



Indigenous Doctors bring Science and Traditional Knowledge together for a Stronger Future

Date: 30 September 2014

From 1-4 October, the Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association (AIDA) will host its 2014 Conference, *Science and Traditional Knowledge: Foundations for a Strong Future*, at Aitken Hill Conference Centre in Melbourne.

With 250 delegates registered for this exciting event, the four day program offers a diverse range of workshops and a two day scientific program, featuring: Ngangkari, Traditional Healers, from the Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands; and Australia's first Aboriginal doctor, Professor Helen Milroy. Delegates and special guests include 45 Indigenous medical graduates, 46 Indigenous medical students, representatives from medical colleges, universities, speciality groups and government departments.

AIDA's President, Dr Tammy Kimpton says that the conference will be an opportunity for AIDA's Indigenous medical graduates, Indigenous medical students, associate members and key stakeholders to come together and share knowledge, be it scientific or traditional.

"As is customary, our honoured and long time teachers the Ngangkari will join us for this Conference. As Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, we recognise the importance of traditional healing and connection to culture. Culture is fundamental to creating a stronger future for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and to improving our health outcomes," Dr Kimpton said.

"For the first time all five of AIDA's past Presidents will also be in attendance at Conference; Professor Helen Milroy, Associate Professor Mark Wenitong, Dr Louis Peachey, Dr Tamara Mackean and Associate Professor Peter O'Mara. Having such an amazing leadership group join us in Melbourne will not only bring a wealth of knowledge, experience and expertise to the table, but provides a chance for our new members to reflect and celebrate the history of our wonderful organisation," she said.

The formal part of the conference will be held over two days, from 3-4 October. Highlights include the two keynote addresses from Professor Helen Milroy, currently a Commissioner with the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, the Ngangkari, and an amazing line up of plenary speakers including; Associate Professor Kelvin Kong; Associate Professor Noel Hayman; Associate Professor Sandra Eades; and Mr Romlie Mokak.

On Friday evening, the Conference Gala Dinner will take place and AIDA's new Indigenous medical graduates and fellows will be presented with their specially painted stethoscopes. Legendary singer/songwriter Mr Archie Roach will perform live at this dinner.

Ms Kate Thomann, AIDA's Chief Executive Officer added, "It is important that we acknowledge the achievement of our new graduates and fellows. This year we have fifteen new Indigenous medical graduates and seven new fellows".

In 2014, there are approximately 204 Indigenous doctors and 310 Indigenous medical students; however, to reach population parity there needs to be 2,895 Indigenous doctors in Australia. AIDA continues to work with its key stakeholders toward achieving this goal.

AIDA acknowledges the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of the land on which we hold our Conference. *For more information about the 2014 AIDA Conference please visit <http://www.aida.org.au/conference/>*