

Lowitja Institute: Board communique February 2020

Lowitja Institute held its latest quarterly meeting on Tuesday 25 February 2021 via Zoom videoconference. The meeting was chaired by chairperson Pat Anderson AO.

Board appointments

Lowitja Institute welcomed two new appointments to the Board.

Dr Suzanne Andrews is Chief Executive of Gurriny Yealamucka Health Service.

She is a proud Aboriginal Woman from the Jaru, Bunuba people of Western Australia's North Kimberley region, who grew up in Broome and moved in her early teens to Yarrabah, on Gunganghi traditional lands, where she now lives and works.

With extensive experience in health and the community control sector, Dr Andrews advocates for social change amongst her people and community.

She has served on numerous organisations as a director and is currently a member of Yarrabah Leaders Forum (YLF) and a Director on the Northern Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Health Alliance (NATSIHA), Northern Queensland Primary Health Network (NQPHN), National Aboriginal Community Control Health Organisation (NACCHO) and is Deputy Chair for Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC).

Robert Skeen is CEO of the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council (AH&MRC).

Robert Skeen has traditional ties to the Gubbi Gubbi of the Queensland Sunshine Coast, Mununjarli of South East Queensland, and Waanyi of North West Queensland.

He has worked in the Government and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (ACCHO) sector for almost 25 years, including in organisational leadership roles in the Northern Territory, Queensland and New South Wales.

Mr Skeen was a member of the AH&MRC Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC), one of only three of its kind in Australia, and of the NSW Working Party for the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) constitution reform.

International conference

The Board set the date for the next Lowitja International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference, after plans for the 2021 conference were halted due to the coronavirus pandemic. It will be held in June 2023, with planning now underway on the theme, location and speakers.

New work

CEO Dr Janine Mohamed tabled key reports:

- Culture is Key: Towards cultural determinants-driven health policy. Final report
- Policy Brief: Cultural bias initiatives to improve kidney transplantation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Cultural bias: Indigenous kidney care and kidney transplantation report.

Lowitja Institute is also developing models to use for roundtable events and will present at the next Board meeting on the Allyship & Cultural Safety Training Program (non-Indigenous version) pilot.

Next board meeting

The next Board meeting will be held in person, in Brisbane, from 24-25 June 2021. Board members hope to hold community visits while there.