

Newsletter



December 2025



From the CEO

The recent Sydney Swans visit to Maningrida was a resounding success; the health promotion messages relating to the negative impact that smoking has was at the fore front of all the activities that took place; the football carnival was a resounding success with many teams involved and they were ably supported by a large crowd of supporters. A special thankyou to the Mala'la staff who willingly contributed to the various stalls at the carnival. David Freier is to be congratulated on coordinating the week, he ensured everything ran smoothly, well done.

Read more about the Maningrida Footy Festival on page 5.

The new building at the clinic is progressing well and all indications are that it will be completed by the end of February or early March, 2026.

The development plans for the new four chair Renal Unit are well advanced, the placement of the new building on the site where the current Primary Health Care office is has required the Architects to plan on moving two of the buildings on the block to align with the current Renal building; the grounds will include driveway, parking bays, gardens and ready access for all clients; we are expecting that the building phase will commence in mid-2026; the building is pre-fabricated and will be built in Darwin prior to its being transported to Maningrida.

We are expecting that the driveway and drainage leading to the morgue area will be completed prior to Christmas, this will entail concreting of the driveway and installing a deep culvert drain to assist in removing the water that collects at the morgue entry following heavy rain.

Planning is progressing for the capital development works at Aged Care, the work will include building an additional six bedrooms two of which will be allocated to Palliative Care, a sensory garden for dementia patients and a new laundry.

Ray Matthews
CEO

Christmas Closure

Our Primary Health Care office will be closed from **Monday 22nd December 2025** and will reopen on **Monday 5th January 2026**.

We wish everyone a safe and wonderful Christmas and a happy New Year.



Mala'la Annual Report

We are pleased to share that the Mala'la Health Service Aboriginal Corporation Annual Report for 2024 - 2025 is now on our website.

We invite you to take a look and learn about our year's highlights, challenges and achievements, as well as view our financial statements.

www.malala.com.au



Northern Territory General Practice of the Year – RACGP Awards



We were delighted to be awarded the *Northern Territory General Practice of the Year* by The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP).

The annual RACGP Awards recognise excellence in general practice and a dedication to patient care and celebrates the people and practices that go the extra mile for the health of their communities.



Mala'la's Chairperson, Charlie Gunabarra OAM, and Corporate Services manager, Aileen Bell, attended the award ceremony held at Parliament House in Darwin and accepted the award on behalf of Mala'la.

The award is testament to the excellent work being done by our clinic staff in the complex area of Primary Health Care.



Family & Community Wellness

The Murnun Men's Shed recently welcomed the arrival of our new Maritime Training boat, the Murnun, funded by the NIAA to support local delivery of the Certificate I in Maritime Operations. The vessel has the capacity to train 4-5 men together at a time, particularly in the core deckhand units, and will provide a pathway towards gaining a Coxswain Licence. The Men see this as more than formal training – it also supports mental health, cultural connection to saltwater country, and their role as "water ambassadors" for community.

The Men have been busy responding to a high level of referrals for men, young men and boys, with regular Burarra and Ndjebbana/Kuninjku bush trips happening twice weekly.



Stedman's Construction have done a great job installing lockable storage cages for the Men's Shed. It is hoped that these new lockable cages will secure all Men's Shed assets and resources into the future.

Clarence Playford, Young Men's Support Worker, has departed the community for a while and has handed over to Brayden Birkett who is settling in well with the Men's Team. We're thrilled to have Brayden on board.



As a result of a CWASP meeting, we helped facilitate a most successful three-day Young Men's Culture Camp at Ndjudda Point in partnership with Nja-marléya and BHAC Community Patrol. The young men participating are all at risk of being taken into custody and sentenced to the Holtze Youth Detention Facility. We also supported the women family members to come along and make damper for the men/boys.

Our Family Wellness team have been working tirelessly taking referred family groups out fishing/hunting and story sharing for day trips and camping on the weekends. We took several young family members out to camp at Garmadi and participate in the Nja-marleya Film Project.

Jayde has been diligently working through a significantly increased load of new referrals and has been facilitating weekly Women's referral meetings so that key workers in our team can be identified to support the women and children.

The Women's Cultural Support Hub team have been very busy with family and funeral business over recent months but have been doing all they can when they are able to work. We've been trying to resume a pattern for Wednesday Women's Wellbeing meetings and regular sewing and craft sessions. There is always very positive feedback from women after they come along and there are several young mums who come to sit with their young children in the Women's Cultural Support Hub room each day. Additionally, women's bush trips and cook ups have also been occurring.

Learning & Development

Exciting Start to the Journey: Ongoing Training for Local Maningrida Workforce

We are excited to announce the commencement of the Certificate III in Primary Health Care training for our clinic's local workforce.

This qualification represents the first step in an important journey toward becoming health leaders in the community.



The Certificate III provides basic skills and knowledge in primary health care. But it's more than just a qualification, it's an opportunity for our local workforce to make a lasting difference to the health and wellbeing of the people in Maningrida.

The training is delivered on-country by Sharon from Ninti Training, allowing staff to keep working in community while building up their skills and qualifications.

It has been an amazing year for the Learning and Development program, and we are committed to expanding training opportunities in 2026.

Mala'la Employee of the Month



September

Joseph Rood for his diligence, positive attitude and a zest for getting things done promptly; he is reliable and goes above and beyond for his client group; general comments are that he is great person to work with.

Emily Manu a very thorough operator in her role within Patient Travel; she is a strong advocate for all patients; she plays an integral part in assisting the clinic to function smoothly, has a very positive demeanour and displays a strong and consistent work ethic.

October

Rita Lawrence for her dedication to clients and her contribution and support to the Aged Care Team

Mere Cirivakaloloma for the dedication she displays to clients through her exemplary warm nature and personality

Chloe Cuxton, our Clinical Operations Coordinator, for her willingness to support staff and perform an expansive range of duties that are integral to the smooth running of the very busy clinic

November

Juan Darwin for his enthusiasm and willingness to assist in the clinic, Juan has an excellent attitude to work and his support is valued by other staff

David Freier for his excellent contribution in organising and making the Sydney Swans visit for the Maningrida Footy Festival such a success; David's attention to detail was second to none and his organizational skills were exemplary

Primary Health Care

Tackling Indigenous Smoking

Kick the Habit – Maningrida Footy Festival 2025

The 2025 Kick the Habit Maningrida Footy Festival has wrapped up after another successful week of footy, health education and community pride across West Arnhem. This year marked the second year of our three-year partnership with the Sydney Swans, strengthening the delivery of smoke-free messaging across the region.



Throughout the week, several Sydney Swans AFL and AFLW players and staff visited Jabiru, Gunbalanya, Milingimbi, Ramingining and Maningrida, running clinics and delivering strong anti-smoking lessons. More than 120 young people took part in AFL activities, and a total of 22 smoke-free education sessions were delivered, reaching around 385 students with the clear message: *“No Smokes, Strong Body.”* Schools reported improved attendance during the Swans visits, showing how sport and health promotion can positively motivate young people.

When the Festival reached Maningrida, smoke-free messaging remained central, with signage, scoreboard content and health stands promoting smoke-free homes, cars and community spaces. The Festival weekend brought the oval to life with youth clinics and games on Friday and Saturday and Sunday featured competitive games featuring five men’s teams and three women’s teams, including teams travelling from Ramingining and Milingimbi. All senior teams were provided with a new set of uniforms reinforcing the smoke free message.



Mala’la extends thanks to our local organisations Nja-Marléya, WARC, NT Police, Djelk Rangers, Maningrida College, Riley Thompson (NTG Sport), and the organisations from elsewhere AMSANT, Red Lily, Miwatj, AFLNT, BAC, Solid Rootz and 33 Creative, for their support to help make the festival a success. A special thank you also goes to all Mala’la staff who worked tirelessly to deliver health promotion, cook BBQs, and anything else needed. Your hard work ensured our smoke-free message reached the whole community.

With two successful years now complete, we look forward to delivering the final year of our three-year contract in 2026, continuing to strengthen smoke-free living and support a healthier future for Maningrida.

If you want any information or help to quit smoking, come and see the staff at the clinic.



Our health teams set up stalls at the new change rooms to engage with the community as well as provide easy access for health checks and information.

We ran 4 health stalls over the weekend with each focused on a topic important to the community (heart, lungs, skin and sugar). Each stall included an observation station, engagement activities and giveaways that promoted healthy living.



Families were able to check their heart blood pressure, blood sugar and oxygen levels and learnt how germs spread. We also had a private room set up for ECHO heart scans.

The stalls were busy from start to finish. It was a good opportunity to reach and speak with many young people who took part in the activities and enjoyed the giveaway prizes.



End of year Flu vaccinations

In October, Mala'la and Menzies teamed up for a two-day flu vaccination campaign across Maningrida.

Our purple shirts went door to door around the community, visited several workplaces as well as offered walk ins at the clinic.

Across the 2 days, we saw 102 people, gave 53 flu vaccinations and 83 COVID shots. It was a good chance for community members to protect themselves and their families before the rainy season.

Bininj and Balanda working together to deliver 3HP

Juan, Will and Sophie from our TB warriors team recently gave a presentation at the CDC conference in Darwin on 'Bininj and Balanda working together to deliver 3HP.'

3HP is a new medicine for treating tuberculosis (TB) infection which requires fewer tablets. Previously, TB patients were required to take a daily tablet for 9 months. Now they take one tablet weekly for 3 months.

We've started using it here in Maningrida. Our community health workers are trained to deliver and support patients to take it in the comfort of their own homes.



Rheumatic Heart Disease – our Healthy Skin Week story

Kylena, Ana and Jess from our rheumatic heart disease (RHD) team recently presented at the National ARF and RHD Summit.

We shared how Healthy Skin Week has grown from an idea about tackling the root causes of RHD into a major community event held twice a year. Since starting in 2022, we've run 6 events across Maningrida sending teams of health workers to homes, schools and workplaces to provide skin check-ups and talk about healthy living.

Every year, Healthy Skin Week keeps growing. It now includes ECHO scanning, strep A testing and strong community partnerships to help prevent RHD.



Healthy Skin Week

In September, we held our second Healthy Skin Week (HSW) for the year.

Our health workers and Menzies volunteers visited different homes and locations across Maningrida to check for skin conditions such as scabies which, if left untreated, can turn into rheumatic heart disease (RHD). We also used the opportunity to talk about our themes for the event – healthy skin, healthy homes and healthy hearts.

ECHO heart scans were also provided for students at Maningrida College and Nja-marleya Youth Centre to make sure they had healthy hearts. We performed over 945 skin checks over 5 days.

Healthy Skin Week is only possible with the support of the community and our stakeholders. We look forward to their continued support to help stop RHD and ARF in Maningrida.



Mala'la Christmas celebrations

Mala'la held their end of year Christmas celebration for all staff and their immediate families at the Maningrida Pool earlier this month.

Everyone enjoyed a delicious meal catered by Hasty Tasty and were in the running for various raffle prizes. Staff also received a goodie bag as a thank you for their hard work and dedication to Mala'la. We are very grateful for their contribution to the organisation.

We wish each and everyone one of you a joyful Christmas and a wonderful New Year.

