

## Rural Interprofessional Seminar Series

Supporting Health Education in Remote Areas



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# Bugalma Dulgu: Strong Hearts and Wellbeing

## *Understanding Acute Rheumatic Fever and Rheumatic Heart Disease*

### Presenters:

#### Vicki Wade

Principal Research Fellow First Nations Heart Health, Menzies School of Health Research

#### Melanie Middleton

Rheumatic Heart Disease Coordinator, Health Protection NSW

#### Kerryn Lawrence

Assistant Manager-Aboriginal Environment Health Unit, NSW Ministry of Health

### When:

**Tuesday 4 February 2025**  
1.00pm - 2.00pm (AEDT)

### Where:

Online

Tickets available via Loghic

### To Register:

Click or scan QR code to register



### Enquiries:

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Join us for an informative webinar where guest speakers will provide an overview of Acute Rheumatic Fever (ARF) and Rheumatic Heart Disease (RHD). This session will explore the impact of ARF and RHD on vulnerable populations and equips participants with the knowledge to support prevention efforts.

The webinar provides a valuable opportunity for health professionals and advocates to enhance their knowledge and positively impact Rural NSW communities and Aboriginal health outcomes.

This session will cover three key areas:

- Increase awareness of ARF and RHD: Understand ARF and RHD development, risks, and their impact on Aboriginal communities.
- Improve knowledge of management and prevention: Explore medical and traditional management, and preventive environmental health practices.
- Empower through access resources and steps to taking action: Gain resources, contacts, and strategies available to support proactive community health efforts.

### Who should attend?

This webinar is for health educators, and healthcare professionals involved in raising awareness, delivering care, and implementing preventative measures in Aboriginal communities.

Those who would benefit from joining include:

- Professionals working with Aboriginal patients and families
- ACCHO health workers
- Rural and remote doctors and nurses
- Chronic disease educators
- Allied health clinicians
- Students
- Community liaisons and advocates for Aboriginal health

Registrations are open to all healthcare professionals interested in Aboriginal health and wellbeing.



### Guest Speakers



**Associate Professor Vicki Wade**  
- Principal Research Fellow First Nations Heart Health, Menzies School of Health Research

Aunty Vicki is a proud Noongar woman who has been working in health for over 40 years. Her career started as a clinical nurse in cardiology. Aunty Vicki has held many senior positions including Area Manager of Aboriginal Health, First Nations Heart Health Lead with the National Heart Foundation, Director of Rheumatic Heart Disease Australia and in her current role as Associate Professor in First Nations Heart Health at Menzies School of Health Research. Aunty Vicki has worked tirelessly to improve the cardiac health of First Nations people throughout her career. Aunty Vicki is the recipient of two prestigious awards for her outstanding contributions: the Sidney Sax Medal and the Cardiac Society of Australia and New Zealand (CSANZ) award for Indigenous Excellence in cardiac care.



**Melanie Middleton** - Rheumatic Heart Disease Coordinator, Health Protection NSW

Melanie is the RHD Coordinator for NSW, working for Health Protection NSW. Melanie holds a Master of Public Health qualification and has worked in public health for over 25 years. Melanie has experience in surveillance and research of blood-borne viruses and sexually transmissible infections at the Kirby Institute. Since 2013, Melanie has worked for Health Protection in NSW where she established the NSW Rheumatic Heart Disease Program in 2015. Melanie has a key role in managing the NSW RHD Register, including data management and reporting.



**Kerryn Lawrence** - Assistant Manager-Aboriginal Environment Health Unit, NSW Ministry of Health

Kerryn is an enthusiastic Environmental Health Officer who currently holds the role of Assistant Manager, Aboriginal Environmental Health Unit, NSW Health. During her career, Kerryn has held various positions in both local and state governments in Victoria and NSW. Kerryn is passionate about improving processes in social housing management and the enhancement of the Environmental Health profession.

[TUNE IN](#) to our second webcast on RHD

**“Healing hearts” – The life journey of Aboriginal girls and women living with Acute Rheumatic Fever and Rheumatic Heart Disease**

Tuesday 11 February 2025, 12.30pm – 2.00pm (AEDT)