



THIRRILI

# Thirrili Ltd

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 8

2 JUNE 2020

## INSIDE:

- Support for constitutional change 2
- Reminder: consultants wanted 2
- Walkabout barber 2
- Opinion piece: Patricia Turner 2
- Constitutional change supported 2
- Events 3
- Scholarship: more 4
- Postponements and cancellations 4
- Updated: the awful numbers 5
- Crisis contacts 5
- Contact us 5
- Biography of our new CEO! 6
- Mental health training for medicos 6
- World no tobacco day 6

## We have a new CEO: welcome Jacqueline!!

In the last few days, the Board has completed their extensive recruitment process and have announced the appointment of an ongoing Chief Executive Officer!

The new CEO— Jacqueline McGowan – Jones — has an impressive CV that bodes well for Thirrili’s future.

She came out on top of a quality shortlist of candidates, all of whom demonstrated the capacity to perform the role

with distinction.

Jacqueline takes over in mid–June which will ensure the momentum we have established across the organisation in the past couple of months will keep rolling.

We look forward to Jacqueline ‘putting her feet under the desk’ and we hope to present a full introduction in her own words, in an upcoming issue once she begins in the role. To read Jacqueline’s biography, [click here](#).

As the transition begins, and on behalf of the Thirrili team, a big thank you to Kerry Arabena for the tremendous leadership and drive she has shown in her time as Interim CEO. Such has been her influence— and in a very short time— she has re-energized and reshaped the organisation and in doing so will leave us much better prepared to fulfill our role in the postvention sector.

Welcome Jacqueline and thank you and good luck Kerry!

## Funerals delayed due to coronavirus

Funeral directors are reporting that bodies of deceased persons are being held in storage for months as families delay funerals as a result of coronavirus. The industry

acknowledges that Indigenous Australians are particularly affected due to the restrictions on numbers at funerals and being unable to attend Sorry Camps.

Full the full story, go to ABC News

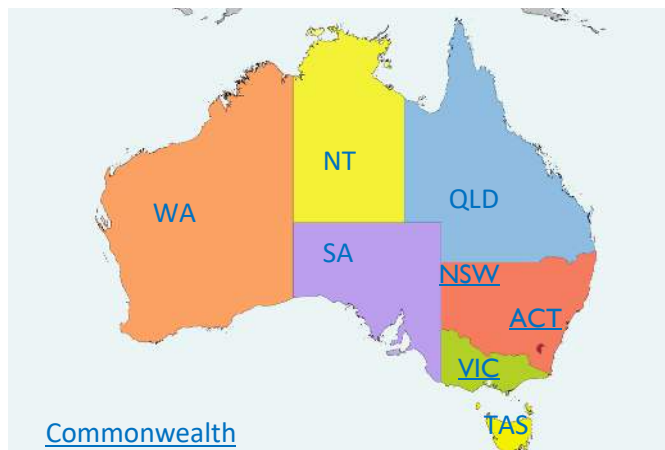
online at:

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-05-30/bodies-are-banking-up-due-to-funeral-delays-amid-coronavirus/12297124>

## COVID-19 information updated 1 June

‘Stay at home’ and other restrictions continue to ease at different stages across each of the states and territories. To continue to understand what is happening where you live, click on the links on the map below for the latest information from that respective government.

For dedicated resources/information for our mob provided by the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) on Covid-19, [click here](#).



*“The recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Australian Constitution will go a long way to recognising and supporting their mental health and human rights”*

## Psychiatrists support constitutional recognition

During National Reconciliation Week, The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP) made a commitment to contributing to the reduction of inequality in mental health outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians by preparing and supporting their psychiatrists to provide culturally appropriate psychiatric care.

Further, the College affirmed the ongoing contribution psychiatrists can make in supporting self-determination by improving the quality of mental health services available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

In supporting substantive constitutional reform to acknowledge the voice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, President of the RANZCP, Associate Professor John Allan stated “The recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Australian Constitution will go a long way to recognising and supporting their mental health and human rights” and “Over many years now, psychiatrists have observed the snowballing effect that exclusion has on the mental health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.”

To read the full article in the RANZCP news, click here:

<https://www.ranzcp.org/news-policy/news/reconciliation-must-also-mean-recognition-and-self>



## National suicide prevention trial evaluation

Last month we indicated we would be seeking local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultants to assist Thirrili conduct local consultations in seven regions of Australia as part of the evaluation of the National Suicide Prevention Trial in:

- ⇒ the Kimberley
- ⇒ Mid-Western WA
- ⇒ Darwin
- ⇒ Central Queensland
- ⇒ Brisbane North
- ⇒ Western NSW, and
- ⇒ Country SA.



Consultations will begin shortly and we are engaging consultants now!

If you are interested, please [click here](#) to access the consultant's brief.

If you have any further questions, please contact Catherine Elvins, Project Manager, National Indigenous Critical Response Service: [catherine.e@thirrili.com.au](mailto:catherine.e@thirrili.com.au) or call on 03 8578 1413.

## Walkabout barber

In the Newcastle region of NSW, a barber and qualified trauma counsellor is responding to community needs during COVID-19 by providing counselling with mobile haircuts.

A person with lived experience of mental health issues and suicide ideation, Brian Dowd is providing free haircuts and mental health counselling in partnership with Awabakal Community Controlled Health Service.

For the full story, click here:

<https://www.sbs.com.au/language/english/audio/clipping-off-trauma-walkabout-barber-helping-indigenous-communities-emerge-from-covid-19>

## Worth a look



In the *Saturday Paper*, Patricia Turner, chief executive of the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation and the lead convenor of the Coalition of Peaks speaks about the lack of progress on closing the gap and the need for “... a new national agreement on Closing the Gap, based on shared decision-making and investment in our communities ...”

To access the full article, go to <https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/node/9897> and create a free account.

# Events

## Significant community events

As Reconciliation Week draws to a close tomorrow (Wednesday 3 June) with the anniversary of the Mabo decision, there are plenty of other significant community events coming up:

### Coming of the Light

Wednesday 1 July 2020

This is a particular day of significance for Torres Strait Islander people. It marks the day the London Missionary Society first arrived in the Torres Strait, landing on Erub Island on 1 July 1871. Religious and cultural ceremonies are held by Torres Strait Islander Christians across the Torres Strait and on the mainland to commemorate this day.



### NAIDOC Week

5 July to 12 July 2020

Celebrated in the first full week in July, NAIDOC celebrations are held around Australia to celebrate the history, culture and achievement of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

NAIDOC was originally 'National Aboriginal and Islanders' Day Observance Committee'.

This week is celebrated not just in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait

Islander communities but also increasingly in government agencies, schools, local councils and workplaces.

### National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day

Tuesday 4 August 2020

Established by the Secretariat for National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care in 1988, National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day (NAICD) is celebrated on 4 August each year.

Each year SNAICC has a theme for Children's Day to highlight significant issues, concern or hope for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children.

### International Day of the World's Indigenous People

Sunday 9 August 2020



The United Nations' (UN) International Day of the World's Indigenous People is observed on 9 August each year to promote and protect the rights of the world's Indigenous population.

This event also recognises the achievements and contributions that Indigenous peoples make to improve world issues such as environment

protection.



### Webinar: responding to inhalant use in Queensland Wednesday 3 June 2020

Like many drugs, inhalant abuse can result in death, and it doesn't have to be long-term abuse that causes it. Children and young people can be especially susceptible to their use as they can be found in any supermarket.

Hosted by Insight, this webinar will be hosted by Insight's Cameron Francis and will discuss issues relating to inhalant use including medical management and strategies to assist coordinated multi-agency responses.

10AM to 11AM (AEST)  
8AM- AWST; 9:30AM ACST

For more information and to access the 'zoom' webinar, click the link:

<https://insight.qld.edu.au/training/responding-to-inhalant-use-in-queensland/detail>

Want to be included on our mailing list?

Something relevant you'd like us to share with our readers?

Email:

[peter.s@thirrili.com.au](mailto:peter.s@thirrili.com.au)

## Scholarship Program Further information

We are very pleased with the number of applications we have received for this initial program. These applications are currently being assessed and those who have applied will receive advice about their applications by 12 June 2020.

While the upcoming course is a pilot, we expect that we will run these courses three or four times per years, to ensure the existence of an ongoing pool of trained workers for the postvention sector.

### Course overview

The course modules are currently being finalised by our curriculum developers, however, the overview of the course will include topics such as understanding suicide and its impact; what is postvention?; working with families and individuals; boundaries and scope of practice; engaging and working with community sector organisations; worker safety and self care. The course is also likely to include a placement with a postvention service. Please note that we have had to revise the starting time for the course to ensure that every element of the course is ready for the participants from day one.

### Some key timelines

- Successful applicants confirmed by 12th June 2020
- Successful applicants will need to provide a photo of themselves for their individual BIO's by Monday 15th June 2020
- Successful applicants will undertake an orientation to the upcoming course at some point between 15th June 2020 – 6th July 2020
- Six week scholarship program commences Monday 6 July 2020

Any further questions contact Shannon Kearing at: [shannon.k@thirrili.com.au](mailto:shannon.k@thirrili.com.au) or by phone: 0438 549 575

## Suicide modelling difficult

Suicide modelling from the University of Sydney's Brain and Mind Centre has predicted a potential 25-50% increase in the number of people taking their lives in Australia over the next five years. The researchers expect this projected increase to disproportionately affect younger people. Such predications not only raise community concern, but have significant implications for public policy and funding decisions.

Professor Jayashri Kulkarni who is Professor of Psychiatry at Monash University says that "...the grim predictions from suicide modelling warrant analysis and exploration". She argues that the best models for diseases are mechanistic models, not purely statistical ones. Mechanistic models are

based on understanding how a system's components interact with each other.

To read the full article as printed in *The Conversation*, [click here](#).



## Postponements and cancellations...

### Dealing with grief and trauma workshops

Due to unforeseen circumstances, workshops with our postvention partner **StandBy** will not proceed as planned on June 10 and June 17. This is not a cancellation, but merely a postponement, so watch this space for the reschedule dates or go to our website at <http://thirrili.com.au/events-media/events>

### National Suicide Prevention Conference 2020

Unfortunately, due to the current Pandemic, the organisers of the 2020 National Suicide Prevention Conference have made the difficult decision to cancel the Conference scheduled for July 20-23 in Canberra. Organisers stated "...this decision was deemed necessary to protect the health and safety of delegates, staff, suppliers, speakers and the general public." For the full announcement, go to <https://www.suicidepreventionaust.org/conferences/>.

### Laura Aboriginal Dance Festival 2020 cancelled

The Ang-Gnarra Aboriginal Corporation have made the decision to cancel the Laura Quinkan Dance Festival 2020, scheduled originally for 3-5 July, a result of the changing and widespread impacts of COVID-19.

The festival is held every two years and showcases the culture of the Aboriginal people of Cape York Peninsula through song, dance ceremony and performance.

For more information, go to:

<https://www.indigenous.gov.au/news-and-media/event/laura-aboriginal-dance-festival-cancelled>

**CANCELLED**

# NICRS notifications 2020: updated every issue

**Updated 2 June 2020.** This week you will see that there is no “all other” column in terms of jurisdictions where completed suicides occurred. That is because in each of the states/territories listed there has been at least four suicides (and as such identification of single cases is not obvious) while Tasmania and ACT have had none reported to us in this calendar year.

Please continue to provide your feedback: it is welcomed and it is valuable.

	Gender			State or Territory*						
	Male	Not known at this time	Female	QLD	WA	NT	VIC	NSW	SA	Total
Completed suicides	39	1	13	18	13	6	6	5	5	53

Age range	17 and younger	18-30 inclusive	Older than 30	Not known at this time	Total
Completed suicides	8	26	15	4	53

	Total
All other incidents include attempted suicides and/or traumatic incidents with or without fatalities	28

### Crisis contact numbers

- ⇒ Lifeline: 13 11 14
- ⇒ Suicide call back service: 1300 659 467
- ⇒ Coronavirus mental health support line 1800 512 348
- ⇒ Kids Help Line: 1800 551 800
- ⇒ MensLine Australia: 1300 78 99 78
- ⇒ Beyond Blue: 1300 845 745
- ⇒ GriefLine: 1300 845 745 (midday to 3am AEST 7 days a week)
- ⇒ Thirrili After Suicide support 1800 805 807

**Thirrili Ltd ABN 617 635 828**

Administration office:  
2/2 Bromham Street  
Richmond  
Victoria 3121



**T H I R R I L I**

**Website: [thirrili.com.au](http://thirrili.com.au) Telephone: (administration only) (03) 8578 1414**

## Meet our new CEO

Jacqueline McGowan - Jones has a long history in working in Indigenous Affairs, including with the former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC).

Her experience includes roles in the Commonwealth Departments of Health; Attorney-General; the Health Insurance Commission and the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA).



Jac has held a variety of Senior Executive roles in a range of business and industry sectors, including the Community and Not for Profit Sector, both as CEO and as a Regional Manager, and she also has experience in the private sector.

In addition, Jacqueline has worked in the Departments of Aboriginal Affairs; Premier & Cabinet; Child Protection; and Education in Western Australia.

While in the role of Executive Director, Office of Aboriginal Education, Jacqueline led the development and implementation of the Aboriginal Cultural Safety Framework for Culturally Responsive Schools. She has also worked in the Victorian and ACT Governments.

An Aboriginal woman, Jac has family connections in both Victoria and the Northern Territory.

Jac has had the good fortune of working in all Australian

jurisdictions (both within their Governments, or when with ATSIC), and has lived in all jurisdictions – except Tasmania!

Jac has a strong commitment to improving lives of Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islanders and this, combined with her personal experience of family suicide, has brought her to Thirrili.

## Mental health training for Med students

According to a media release from the Commonwealth Minister for Health Greg Hunt, Medical students across Australia will soon receive basic mental health first aid training to ensure they can recognise and respond to the extra stresses associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Funding provided by the government will provide first level mental health training through an online course specifically designed for medical students by Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Australia.

As well as learning to recognise others' problems, the course will remind Australian medical students to monitor their own mental health and wellbeing.

To download the release, [click here](#)

Remiss of us not to mention last week that Sunday 31 May was *World no tobacco day*. That said, there is no better time to quit than now.

According to the experts,

- Twelve hours after stopping, almost all nicotine is out of your system with most by-products gone within five days.
- After 24 hours, the level of carbon monoxide in your blood has dropped dramatically, meaning your body can take and use oxygen more efficiently.
- After two days, your senses of taste and smell start to return.
- After two months, blood flow to your hands and feet improves.
- After one year, your risk of heart disease rapidly drops.
- After 10 years, your risk of lung cancer is halved.

They are just some of the health benefits. Add to those, you'll smell better and have more money to spend .

Give it a go, chuck out the smokes and stick around longer and be healthier. If not for you, for your loved ones.



## World no tobacco day



See you next edition!