earth.

In ACT, our branch manager, Oliver De Villa and Aboriginal Service champion, Laura McAuslan attended a Canberra Community NAIDOC Week Event held at Woden Town Square, Phillip. On the day there were musicians' stalls and guest speakers present to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture.

Over in WA, the team got involved in an exciting art class with Whadjuk artist and Aboriginal Education Consultant, Julianne Wade. Julianne inspired the team to reach new levels of artistic expression through a painting which was focused on the NAIDOC theme of Heal Country. The beautiful and striking colours of the painting represent the six seasons, with the footprints symbolising the connection of the earth, as well as the 'campgrounds' in the middle (meant to represent shoulders).

For more information about Whadjuk artistry and the art work and services Julianne can provide, please read the following pages [whadjukartist](#) or [whadjuk_artist](#)



We are also proud to announce the recent update to our website to reflect which Aboriginal nation in which **our offices** are located.



International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples

9 August

9 August commemorates the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples. It is celebrated around the world and marks the date of the first meeting of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations held in Geneva in 1982.

There are over 476 million Indigenous Peoples in the world living across 90 countries. They make up less than 5% of the world's population. Indigenous Peoples speak an overwhelming estimated 7,000 languages and represent 5,000 different cultures worldwide.

Indigenous Peoples are inheritors and practitioners of unique cultures and ways of relating to people and the environment. Indigenous peoples have retained social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which they live. Despite their cultural differences, Indigenous Peoples from around the world share common problems related to the protection of their rights and preservation of their culture.

This year's theme for International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples will focus on, "Leaving no one behind: Indigenous Peoples and the call for a new social contract". A commemoration will feature an interactive discussion with two speakers on the distinct element to be considered when building and redesigning a new social contract that is inclusive of Indigenous Peoples. Commemoration to be held on Monday, 9 August from 9am-11am (EDT).

For more information regarding International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, please visit:

un.org/en/observances/indigenous-day

What's ahead...



Indigenous Wellbeing Conference

Indigenous Wellbeing Conference

7-8 October

Depending on COVID-19 restrictions and guidelines, WorkFocus Australia is honoured to announce that we have been accepted to present at the upcoming 2021 Indigenous Wellbeing Conference being held in Cairns on 7-8 October.

The conference aims to highlight the key health challenges faced in Indigenous communities, including inequities in accessing healthcare and treatment. Presenters will be discussing current community programs, evidence-based research and current treatment services available across the country in the effort to connect communities and services to Close the Gap in the indigenous community.

WorkFocus Australia will be proudly presenting an overview of our bespoke and culturally respectful Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) Service. The service was launched during National Reconciliation Week in 2019 with the primary goal to support those identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander to reach into their rich and unique culture to achieve their recovery and return to work goals. To date, we are the only national workplace rehabilitation provider with a dedicated culturally respectful service for Indigenous Australians.

With our presentation, we aim to further connect with local community groups and Aboriginal land councils to ensure our Aboriginal service social network continues to grow and remain connected, providing our Indigenous clients access to social and cultural support. Through our ever-growing social network, we aim to continue to improve our service through the constructive feedback and lived experience from our consultants and clients.

For more information about the conference, please visit:
iwc.anzmfh.asn.au/



Spotlight on two of our

Aboriginal Service Champions



Josh Piper
Service Leader

As the Divisional Organisational Excellence Manager, Josh has in-depth knowledge and multiple skills in handling the most complex cases and liaising with multiple stakeholders while comforting and supporting his clients as they go through an unfamiliar process. Since joining the team in 2011, he has been instrumental towards advocating for his clients to receive the best care and recovery while helping them cope with injury and work-related stressors.

As a Service Leader, Josh now holds the pivotal role of ensuring all our Rehabilitation Consultants are trained and supported appropriately to deliver great culturally respectful rehabilitation service to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and customers.

Having recently moved to Wiradjuri Nation, Josh is keen to explore the history and culture of his new local area.



Sera Shepherd
Team Leader

Sera is one of our Team Leaders based in the Sydney office. With a background in Psychology she uses her skills, experience and interest in the field of mental health to assist with returning people to work and life, and leading her multidisciplinary team to do the same. Sera is one of the Aboriginal RTW service champions which has allowed her to learn more about local Indigenous culture and working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients while also providing a culturally respectful rehabilitation service including guidance for stakeholders involved, who may be less familiar.

In her downtime Sera enjoys music and live theatre. She also loves cooking (particularly baking!) and watching true crime shows – sometimes doing those together!

WorkFocus Australia Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander logo developed by Justine Kinney from Independent Indigenous Design Agency - Cultural Creative. Used with permission.

NEXT EDITION: NOVEMBER 2021

GET IN *touch*

Please call us on **1300 570 181** or visit
workfocus.com/return-to-work/aboriginal-return-to-work-service