

# WHICH WAY?

WUCHOPPEREN NEWSLETTER COVID-19 EDITION

# JAB DONE!

NOVEMBER 2021

## Keeping Our Community Safe

A global pandemic affects everyone, wherever in the world you live. In the Cairns region we've been fortunate not to have experienced COVID-19 in the ways that much of Australia has - with extended lockdowns and restrictions - Wuchopperen staff have been working hard to ensure that its clients, family and community are protected from the virus as much as possible, when the Queensland borders open.

If you have yet to get your two COVID jabs, it's not too late. Come and talk to a Wuchopperen health worker, nurse or GP and we can answer any questions and concerns you have and support you getting the vaccine; it really is the best line of defence against the COVID-19 virus.



Wuchopperen  
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## Coming together to get the job done!

Since late August, Wuchopperen has held vaccine events in the style of a community celebration every 3 weeks. With live music, a BBQ or traditional dinner and kids' activities for everyone to enjoy and entry to a door prize for those that got the #jabdone.

"While our clients now live in the Cairns area, their families originate from all over Cape York, the Torres Strait and north Queensland and we all have one thing in common - we love to get together; we love our music, our food and a good yarn with family," said Rachael Ham, Wuchopperen Deputy CEO

"We have seen community members who got their jab at our first event come back for the second and third, bringing extended family members and encouraging them to get the vaccine. This is how we as an organisation and a community work, we talk to each other, we trust each other. And with the majority of Wuchopperen staff identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, we're almost all connected in some way, and we love these events too. We've got deadly staff here." said Rachael.



## MUSIC, FOOD & FAMILY

"We know that vaccines for COVID-19 are the best first-line of defence to protect our community today and into the future," said Dania Ahwang, Wuchopperen CEO. "But we also understand the hesitancy - this is something none of us have experienced before - we all have questions. That's why we've been creating opportunities for our clients, to come with their families, to have an informed discussion with a health worker, nurse or GP that they know and trust, and consider all the risks of COVID-19 and the benefits of the vaccine."

Through our Monday to Friday vaccine clinics at Manoora and Edmonton, community events on weekends and evening, and pop-up clinics in local parks; all in addition to supporting community partners at sporting and social events, Wuchopperen has delivered over 4000 COVID-19 vaccines and spoken to 1000s more concerned and hesitant community members.

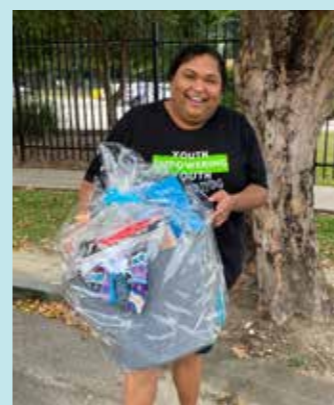


“It’s so important that we all continue to talk about COVID and how you and your family are going to live with the virus. If that doesn’t include the vaccine then you need to consider other means, and we want to talk about that too.”

DANIA AHWANG



## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LUCKY JAB WINNERS!





## YARN WITH DR LUCY

In June this year Dr Lucy Morris (pictured left) had been working as a GP at Wuchopperen for over 18 months – but at that time, in the midst of a global pandemic was excited to take on a new role at the health service - as Public Health Registrar.

“Public health is all about looking at strategies to keep a whole population healthy and the long-term impacts that affect that population. I have always enjoyed working in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and saw this new role as a way to address social determinants and policy that would have greater long-term impacts for communities I was working with,” Lucy said.

“I recognise the importance of getting people vaccinated and the COVID vaccines we now have access to are the best protection we have against the virus. But I am also very aware of the amount of misinformation circulating about the vaccines, and the fear – and potential danger – that has generated.

“To be personally involved in Wuchopperen’s community vaccine events and pop-up clinics; and to be able to talk directly to community members, to respond to any concerns and help them make the decision for themselves – to get vaccinated or not – and then to see them get vaccinated not only for their own benefit but for the benefit of their community, is a great day at work and why I’m excited about my new role,” said Dr Lucy.

## Park pop-ups

Pop-up clinics have helped Wuchopperen staff get out into community to have a yarn with anyone who might not have had the time to drop into the clinics.

The COVID-19 Response team visited a number of parks across the Cairns region including Khalu Park, Brothers Hockey Park, Todd Park and Henley Hill Park.



“ A lady was driving past a pop-up clinic at a park in Edmonton, and saw the ‘COVID VACCINE HERE’ sign, and stopped for a chat. She said she was a sceptic, wanted more information. She had a yarn with a health worker and within about 10 minutes she had her first dose. ”

**RACHAEL HAM**



Wuchopperen was invited by Anglicare to set up a pop-up clinic at their Diversionary Centre on Lake Street. Working together, we were able to vaccinate clients against COVID-19 and yarn with some that weren't too sure.

## Thanks to our deadly partners!

A priority for Wuchopperen - identified and delivered through its Strategic Plan – is to engage in collaborative connections. More than ever, responding to the threat of COVID-19 has strengthened existing partnerships through community events and promotions; and encouraged new connections and relationships which we hope will continue to grow.

Our thanks to: BBM Radio, the First Nations COVID-19 Response Team, Gordonvale Indigenous Rugby League Carnival, Cairns Regional Council and NQ Cowboys star Ben Hampton, Deadly Inspiring Youth Doing Good and everyone else who helped to make everything possible!



WORKING TOGETHER TO GET THE #JABDONE



## Staying COVID Safe

Wuchopperen's Respiratory clinic moved from a fever-testing tent to a structured clinic in July. Funded by the Department of Health the clinic is the only GP respiratory clinic in Cairns and continues to offer COVID-19 testing by Wuchopperen staff and at the same time has allowed the health service to carry out its business as usual service says Dr Nicolette Roux, Director, Medical Services.

"Having an on-site respiratory clinic has allowed us to maintain our commitment to prioritising our clients' health needs," said Dr Nicci. "This has also seen us contribute to the COVID-19 response for the wider Cairns community."

"During periods of local transmission and lockdown Wuchopperen's COVID-19 Safe Plan has implemented screening at gates and doors to all our facilities, including those accessing the respiratory clinic. This has ensured all staff and clients stay safe; and we thank everyone for their patience during these times."



## DON'T FORGET YOUR 2ND JOB!

We'd like to thank all the thousands of community members who have already come forward to have a yarn with our staff and had their COVID-19 jab. It's important that you have two doses of the Pfizer vaccine to be fully vaccinated and protected against the virus.

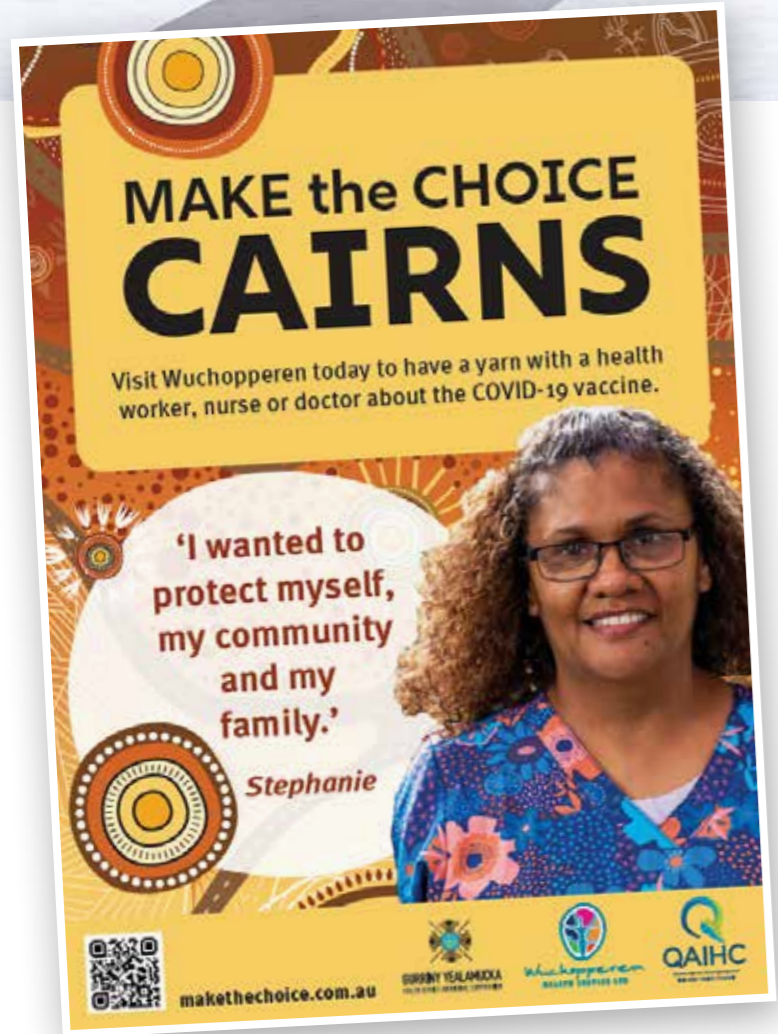
Patricia Sagigi (pictured above), an Administration Officer from our Edmonton clinic has been busy calling community members who have had their first jab with us, but are overdue for their second. The second dose is due 3-weeks after the first.

Tricia told us she, her husband and four adult children are all fully vaccinated (two doses) and

she's enjoying calling people to talk to them about booking their second dose appointment.

"Some of the people I'm talking to are telling me they've already had their second jab somewhere else – and that's good to hear. But some people are telling me they're nervous about getting the second jab because of something they've heard from a neighbour's relative, or that they've read on social media. That's not good."

"But it is good to be able to talk to these people and encourage them to come and talk to a health worker, nurse or doctor at Wuchopperen – and they're doing that, and getting their second jab!"

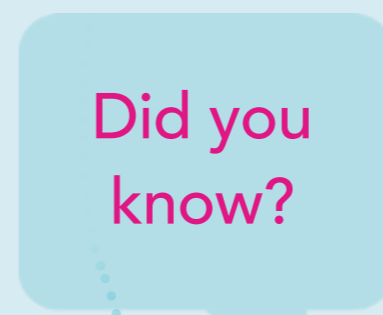


## MAKE THE CHOICE

Wuchopperen staff have been part of a state-wide TV and social media campaign facilitated by QAIHC (Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council). Have you spotted the familiar faces of Stephanie Saunders, Belinda Jackson and Dania Ahwang in the 'Make the Choice' campaign? Visit our website to see the videos.

“ I always say to our mob, when the borders are open, you don't know what's going to come through there, whether somebody has got the COVID virus. And this is where you need to have (the jab). Cause if you take it back to the community, it's going to be a lot worse.”

STEPHANIE SAUNDERS



- ✓ A person is considered 'fully vaccinated; two-weeks from their second dose of the vaccine.
- ✓ By Friday 17 December the Queensland borders will be open to interstate visitors. This may be earlier if the target of 80% vaccination rate is met before then.
- ✓ Lockdowns may still occur in areas with low vaccination rates. In line with the National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response, any lockdowns will be highly targeted. Areas with lower vaccination rates will be more likely to require public health restrictions and lockdowns.
- ✓ Restrictions at venues and events will apply to unvaccinated people. Vaccinated people will need to show their COVID-19 vaccination certificate (either on their phone or paper copy).
- ✓ If you're unvaccinated and want to travel in and out of Queensland you will need to apply for an exemption.
- ✓ People who cannot be vaccinated—for example those who are not eligible due to age (at this stage under 12) or have an exemption from a qualified medical practitioner—will be treated as vaccinated for the purposes of entry and quarantine requirements.

Visit our website for more COVID-19 information including facts vs. myths.



## Are you COVID ready?

Wuchopperen cares about the safety of its community and staff. We encourage you to come and talk to us if you have any questions or concerns about the COVID-19 virus and vaccines.



**Wuchopperen**  
HEALTH SERVICE LTD

### Opening Hours

Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri - 8am to 5pm  
Wed - 8am to 3pm

### Manoora

6 Moignard St, Manoora QLD 4870  
P: (07) 4080 1000 F: (07) 4059 1966  
COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic P: (07) 4255 8400

### Edmonton

7 Stokes St, Edmonton QLD 4869  
P: (07) 4040 3100 F: (07) 4051 1558

*Wuchopperen acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging, the holders of our culture, memories, tradition and hopes.*