Mala'la Health Service Aboriginal Corporation

Newsletter

October 2026



NTPHN HPOY Awards

It was a successful night for Mala'la at the NTPHN Health Professional of the Year awards recently.

Our Primary Health Care's Healthy Skin Week team took home the *Northpharm's Primary Health Care Team of the Year* award.



Katrina, our Learning and Development coordinator, was awarded the *CDU Rising Star of the Year* award.



From the CEO

Congratulations to clinic staff who were instrumental in ensuring our recent Healthy Skin Week was a resounding success; 840 community members were screened; 75 had heart scans; we were supported with the visit of nine volunteers to assist with the program and in addition we had staff from the Captain Starlight foundation entertain the kids.

We have received $746,000 in funding for the next two years to employ two full time Remote Community Connectors who will work closely with our NDIS clients. These workers will assist clients with accessing resources, engaging in planned activities, updating and monitoring participant plans, connecting clients to service providers when providers are in community and support clients and families to connect with mainstream community supports when required.

We have put in a bid for Commonwealth government capital funding to build an accommodation block for staff and a new administration block for our Corporate Services team; bidding can be very competitive, we await the outcome.

The Tobacco Program is to hold a day of activities on Saturday the 21st of November which will include local dance groups and a BBQ.

NACCHO, our peak body for Aboriginal Health, is currently holding elections for new board members, The NT has two positions on the NACCHO board, there are three nominations for the NT positions, voting is currently underway.

I am currently negotiating with RFDS for the continuation of our business agreement, whereby we have a weekly return flight for staff transportation on a Monday morning and Friday afternoon, it is envisaged that this arrangement will continue for 2027.



To this month's employee's of the month, thank you for a job well done:
Peter Elton (Driver, Clinic), Juan Darwin (Community Worker, Clinic), Zakora Gibson (Men's Shed) and Jayde Preston (Social Worker, Community Wellness).

Jenny McAllister, Commonwealth Minister for NDIS, met with board members and staff to discuss service delivery in the Maningrida area; we are one of the few Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services that is involved with NDIS, we currently have 130 clients on our books, the Minister was impressed with our footprint in this important area of service delivery; Maningrida has in excess of 300 community members who may be eligible for NDIS services.

Ray Matthews
CEO

Primary Health Care

A busy few months for Primary Health Care

It's been a big few months for Mala'la Primary Health Care with new facilities, major community health events and recognition of our team.
Our Rheumatic Heart Disease team has now moved into the new Public Health Centre, which opened earlier this year. The building also provides dedicated spaces for our cancer coordinator, tuberculosis (TB) nurse and Integrated Team Care nurse. The new centre has also become a hub for our public health programs and community events.
Over the past few months, our team has delivered a community-wide TB screening program, welcomed the Millie breast screening bus and held our second Healthy Skin Week for the year. We also travelled to Darwin to share how Mala'la uses community health events to provide vaccinations and other health services.

Community screening for TB

Mala'la held its first community-wide TB screening program in Maningrida, working with visiting health professionals and local staff to screen as many people as possible over two weeks.
People could get screened at the clinic, at sites around the community or during home visits. Health professionals from Darwin and interstate joined Mala'la staff to help with health checks, blood tests, chest X-rays and other TB testing.







Finding TB early is important. It means people can start treatment sooner and helps reduce the chance of TB spreading to family and other community members. The program was also an opportunity to talk about TB, its symptoms and when people should come to the clinic for testing. Mala'la used local health workers, videos, social media and face-to-face conversations to share information. Community BBQs and raffle prizes also helped bring people along.



Primary Health Care of the Year Awards

Mala'la's Healthy Skin Week team was named Team of the Year at the Northern Territory PHN Health Professional of the Year Awards. What began as a local initiative to tackle the high rates of rheumatic heart disease in Maningrida, has grown into a biannual community health program supported by organisations and health professionals from across the Northern Territory and Australia.
The award recognises the work of Mala'la staff, visiting health professionals, partner organisations and volunteers who have contributed to Healthy Skin Week. Their combined efforts have helped make regular skin screening, early treatment and RHD prevention more accessible across the Maningrida community.
We thank everyone who has contributed to Healthy Skin Week since it began.

Maximising every opportunity

Primary Health Care Manager, Jessica Gatti, represented Mala'la at the NT Immunisation Symposium in Darwin. Jessica spoke about how Mala'la uses community events and outreach programs to offer people more than one health service at the same time. A good example was the lung screening program held in Maningrida in July. While people were waiting for their lung scan, Mala'la staff were also able to check their vaccination records and offer vaccinations. This helped us reach people who may otherwise have missed out. Mala'la offers a range of vaccinations, including influenza, diphtheria and pneumococcal vaccines. By including vaccinations in our community events, we can make it easier for people to get the health care they need.

Millie the Breast Bus: Farewell Tour

There was plenty of pink around Maningrida when the BreastScreen NT bus, affectionately known as Millie, returned for a two-week visit. Millie provided free breast screening for women aged 40 years and over. Mala'la also created a women's health space alongside the bus, where women could receive health checks and vaccinations while enjoying lunch, activities and a pamper station.





We partnered with Bábbarra Women's Centre to offer lino-printing activities, where women could create their own designs on shirts. Women who received a breast screen also received a gift bag, lunch and a free shirt. Students from the middle years girls' program at Maningrida College joined us during the visit. They volunteered at the pamper station, helped with activities and had the chance to talk with our health workers about careers in health and the importance of regular health checks. The visit was also bittersweet. It marked Millie's final trip to Maningrida before the bus is retired. Millie has played an important role in bringing breast screening to women living in remote communities, and we were proud to be part of her final visit to Maningrida.







Another successful Healthy Skin Week

Mala'la held its second Healthy Skin Week for the year in September, bringing together local staff, visiting health professionals and partner organisations for five days of skin checks and treatment across Maningrida.

Healthy Skin Week focuses on finding and treating skin sores and scabies early. Healthy skin is important because untreated skin infections can lead to serious health problems including rheumatic heart disease.



Healthy Skin Week is about more than skin checks. It brings health services out into the community, gives people a chance to talk with health workers and helps connect people with other care when needed. This time, we brought Environmental Health NT who talked about the link between environmental and skin health. The program continues to grow thanks to the support of Mala'la staff, visiting health professionals, partner organisations and the Maningrida community.

Throughout the week, teams provided skin checks and treatment around the community and worked with Maningrida College to reach children and young people. The team also travelled to several outstations to make sure people living outside the main community could take part.









Medicare

August delivered an excellent financial result with combined revenue of $315,019.95, comprising $150,846.15 in Medicare claims and $164,173.80 from PIP, WIP, GPACI, BBIPI, and private invoices.

This achievement reflects the clinic's strong commitment to community engagement and outreach. Through an extensive range of outreach activities delivered across the community, including TB screening and Women's Health checks, the team has successfully increased access to healthcare services for community members who may otherwise face barriers to care.

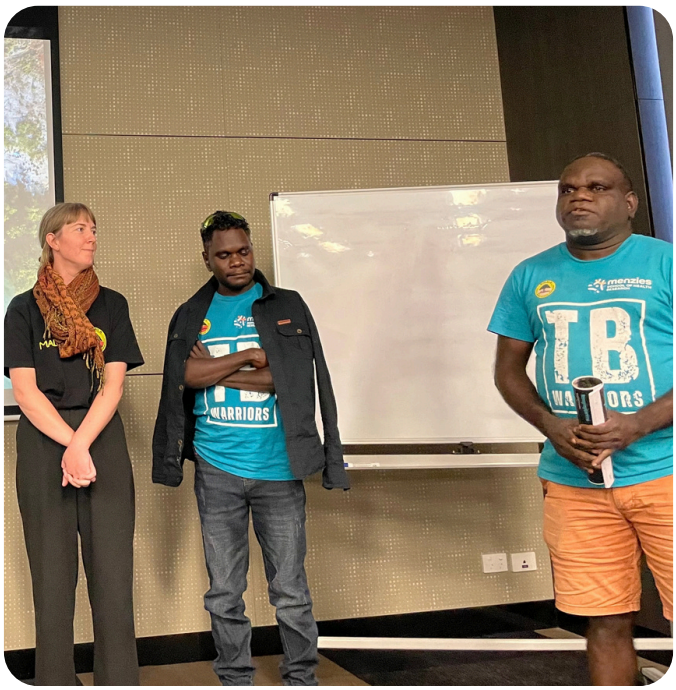
These outreach initiatives have strengthened relationships with the community, increased service utilisation and contributed significantly to the clinic's overall revenue performance.

The dedicated teamwork demonstrated by the Mala'la RAN's and GPs continue to be a key driver of both quality patient care and the clinic's financial sustainability. Working collaboratively and supporting one another, the team consistently embraces feedback and maintains a shared commitment to achieving the best outcomes for the community.



Quality and Safety

The AMSANT CQI Collaborative was held in Darwin early October, with this years' theme 'CQI & Chronic Disease Beyond 2026: Strengthening Quality and Improving Care'. At the collaborative, our TB team presented the great work they are doing in managing TB in the community.



This presentation highlighted the important role that our Community workers Juan Darwin and Will Martin play in supporting Nurse Sophie in her role. It also focused on the benefits of targeted education for our community workers to develop practical skills in assisting with medication administration to community members with positive outcomes.



Aged Care and Community Services

New staff announcements



We are delighted to welcome Mick and Marne Wood, two of our newest team members. Mick joins us as our new Maintenance Supervisor, while Marne joins our team as an Enrolled Nurse. Originally from Orange in New South Wales, they bring valuable skills and experience from their previous roles in the community.
Mick previously managed groundskeeping and maintenance for the Australian National Field Days, which is Australia's oldest agricultural event. Marne worked as an Enrolled Nurse at Orange Health Service, bringing valuable clinical experience to our Aged Care team. Their combined skills, knowledge and experience will be a great asset to our organisation and will contribute significantly to the quality of care and services we provide.



We also warmly welcome Dan Li and Kevin who have joined us from Katherine as our new Aged Care Support Workers.

We are pleased that two additional staff members will be joining us soon, bringing our staffing team to full capacity after being short-staffed for the past five months. Despite this challenge, our service delivery remained strong thanks to the commitment, dedication and resilience of our existing staff who continued to go above and beyond to support our residents and clients.

With a full team now coming together, we look forward to strengthening our operations, enhancing our services and continuing to provide quality care and support to our residents and clients.

Medication Refresher training

Recently, our staff participated in a medication refresher training session to strengthen their knowledge and ensure the safe administration of medication to our residents and clients.

The training reinforced the importance of administering the right medication to the right person, at the right dose and at the right time. Staff also received refresher training on medication storage, handling requirements and accurately reading medication charts.









The training of our local staff also focused on the correct use of inhalers. As many of our residents and clients live with asthma, understanding how to use an inhaler correctly is important to ensure they receive the intended benefit when needed. This knowledge will also be shared with family members so they can be provided with appropriate support at home.
Training of our staff helps promote safe medication practices and ensures a more holistic approach to the care and support we provide.

Monthly Physiotherapy sessions

Our monthly physiotherapy sessions continue with our visiting physiotherapist, Hamish Peberdy, who travels from Darwin. The sessions bring together our NDIS and Aged Care clients for a combined physiotherapy program aimed at improving mobility, reducing pain and promoting greater independence.





As part of the program, Hamish also provides our staff with training on basic stretches and exercises. This helps ensure continuity of care between visits and enables staff to support clients with their ongoing physical wellbeing.

Physiotherapy plays an important role in enhancing the quality of life of our elders by supporting their physical health, mobility and overall wellbeing. Regular exercise and movement can also contribute positively to their confidence and mental wellbeing.

This monthly program provides essential therapeutic benefits while also strengthening the relationship between clients and caregivers through shared goals, regular engagement and consistent support.









Residence and Clients Spotlight: Bruce Wurrkidji

Aged Care staff and residents recently came together to celebrate Bruce's 55th birthday. Bruce was delighted when staff surprised him with a birthday cake, making the occasion special and memorable.





We believe it is important to celebrate our residents' birthdays and milestones as each year of life is an achievement worthy of recognition. These celebrations help our residents feel valued, appreciated and connected to those around them.

Bruce enjoys spending time with his family, and we make sure he has the opportunity to visit them each week. As part of his community access and participation, Bruce is dropped off at his brother's home where he spends a few hours with his family.

These regular family visits provide Bruce with an opportunity to step outside the Aged Care environment, maintain meaningful family connections and continue to participate in his community. Through these simple but important activities, we support Bruce's social wellbeing, independence and sense of belonging.





Supporting clients and residents' wellbeing through activities



Our NDIS clients, Abraham Manukorrerre and Paul Dennis, both enjoy fishing. As part of their NDIS social and community access activities, our staff take them fishing on a weekly basis. These regular outings provide more than just an opportunity to enjoy a favourite pastime. They give Abraham and Paul the chance to spend time outdoors, connect with nature and Country and participate in an activity that is meaningful to them.





At the aged care centre, resident Agnes Jinguwana has a regular morning routine activity that keeps her engaged and occupied. The activity enables her to remain mentally active and engaged. Having familiar activities as part of her daily routine can also provide a sense of structure, purpose and independence.

These examples highlight our commitment to providing person-centred care and support. Whether activities take place outdoors in nature or indoors as part of a daily routine, they are planned around the individual interests, abilities and needs of our clients and residents. Their preferences and input are an important part of deciding what activities they participate in, helping their overall wellbeing are well supported.



Congratulations to Mere Divatulili (Dee)!

We are delighted to celebrate Mere Divatulili on the approval of her Subclass 494 DAMA visa.
Dee currently serves as the Aged Care Assistant Manager, where she plays and important role in overseeing the day-to-day operational functions of the facility. Her commitment, reliability and strong teamwork have made her a valued member of the team.
Dee has consistently shown a willingness to support others and contribute positively to the smooth running of the facility. This visa approval is a wonderful milestone and well-deserved achievement.



Maningrida College students visit Mala'la Aged Care

We were pleased to welcome Year 12 students from Maningrida College to our Aged Care facility as part of their educational tour.



During their visit, the students had the opportunity to experience the aged care environment, interact with residents and staff and take part in practical activities such as food preparations and meal support. The visit provided valuable insights into the important role aged care services play within the community.



It was wonderful to see the students engaging, learning and contributing with enthusiasm. Experiences like this help strengthen the connection between education, community and future career pathways.Thank you to the Maningrida College Year 12 students and teachers for spending time with us. We hope the visit was enjoyable and inspiring.