

Futures on the frontiers

Di Bennett, Chronic Disease Nurse, **Carolyn Groth**, Regional Diabetes Centre, **Janet Dalby**, Barrier Division General Practise, **Alison Warburton**, GP Liaison Officer

Broken Hill, a historic rural mining town, brings history into the present through this interactive poster that displays the birth of the Regional Diabetes Centre.

This poster acknowledges the importance of the land that has been valued throughout history to both Indigenous and Western culture. A contrast of how Western culture and Indigenous culture value the land becomes evident. The original Aboriginal tribes were the Paakantji who still live along the Darling River. The other major Aboriginal community is Ngiyampaa from further east. The land is the focal point of where everything began. The Aboriginal peoples' respect and care for the land was evident through their living practices. Not only was food obtained from native plants and animals, the tribes travelled in a circular fashion, allowing re-growth and rejuvenation of the elements within the land.

In 1883 Broken Hill was discovered to have a massive silver ore site. Billions of dollars have been reaped from the mines under the ownership of licensed mine holders. The land of this area has provided value to its inhabitants through food, life and wealth.

The town of Broken Hill sits above the mines. The houses of Broken Hill are quaint and characteristic of the area. The main material used for building these structures was tin and bluestone, materials locally available. Isolation increases dependency on local knowledge and local resources. Independence is replaced with interdependence to foster survival and success.

Today we may be "reaping what has been sown" as the drought plays havoc with flora and fauna. The natural resources are depleting daily and sustainability requires clever thinking and action. Good health becomes a motivator for action.

This poster illustrates how Indigenous culture merged with Western culture can cause a change within and around its environment. The Regional Diabetes Centre resulted from the joining of services throughout the region. Today the Diabetes Centre is a partnership between The Barrier Division of General Practice, Maari Ma (Aboriginal Health Service) and the Far West Area Health Service (NSW). The hypothesis that set the scene was "the provision of well-organised care, based on agreed guidelines for best practice which incorporate principles of primary care, would reduce the impact of diabetes". This Centre has resulted in improved relationships between key stakeholders within the community. Both clients and service providers realise that collaboration is better than isolation.

Interact with this poster; take a walk into the history and present township of Broken Hill. Every home has a story and these houses are the beginning of a greater one to be told.

