



Mala'la Health Service Aboriginal Corporation

Newsletter

March 2026



From the CEO

Mala'la is prepared for another busy year. After a well-earned Christmas and New Year break, staff have returned energised to continue providing quality service delivery across the community.

We welcome Ana Malupo as the new Manager of Mala'la's Aged Care and Community Services. Ana previously worked as a nurse in our Rheumatic Heart Disease Unit. We wish her well in her new role.



Ana Malupo

Karen Yarnold, who has been managing Aged Care for the past four years has returned to her home town of Taree in NSW. She has been appointed Manager of Aged Care at another Aboriginal Health Service known as Biripi. We thank Karen for her contribution to Mala'la over the past four years and wish her well.

David Freier has been appointed to the position of Manager, Information Technology, he will be busy on matters such as cyber security and the upgrading of our computer systems.

The development plans for the new four chair Renal unit continue and we anticipate that building of this unit will commence in the later part of 2026.

The Aged Care capital development is taking shape; there are a number of trees at the northern end of the facility that will be removed shortly to allow a site office to be erected prior to building commencing.

The clinic extension is nearing completion, we anticipate that it may be ready for occupancy in April. The suite of new buildings is impressive. Take a look on page 4!

The upgraded drainage and concreting of the Morgue entrance has been completed. We hope to complete the driveway behind the clinic as the year progresses, sourcing available funding will allow this to occur.

We met with Minister Steve Edgington to discuss Mala'la service delivery to the Maningrida and surrounding Homelands areas; he was particularly impressed with development of our After- hours Urgent Care clinic. Lack of staffing accommodation continues to be a significant issue and is impacting on the recruitment of new staff.

Ray Matthews
CEO

Matthew Roberts is pictured presenting Ray Matthews, CEO, with a plaque acknowledging the invaluable contribution made by Mala'la Health Service to the 2025 Kick the Habit Program (Non Smoking Program), proudly sponsored by the Sydney Swans. Matthew, who currently plays for the Sydney Swans, was selected at number 34 in the 2022 AFL Draft. A talented running defender, he has transitioned to playing on the wing this season and continues to make a strong impact on the field. His performance was recognised in 2024 when he was nominated as an AFL Rising Star.



Primary Health Care

HEALTHY SKIN WEEK

Healthy Skin Week

Healthy Skin Week was a very busy and rewarding time, and the clinic would like to thank everyone who was involved in making it such a successful, collaborative effort across the community.

In the lead-up to Healthy Skin Week, workshops were delivered at Maningrida College and Maningrida Creche. These sessions were led by our community workers, who provided information in local Maningrida languages including Kuninjku, Burarra and Njebbenna. Students learned about skin sores, scabies and the importance of early treatment. AMRICC also delivered school sessions focused on looking after animals. Jacqui and Dimitri, with support from our rheumatic heart disease team, ran heart screening at the school using portable scanning equipment. Josh Francis from Menzies and the AMRICC team also ran in-services for our local workforce and clinical staff.

During the week, Mala'la teams travelled around the community providing free skin checks. Treatment was provided for skin sores and scabies where needed. Staff spoke with families about recognising symptoms early, seeking treatment and preventative measures. Community members were encouraged to attend the clinic if they noticed skin problems. AMRICC was also part of a team who provided treatment to animals.



This work was supported by strong partnerships. Support was provided by Aboriginal Investment NT, AMRICC and Menzies School of Health Research. Local partners included Maningrida College and the Maningrida Progress Association. Visiting teams worked alongside local staff throughout the week.



Quality and Safety

The National and NT Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are used to track and evaluate progress towards health goals for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia. Currently, there are 22 indicators reported, focusing on areas such as maternal and child health, preventative health, and chronic disease management. The reports shows findings on Aboriginal health status and how well the service is performing for our clients. The health service has demonstrated outstanding results for our primary health service in the 2025 results.

Our community has a high burden of chronic disease, and the results show that our processes of care are above all national, NT and very remote community. We are leading the way. (see results graphs)

The Healthy under 5 team also have a quality improvement project in progress to improve anaemia rates in young children with early results in the KPI results showing very positive outcomes. Children under 5 years of age with anaemia at any presentation were reduced by 20% between June and December 2025.

These results can be attributed to the primary health care team's dedication and passion for improving health outcomes, community engagement, and education.

It is also attributed to the community members for being more aware of and seeking preventative health treatments, particularly related to diabetes, kidney disease, Rheumatic heart disease and other cardiac issues.

We never rest on our good results and continue to work to improve our processes of care in a culturally safe and acceptable way.

Our next Quality improvement projects include auditing chest pain and sepsis presentations to examine and evaluate areas for improvement.

Chronic Disease Management Summary

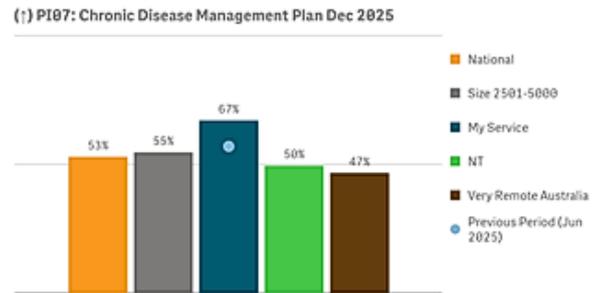
Process of Care

PI07

Proportion of regular clients with a chronic disease for whom a Chronic Disease Management Plan was prepared

Focus: Type 2 diabetes

A higher result is the preferred outcome

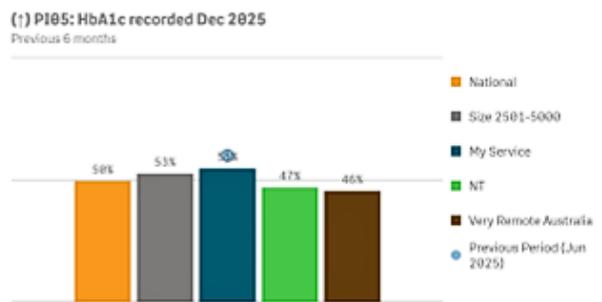


PI05

Proportion of regular clients with Type 2 diabetes who have had an HbA1c measurement result recorded

Focus: Past 6 months

A higher result is the preferred outcome

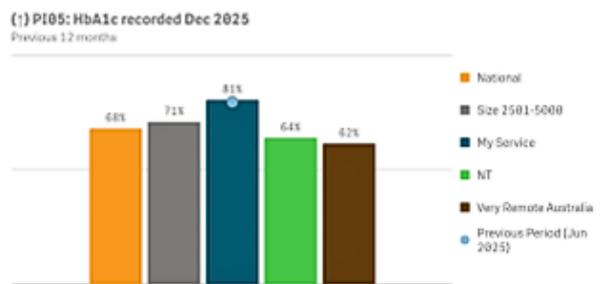


PI05

Proportion of regular clients with Type 2 diabetes who have had an HbA1c measurement result recorded

Focus: Past 12 months

A higher result is the preferred outcome

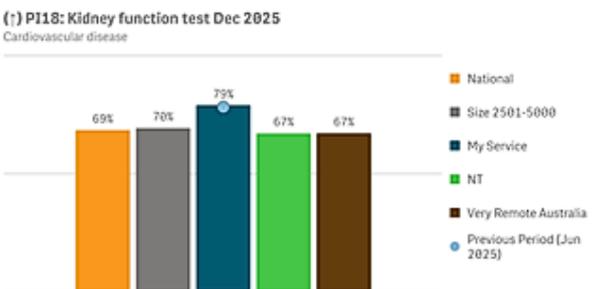


PI18

Proportion of regular clients with a selected chronic disease who have had a kidney function test

Focus: Type 2 diabetes

A higher result is the preferred outcome

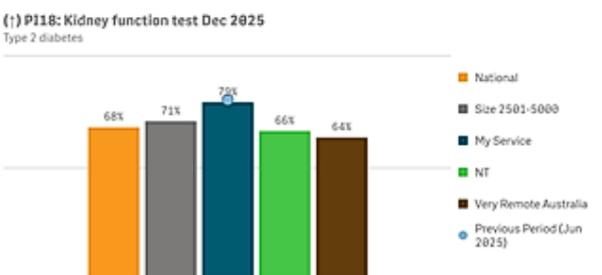


PI18

Proportion of regular clients with a selected chronic disease who have had a kidney function test

Focus: CVD

A higher result is the preferred outcome





Medicare

Our Medicare revenue continues to demonstrate stability, providing a reliable foundation for our operations. The year opened on a particularly strong note, with combined income figures of \$142,562.45 and \$125,322.30 contributing to a solid financial position. This consistent performance reflects both the steady demand for our services and the ongoing commitment of our team to delivering high-quality care.

Beyond core Medicare revenue, we also received valuable supplementary funding through PIP, WIP, and BBIPIP programs. These contributions: \$65,628.00, \$41,995.73, and \$7,892.27 respectively, have further reinforced our financial outlook for the year. Together, these revenue streams ensure we remain well-resourced to support our patients, invest in service improvements, and continue building on the momentum established in the early months.

Despite being down a full-time GP following the departure of our registrar, Mala'la continues to generate steady and reliable revenue. This stability has been made possible through the valuable support of our locum GPs and the ongoing contribution of nurse-led claims. Their combined efforts have ensured continuity of care for our community while maintaining strong financial performance during this transitional period.

Manayingkarirra Health Care Centre extension project

The clinic extension is nearing completion and we anticipate that it may be ready for occupancy in April. Take a look at the latest progress below!



Family and Community Wellness

Tackling Diabetes – Women’s Health Project

We would like to thank our stakeholders for their continued support of the Women’s Health Project, Tackling Diabetes, in Maningrida. This is an ongoing project and we look forward to continuing to work closely with women and the wider community. The project focuses on three key priorities: exercise, health education and healthy food choices. From February, we will commence physiotherapy sessions with Hamish at the pool. Women are welcome and encouraged to come along and participate.

Women’s Cultural Support Hub – Wellbeing Bush Trip

The Women’s Cultural Support Hub has been supporting community wellbeing by taking families out on bush trips to spend time on Country. We understand there are many worries and pressures affecting families in the community at the moment, and through these activities we are doing our best to respond to the emotional, cultural, and social needs of women and families.

During this bush trip, families spent the day together, reconnecting, sharing stories, and supporting one another. We collected crab, shellfish, and long bums. We cooked on the fire, allowing families to enjoy bush food together.

These activities actively support wellbeing by strengthening cultural identity, providing space away from community stress and encouraging intergenerational learning and connection.

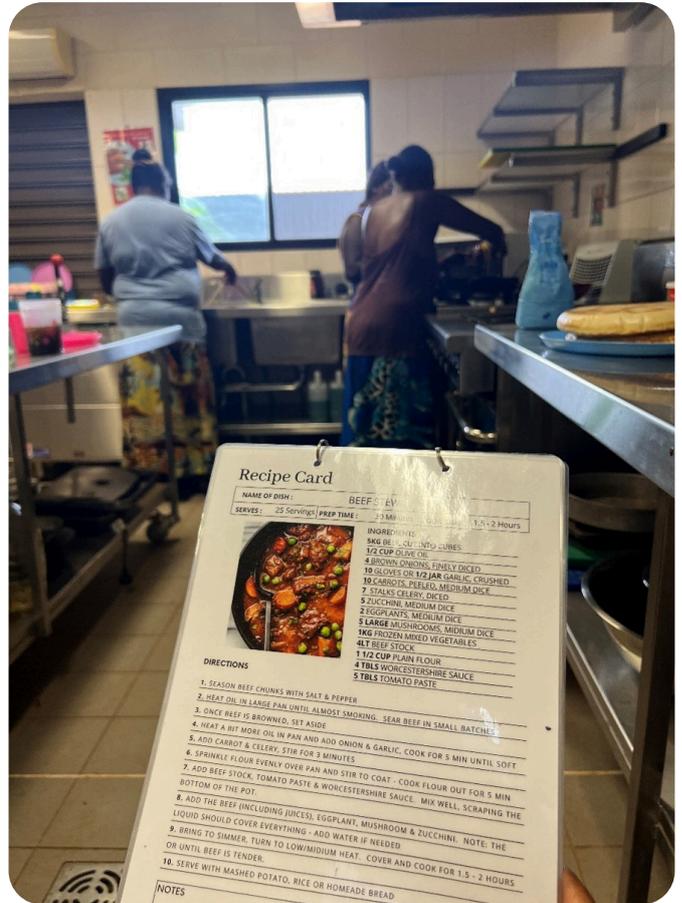
A big thank you to the Traditional Owners for allowing access to Rocky Point.

Young Mums Program – Ready to Kick Off 2026

The Young Mums Program is ready to kick off in 2026. We look forward to working with all the young mums who have signed up, others are welcome to pop in anytime. This year the program will focus on adult learning, cooking workshops, sewing workshops and health sessions, linking in with our Healthy Women Project in partnership with Menzies. Come down to the CFC and check out our weekly calendar for session times and activities.

Staff acknowledgement

Cerena Taylor and Deliliah Yirindili Family Wellness Workers work tirelessly to support wellbeing clients on a daily basis. They are passionate about creating positive change and with their cultural knowledge of family kinships helps to engage look-out for the wellbeing of young people, older individuals, and those who take medication. Both Cerena and Deliliah have completed trauma training workshops and are eager to continue learning so they can better help others.



Training

Our team completed the AMSANT delivered Culturally Responsive Trauma Informed Practice Training last month (3-4th Feb). Two Aged care team members joined as well as 2 Nja-marleya team members.



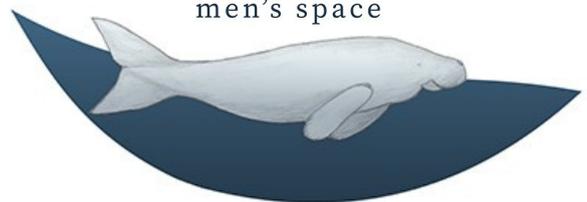
Murnun Men's Shed

Maningrida College recently hosted a community basketball competition, bringing together a range of local organisations and agencies. The aim was to showcase strong role models within the community and create a positive, engaging environment for students.

The Mala'la Men's Shed came out on top, finishing first after a strong performance throughout the tournament, including a hard-fought win against the Naj-Marleya Justice Group in the final. The team also played against the Rangers/LOC team; the Maningrida College Men's Staff and Stedmen's Constructions.

More importantly, the day was about connection – bringing community, staff, and young people together in a positive way. It was great to see so many people involved, creating fun memories and strengthening relationships across Maningrida. Well done to everyone who participated and supported the event!

murnun
men's space



Murnun Men's Shed CDU Graduation Day

Last year, with support from NIAA, the Men's Shed acquired a Maritime vessel to support training in the CDU Certificate I in Maritime Operations.

Over 2024/2025, around 9 local men completed the Certificate I Maritime course and can now complete their hours on the boat to attain the coxswain grade 2 license. The program has been targeted for the Strong Fathers program which helps to support any young fathers under 25 years old, and specifically those who may have left school due to teenage pregnancy.



On Friday, 27th March, we held our first Graduation Ceremony for the Men's Shed, a proud moment for the Maningrida community as several local men graduated from Charles Darwin University (CDU) training programs.

Graduating with a Certificate I in Maritime Operations: Scott Williams, Taris James, Eden Namundja, Zakora Gibson, and Lamos Lyarkinjan were recognised for their hard work and commitment. They are now on the path to completing their Coxswain Grade 2 licences, opening up future opportunities on the water and in the marine industry.

Absent to receive their awards were Clarence Playford, Ali James, and Clarence Turner.



In addition, Zakora Gibson, Lamos Lyarkinjan, and Eden Namundja successfully completed their Certificate II in Rural Operations. As part of the graduation, these participants were awarded a graduation stole, recognising their achievement and the skills they have developed.

These qualifications represent more than just certificates. Throughout their training, participants gained hands-on experience across a range of practical skills, including:

- Chainsaw operation and safety
- Side-by-side vehicle use and maintenance
- Small machine maintenance
- Tractor operation
- Biosecurity awareness
- Sustainability practices on Country

This training reflects a strong commitment to building real-world skills that support both employment pathways and community development. It has been encouraging to see the effort, growth, and leadership shown by all involved.

Well done to all graduates – this is a significant step forward, and the community is proud of your achievements!



Aged Care and Community Services



A message from Karen Yarnold

After 4 years at the helm of Mala'la Aged Care and Community Services, the time has come for me to return to New South Wales to be with my family. I want to thank the local staff, our clients, and the community for welcoming me and for showing me the wonderful culture in Maningrida. I have so much art to take back with me! I am so grateful for my four years working and living in the community. It has been a highlight of my life, with many beautiful memories and experiences.

I also want to take this opportunity to welcome Ana Malupo, who previously worked in the RHD team at the clinic, to the position of Manager of Aged Care and Community Services. Dee has now taken up the position of Assistant Manager and Ned will be moving into the clinic to work in the cessation of smoking program. I wish you all the very best in your new journeys.

Rolling Up Her Sleeves for a Safer Centre

Ana Malupo wasted no time rolling up her sleeves in the first few weeks of stepping into her new role as our Aged Care Manager. With a strong focus on infection control, she supported the team to put enhanced measures in place across the Centre. This included taking stock of all cleaning supplies, organising a thorough clean of the entire facility, and helping staff strengthen their knowledge of proper hygiene practices. Inhouse refresher training was also facilitated by out training officer on infection control procedures to make sure everyone is confident in keeping the Centre and surrounding environment safe and clean.

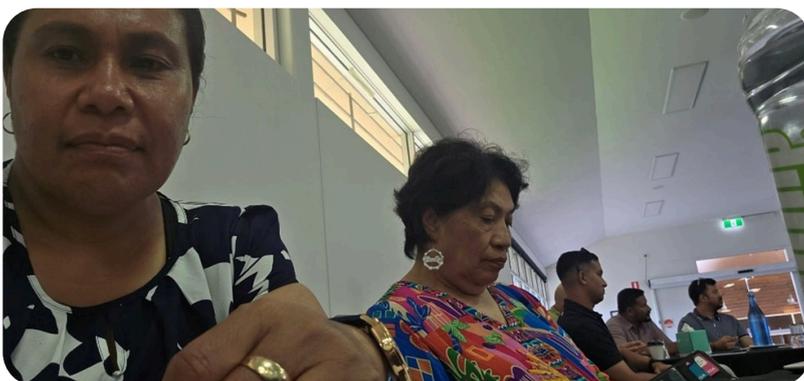
These efforts help ensure our team is well equipped to maintain a safe, infection-free space for everyone, protecting not only our staff, but also the residents and clients who are part of our community.



Leadership team attends training in Darwin

From 17–20 February, our Aged Care Manager, Ana Malupo, and Assistant Manager, Mere Divatulili (Dee), attended the Home Care Workforce Program leadership camp in Darwin, organised by NEST NT.

The training provided an opportunity to strengthen their leadership skills, build on communication, and further develop their understanding of how to support staff and manage responsibilities within our aged care service.



They also joined many other Aged Care Managers from across the Northern Territory, creating valuable networking opportunities to share experiences, learn good practices, and exchange resources. Ongoing leadership training and professional development opportunities remain important priorities for our Centre. Opportunities like this help our team stay up to date with new and innovative ideas and approaches, respond effectively to challenges, and continue improving the way we support our community through innovation and creativity.

NDIS Audit

We successfully participated in the NDIS audit, during which the auditor interviewed some NDIS clients.

During this time, we continued to deliver safe, person-centred care and supported our local staff, Aged Care clients and Community clients to attend funerals and pay respect to their family members and community. We ensured cultural obligations were respected while services continued safely and smoothly.



Staffing update

We would like to acknowledge all staff coming together over the Christmas period and working extra shifts while others were on leave – well done! Thank you for your commitment, flexibility, and teamwork in supporting clients and each other to ensure services continued during community obligations.

Consistent staffing can be challenging. To ensure we can continue to provide quality care and the services that our community needs, we will be looking at employing more local staff to assist with client care, meals, transport, maintenance and our NDIS program.

Transport

Aged Care and Community Services continues to be a very busy area, with many programs and services. Quite often we do not have enough drivers available to accommodate the high volume of patient transport. This can mean that, when transport is arranged, staff may be collecting three or four other clients at the same time.

We ask that everyone remains patient as we try to accommodate all transport requests.

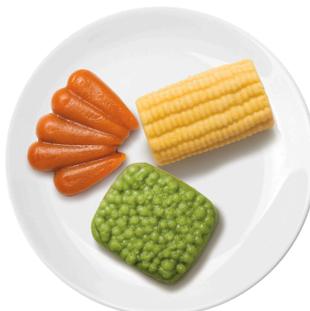


Food moulds

Aged Care has recently introduced new food moulds for clients who require puréed meals. This is exciting for clients who require specialised meals.

These moulds shape foods to look like the real food item instead of appearing as indistinct puréed portions. This includes carrots, broccoli, sweet potato and even chicken drumsticks!

Since introducing the new food moulds, our clients that receive the puréed foods have put on weight which is great news!



Outdoor activities

Every Thursday, the Centre organises outdoor activities for our residents and clients. These outings are always something everyone looks forward to, as they provide a chance to get out of the Centre, enjoy nature, and spend time together in a relaxed setting.

For 46-year-old Jeremiah, who is visually impaired, the weekly fishing trips are a real highlight. Fishing brings together his hobby for fishing and passion for nature.

The thrill of feeling a catch on the line is always a special moment for him. Pictured here is Jeremiah alongside 72-year-old Abraham after one of their successful fishing trips. Moments like this show how meaningful these outings can be for our residents and clients.

Outdoor activities like this provide valuable therapy and enjoyment for our residents and clients, supporting both their wellbeing and their connection to the natural environment.



Small Steps, Big Smiles: Lilian's Story

It's stories like Lilian Mawualila's that make our work so rewarding.

Lilian Mauwalila is 62 years old and has been a resident at the Centre for more than 5 years. Recently, she had been experiencing some emotional challenges that affected her motivation to do the things she loves and to fully enjoy daily life. With the support of our visiting Senior Occupational Therapist, Felicity Fong, Lilian has made wonderful progress. With a little encouragement, motivation and support, she has started reconnecting with activities she enjoys, like visiting the community store and spending time with fellow residents.

One of our recent highlights was when Lilian independently made damper, a favourite in many First Nations communities.

She proudly shared it with the other residents, and hearing their compliments about how delicious it was brought her great joy and a real sense of accomplishment. With ongoing support and access to the right resources, we hope Lilian will continue building on this positive momentum and helping her stay connected, confident and engaged with those around her.

