

INCREASING the **ABORIGINAL** HEALTH WORKFORCE

Building capacity for a skilled local Aboriginal workforce in mental health and addiction support in the Nepean Blue Mountains region.

NBMPHN listened to our Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander community members who told us about the poor quality cultural safety for local mental health, alcohol and other drug services.

Aboriginal stakeholders also told us that there were not enough trained Aboriginal people to deliver primary health and mental health services for the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander community.

As a result, in 2017 **NBMPHN commissioned the Poche Centre for Indigenous Health** to support local Aboriginal students in completing a Diploma in Mental Health, specialising in mental health and alcohol and other drugs.

We are thrilled that this year nine students have graduated with their **Diploma of Mental Health, and some already have full-time employment.**

“Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people often face extra barriers when accessing health services and these graduates will help our community by providing culturally safe and appropriate support that will help break down some of those barriers.”

“Before these nine students graduated, our consultations indicated that there was only one qualified Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander professional delivering support for mental health services in our region. As a result of the program there are ten Indigenous workers in the NBM region qualified to provide support for people with mental health and drug and alcohol needs.”

Wentworth Healthcare CEO,
Ms Lizz Reay

