



KEEPING IT REAL

**Empowering Aboriginal Children,
Families and Communities**

SECTOR CONFERENCE 22 NOVEMBER 2017
WORKERS CONFERENCE 23–24 NOVEMBER 2017



AbSec 2017 Conference Program

Thank you to our sponsors

This conference couldn't happen without the generous support of our sponsors. Thank you to our premium sponsor, the Office of the Children's Guardian; our major sponsors, the NSW Department of Family and Community Services and My Choice Matters; as well as proud sponsors NCOSS, Woomera Aboriginal Corporation and Relationships Australia.

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Welcome & overview

Welcome to AbSec's 2017 conference, *Keeping It Real: Empowering Aboriginal children, families and communities.*

True to its name, this conference is intended as a place to have real, candid discussions about the real issues our families and communities face. Over the next few days, I encourage you to share your honest views and engage with perspectives that challenge your way of thinking.

With Aboriginal children over-represented 10 to one in the NSW child protection system, it's clear that something is not working. This is why we're calling for frank and challenging conversations at this conference: because the time for change is now.

I am confident that the solutions to our problems lie in our own communities. I believe in the great strength inherent in our people and our culture, and I'm excited to see what the next few days will bring. When we all come together with enquiring minds and unwavering commitment, we can achieve a better future for our Aboriginal children, families and communities.

Thank you for joining us for this valuable opportunity, an event that only comes around once every two years. On behalf of everyone at AbSec, I am delighted to have you here.

Tim Ireland, AbSec CEO

Speakers



JOHN TAMIHERE

Our keynote speaker, John Tamihere, has a long history fighting for Maori rights both as a New Zealand Government minister and as CEO of the Te Whanau O Waipareira Trust (an urban Maori authority delivering not-for-profit services to the community of Waitakere and across Aotearoa). John, affectionately known as JT, was widely expected to become the country's first Maori Prime Minister before leaving parliament to return to the grassroots.



JOCELYN FORMSMA

We also welcome special guest Jocelyn Formsma, a member of the Moose Cree First Nation in Canada and an advocate for First Nations' rights. Jocelyn has over 15 years of experience in Indigenous and children's rights. She was also the recipient of the Canadian Coalition on the Rights of Children's 2009 Child's Rights Award, and is an alumni of the Governor General's Canadian Leadership Conference (2015). She currently serves as an Associate Lawyer with Nahwegahbow, Corbiere Genoodmagijig Barristers and Solicitors, a board member of the National Indian Child Welfare Association, and the Chairperson of the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN) Board of Directors.



CALEB TURNER

Caleb Turner is a role model, youth mentor and organiser from Moose Cree First Nation in northern Ontario, Canada. His job with Moose Cree First Nation Youth Department entails working with young people in Moose Factory to organise recreational, sports, art, cultural and ceremonial activities.

Caleb lives the values he promotes. He is a drummer at Pow Wows and works hard to create a bridge between elders and youth. He also founded the drum group 'High Ridge' and travels extensively across Canada as an unofficial ambassador of Moose Cree people, culture and language.



LUKE CARROLL (CONFERENCE MC)

Luke Carroll is a busy film, television and theatre actor — he has just completed a successful season of *Black is the New White* at the Sydney Theatre Company (STC). He played the lead role in *The Hanging* and *The Battle of Waterloo* for STC and premiered a one-man version of *Wind in the Willows* for La Boite Theatre Company. Some of Luke's extensive television and film credits include *Black Comedy*, *The Gods of Wheat Street*, *Redfern Now*, *Strangerland*, *Needle* and *Stone Bros*. Luke is also a much loved presenter on *Playschool*.

Evening functions

CONFERENCE DINNER

The Conference Dinner will be held on Wednesday 22nd November 2017 from 6.30pm, and will include a 3-course banquet dinner and complimentary drinks in the Currawong Room at Opal Cove Resort.

Registrations for dinner will begin at 6pm.

COCKTAIL FUNCTION

The Cocktail Function will be held on Thursday 23rd November 2017, in the Horizon Bar and Restaurant from 6pm.

Entertainment

ROCHELLE PITT

Rochelle is a proud Aboriginal woman from Cairns and rose to fame as a finalist on *The X Factor* in 2014. Since then she has featured at many events, including festivals, communities and conferences, released her EP *Soul Mumma*, and become ambassador for Kidney Health Australia.

Rochelle has been affectionately dubbed Australia's very own 'Soul Mumma'. Our Conference Dinner promises to be an unmissable event with Rochelle headlining.

KEVIN KROPINYERI

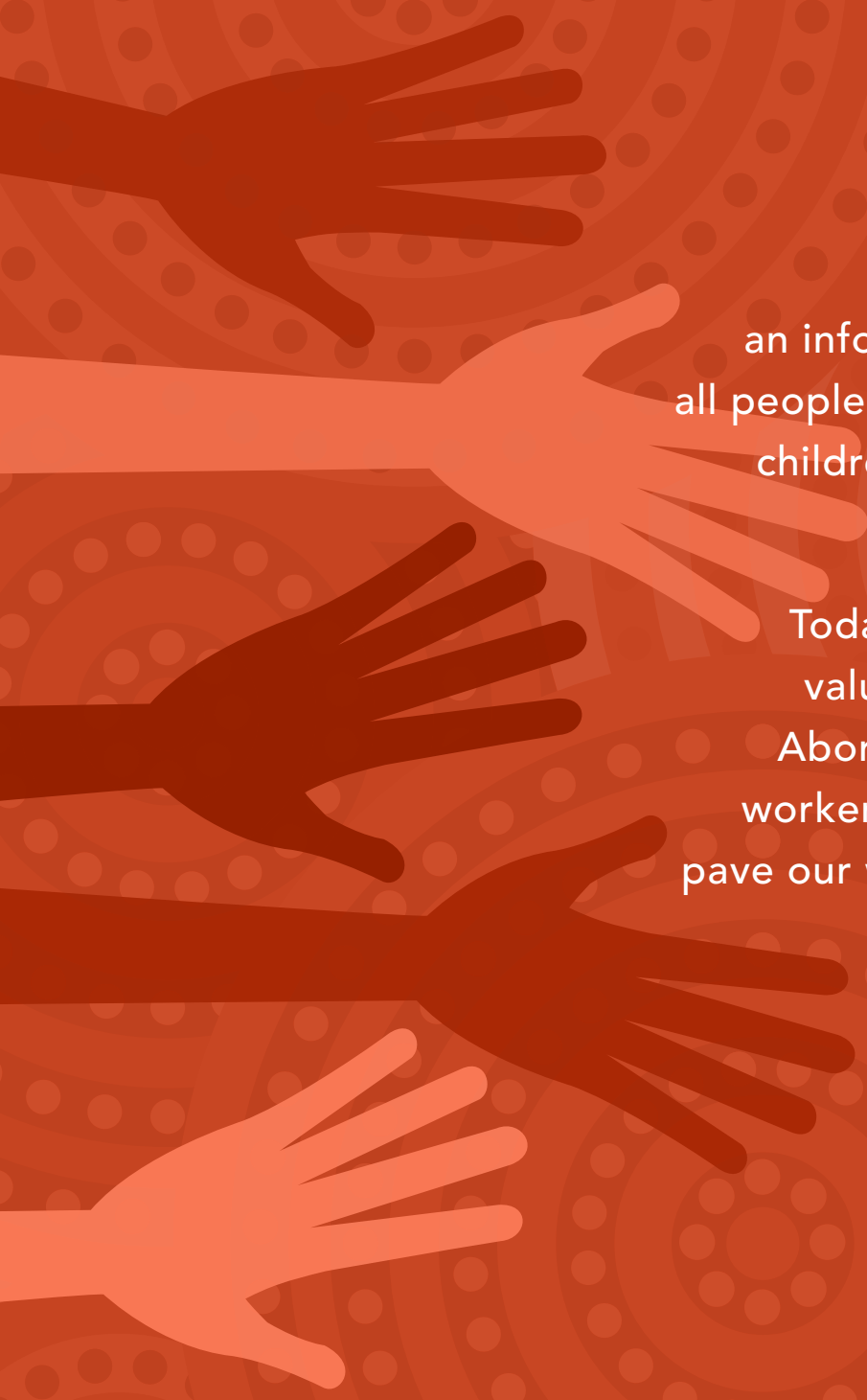
Australia's premier Aboriginal comedy star, Kevin Kropinyeri is a one-man whirlwind that will have you holding your sides laughing, as he shares tales of growing up, marriage and the particular, absurd challenges of life as an Aboriginal Australian family man.

A high-energy performer, Kevin is sharp, likeable, silly and measured; mixing keen observational standup with joyfully ridiculous physical comedy.



AbSec Sector Conference 2017

Day One



The Sector Conference is an informative event for any and all people who work with Aboriginal children, young people, families and communities.

Today's sessions will present a valuable opportunity to bring Aboriginal and non-Indigenous workers and experts together to pave our way forward in supporting Aboriginal communities.

AbSec Sector Conference Agenda

AbSec Conference 2017 (DAY ONE – SECTOR)

WEDNESDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2017

TIME	OUTLINE	SPEAKER
8:30am	Registrations	
9:05am–9:45am	Day one welcome and open	
9:45am–10:45am	Keynote address John Tamihere, CEO, Te Whanau O Waipareira Trust	
MORNING TEA 10.45AM–11AM		
11am–12:15pm	1 Creating cultural connections workshop	Stevie Kirby, AbSec
	2 Innovative practice – evaluation findings: QATSICPP practice standards workshop and supervision framework training	Sidney Williams, QATSICPP
	3 NGO benchmarking – Results and what does this mean?	Zoe Zeller and Alyssa Martin, Department of Finance, Services and Innovation
LUNCH 12:15PM–12:45PM		
12:45pm–1.45pm	1 Working towards better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families through building a strong, sustainable and capable sector	Candice Butler, QATSICPP
	2 Reportable conduct: Key issues arising from our oversight of Aboriginal agencies	Julianna Demetrius, NSW Ombudsman
	3 Aboriginal Case Management Policy and Guidelines	Cathrine Tarrant, AbSec
AFTERNOON TEA 1.45PM–2PM		
2pm–3pm	Permanency Support Program — Its application to Aboriginal children and young people	Simone Czech, Department of Family and Community Services
3pm–4pm	AbSec wrap-up	Tim Ireland, CEO AbSec
END OF DAY ONE SECTOR CONFERENCE – 4.00PM		

SESSION 1

CREATING CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

AbSec

This workshop gives insight into how to create meaningful cultural plans, providing Aboriginal children and young people in care with the opportunity to strengthen their connections to culture and community. This is especially important when children are placed off-country.

INNOVATIVE PRACTICE — EVALUATION FINDINGS: PRACTICE STANDARDS WORKSHOP AND SUPERVISION FRAMEWORK TRAINING

QATSICPP

In 2016, QATSICPP launched a suite of practice resources aimed at enhancing and supporting those working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families in Queensland. The resources include: Practice Standards, Practice Guide, and a supervision framework. In 2017, a training package has been developed, based on these practice resources.

NGO BENCHMARKING – RESULTS AND WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Department of Finance, Services and Innovation

The Department of Finance, Services and Innovation has recently completed a round of NGO benchmarking. Hear about how NGO benchmarking is levelling the playing field for all NGOs. How can your organisation get involved? Find out how to interpret your benchmarking results and use them to influence your organisational development plans as your organisation grows and evolves.

SESSION 2

WORKING TOWARDS BETTER OUTCOMES FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CHILDREN AND FAMILIES THROUGH BUILDING A STRONG, SUSTAINABLE AND CAPABLE SECTOR

QATSICPP

QATSICPP will discuss how the concept of storylines assisted the Practice Development Team of the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak Limited (QATSICPP) to develop a suite of practice resources to assist frontline practitioners throughout Queensland. These tools and a further conversation of storylines will be discussed during this presentation.

REPORTABLE CONDUCT: KEY ISSUES ARISING FROM OUR OVERSIGHT OF ABORIGINAL AGENCIES

NSW Ombudsman

The NSW Ombudsman's Office will present on key issues and trends from their oversight of Aboriginal agencies, including the importance of Reportable Conduct in the NGO sector.

ABORIGINAL CASE MANAGEMENT POLICY AND GUIDELINES

AbSec

AbSec has been working in partnerships with FACS and Aboriginal stakeholders to develop a Aboriginal Case Management Policy and Guidelines for practitioners who work within the NSW child welfare system.

The purpose of the policy is to promote an integrated case-management approach that is tailored to the needs of Aboriginal children and families, that commences early in the continuum of support, and that empowers and supports families and communities to reduce the incidence of harm. The policy and guidelines seek to address identified risks and thereby support Aboriginal children and young people to thrive.

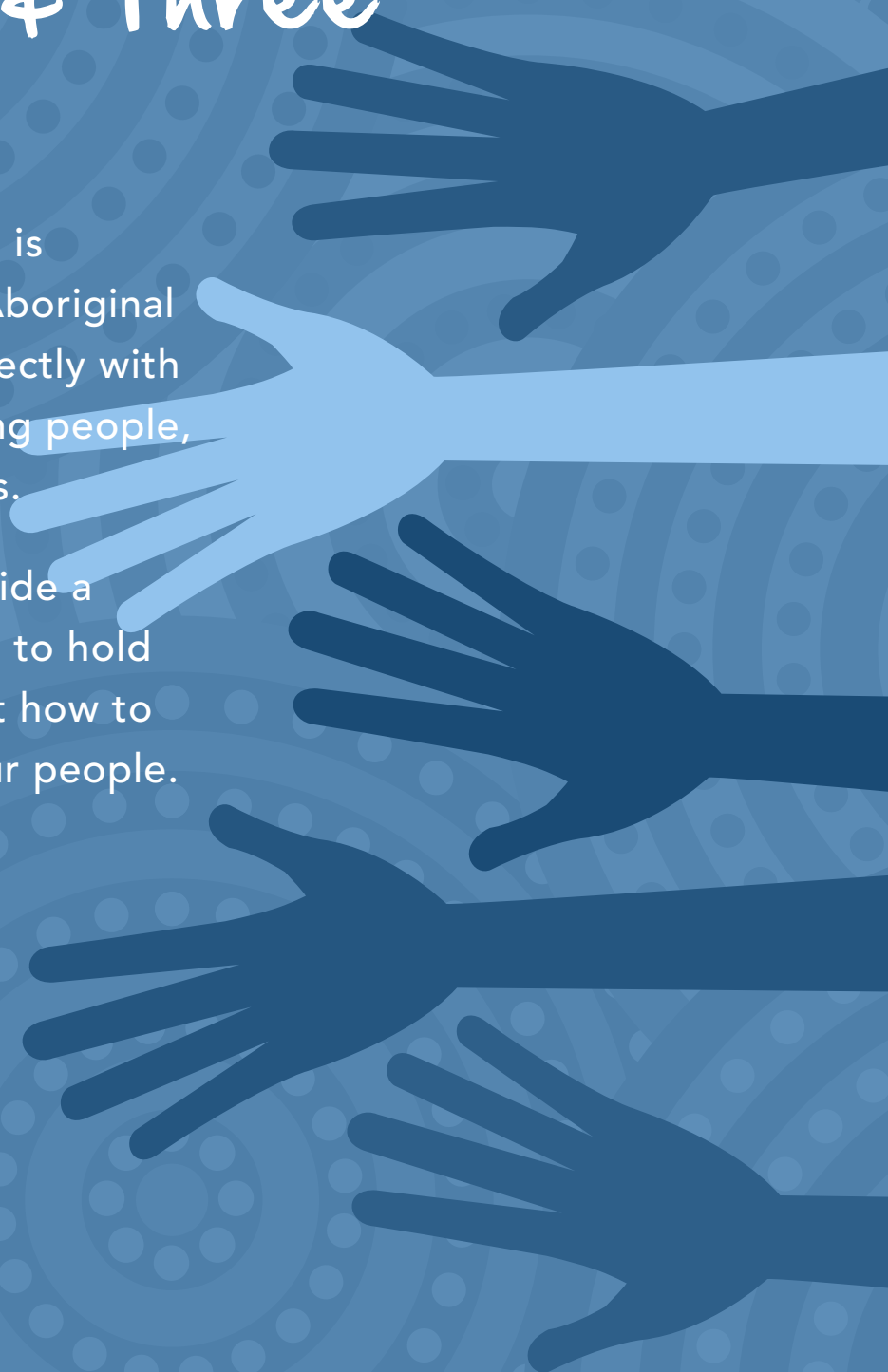
AbSec will be presenting the Aboriginal Case Management Policy and Guidelines. The workshop will provide an opportunity for practitioners to discuss practice changes and implementation requirements.

AbSec Workers Conference 2017

Days Two & Three

The Workers Conference is tailored specifically for Aboriginal workers who interact directly with Aboriginal children, young people, families and communities.

These two days will provide a culturally sensitive space to hold honest discussions about how to continue empowering our people.



AbSec Workers Conference Agenda

AbSec Conference 2017 (DAY TWO – WORKERS)

THURSDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2017

TIME	OUTLINE	SPEAKER
8:30am	Registrations	
9:05am–9:30am	Day two welcome and open	
9:30am–11am	<p>Keynote address</p> <p>Jocelyn Formsma, Indigenous Children’s Rights and Youth Engagement Advocate, Canada, & Caleb Turner, Youth Council Representative from Moose Cree First Nation, Canada</p>	
MORNING TEA 11AM–11:15AM		
11:15am–12:30pm	<p>1 » How connections can make a difference to Aboriginal homelessness » Preventing exits into homelessness for Aboriginal care leavers: a call for culturally appropriate models of service provision</p>	Cheryl Barnes, Wentworth Community Housing & Trevor Walker, Aboriginal Corporation for Homeless & Rehabilitation Community Services
	<p>2 Redefining Aboriginal community control and shifting the power back into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, families and children</p>	Nadia Currie, QATSICPP
	<p>3 Accreditation & the Carers Register — What, why and how we do it?</p>	Briallen Dillen, Allison Prior, Stella Cue, Office of the Children’s Guardian
	<p>4 Voices of Aboriginal children & young people in NSW</p>	Andrew Johnson, NSW Advocate for Children & Young People
LUNCH 12:30PM–1PM		
1pm–2pm	Being child safe is everybody’s business	Janet Schorer, NSW Children’s Guardian
2pm–3pm	Industry Development Strategy	Eleri Morgan-Thomas, Department of Family and Community Services & Tim Ireland, CEO AbSec
AFTERNOON TEA 3PM–3:15PM		
3:15pm–4:30pm	<p>1 Education and intersections with Aboriginal children and families</p>	Trisha Ladogna, Department of Education and Communities
	<p>2 Jarjums Program</p>	Ruth Callaghan & Kim Davies, Northcott
	<p>3 Targeted Earlier Intervention</p>	Anthony Shannon, Department of Family and Community Services
	<p>4 National Disability Insurance Scheme – Preparation and planning</p>	Lynne Hudson & Ann Murphy, My Choice Matters
END OF DAY TWO WORKERS CONFERENCE – 4:30PM		

SESSION 1

HOW CONNECTIONS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO ABORIGINAL HOMELESSNESS & PREVENTING EXITS INTO HOMELESSNESS FOR ABORIGINAL CARE LEAVERS

Wentworth Community Housing & Aboriginal Corporation for Homeless and Rehabilitation Community Services

This workshop will provide an overview of how an issue, “Aboriginal homelessness”, can be identified and then how commitment and passion can have an impact on reducing homelessness within the Aboriginal community. This session will also look at the interconnections between homelessness and out-of-home care systems for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It will examine the supports needed for young people entering and exiting the care system in order to prevent homelessness, particularly around maintaining connections with family, community, land and culture. Greater collaboration between staff from these two sectors is critical to preventing exits into homelessness for Aboriginal youth. Importantly, the failures for Aboriginal people in housing and care systems mirror broader system failures. The lack of cultural appropriateness and understanding in juvenile justice, education and health systems, for example, continue to perpetuate poor outcomes for Aboriginal people. This session will examine the ways in which cultural appropriateness can be reflected in these systems and what is needed to promote genuine empowerment of and respect for Aboriginal people and their communities.

REDEFINING ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY CONTROL AND SHIFTING THE POWER BACK INTO ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMUNITIES, FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

QATSICPP

This presentation will discuss and provide findings from community consultations and the proposed definition of Aboriginal community control, which will be presented to Australian governments in order to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to determine their own futures and furthermore, access funding that is currently going to non-Aboriginal organisations claiming to service Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and children.

ACCREDITATION AND THE CARERS REGISTER — WHAT, WHY AND HOW WE DO IT?

Office of the Children’s Guardian

This presentation focuses on the OCG’s role in accreditation — purposes of accreditation, what agencies have told us, and lessons learnt through the accreditation process. The second part is the NSW carers register strengths, gaps and lessons learnt.

VOICES OF ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN NSW

NSW Advocate for Children and Young People

This session focuses on the information gained by the Advocate for Children and Young People following his state-wide consultations and recently released report. Where to from here and next steps.

SESSION 2

EDUCATION AND INTERSECTIONS WITH ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Department of Education and Communities

This session will focus on education and its intersections for Aboriginal children and young people, including those in out-of-home care. We will also look at how to work better to support Aboriginal children and young people to access education successfully.

JARJUMS PROGRAM

Northcott

Together, Jarjums and Northcott are building the capacity of the teaching staff and school leadership through a skills transfer and community development model. We are working holistically — supporting not only the student, but also the student’s family and community to acquire skills and resilience.

TARGETED EARLIER INTERVENTION

Department of Family and Community Services

This session is an opportunity to focus on the FACS reforms around targeted earlier intervention with a focus on the Aboriginal strategy. How do we ensure TEI programs and services are supporting our families better. What works, what doesn’t work?

NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME — PREPARATION AND PLANNING

My Choice Matters

My Choice Matters supports people with disability and their carers to think about what makes a good life for them. The NDIS is making it easier for people to set goals, find supports and make change in their life. This session is an introduction session to support Aboriginal people with disability and their carers to approach preparation for a planning session with the NDIS.

AbSec Conference 2017 (DAY THREE – WORKERS)

FRIDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2017

TIME	OUTLINE	SPEAKER
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9:00am	Day three welcome and open	
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9:05am–10.30am	Looking to the future for Aboriginal children and families in NSW	Tim Ireland, CEO AbSec and others
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MORNING TEA 10.30AM–10.55AM

11.00am–12pm	1 Challenges of leadership in a community sector environment	Scott Wesley, Wesley Consulting
	2 Knowledge circles: Empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through giving voice and real participation	Candice Butler & Nadia Currie, QATSICPP
	3 Art therapy for Aboriginal children	Ben Rockett, KidsXpress
	4 Health intersections with Aboriginal families, children and young people	Sharnee Townsend & Emily Goldsmith, NSW Ministry of Health

LUNCH 12PM–12:30PM

12:30pm–1:30pm	1 Justice intersections with Aboriginal children and young people	Judge Stephen Coates, Federal Circuit Court of Australia
	2 The NDIS and its intersections with out-of-home care and mental health	Mick Scarcella, AbSec
	3 Policy hack-a-thon	Paul Gray, AbSec
1:30pm–2:30pm	AbSec wrap-up	Paul Gray, AbSec

CLOSED AND AFTERNOON TEA AVAILABLE IN FOYER

CONFERENCE END – 2:30PM



SESSION 1

CHALLENGES OF LEADERSHIP IN A COMMUNITY SECTOR ENVIRONMENT

Wesley Consulting

This session will focus on leadership challenges in community organisations, how to approach these challenges and overcome common constraints. We'll look at issues such as lack of investment in leadership and management capability, reluctance by management to tackle poor performance issues, rigid recruitment practices, and more.

KNOWLEDGE CIRCLES: EMPOWERING ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMUNITIES THROUGH GIVING VOICE AND REAL PARTICIPATION

QATSICPP

To ensure that the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities throughout Queensland were heard and real participation was at the forefront, the QATSICPP developed the concept of QATSICPP Knowledge Circles. Knowledge Circles have a strong focus on ascertaining information to benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and children. The Knowledge Circles integrate the process of 'yarning', which is a highly effective process for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

ART THERAPY FOR ABORIGINAL CHILDREN

KidsXpress

KidsXpress are soon launching an art therapy program run in partnership with AbSec, targeting Aboriginal children. Art therapy at KidsXpress encourages children to develop their thoughts and feelings further by drawing, painting, sculpting and constructing. It differs from traditional art in that the emphasis is on the process of creating rather than the end product. Their work is not judged and art ability is not necessary.

HEALTH INTERSECTIONS WITH ABORIGINAL FAMILIES, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

NSW Ministry of Health

Presentation will include the following key projects and policies NSW Ministry of Health currently manage and lead: (1) Aboriginal Family Wellbeing and Violence Prevention Strategy; (2) Aboriginal Maternal Child and Family Health Service and the Building Strong Foundations program (child and family health service).

SESSION 2

JUSTICE INTERSECTIONS WITH ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Judge Stephen Coates, Federal Circuit Court Australia

The Federal Circuit Court deals with most of the family law cases in Australia. People who have experienced family breakdown come to this court every day to seek help in resolving disputes about children. The person who applies is most commonly one of the parents, but might also be an uncle or aunt, a grandparent, or another adult member of the extended family. The Court is required to make orders determined to be in the child's best interests, which in almost all cases, involves keeping children within family units. The Federal Circuit Court of Australia was the first court in Australia to launch a Reconciliation Action Plan. The RAP aims to provide Indigenous people with better access to the family law system. There is an over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out of home care. The Court wants to break down barriers with the community, and has been consulting widely with many agencies working with Indigenous families, to assist Indigenous litigants to better understand what the Court does, and hopefully keep children within families.

THE NDIS AND ITS INTERSECTIONS WITH OUT-OF-HOME CARE AND MENTAL HEALTH

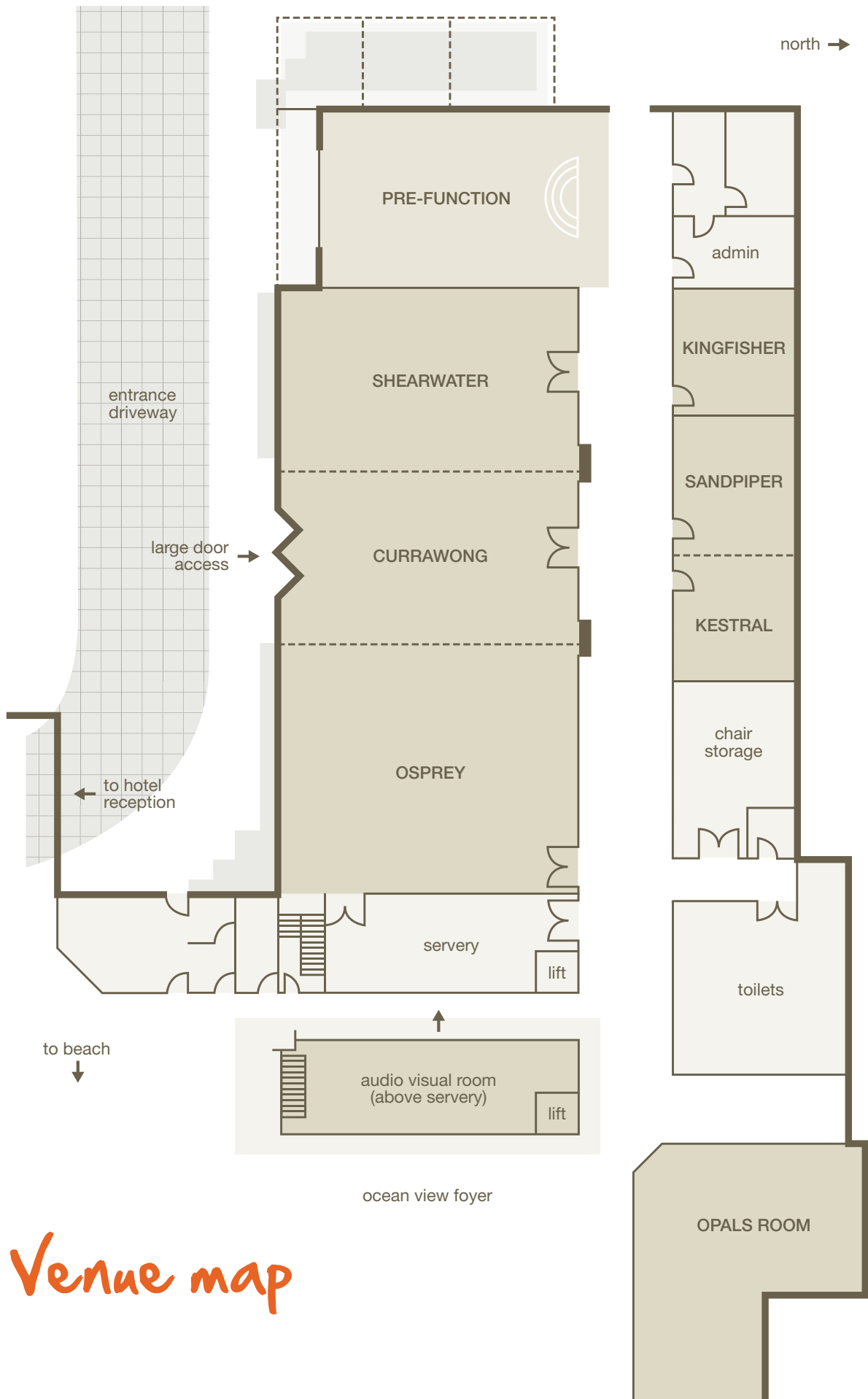
AbSec

This session will focus on the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in a general sense, with a basic overview of the scheme, how it will support Aboriginal people with disability and their families, and the employment opportunities it will provide for Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and the wider Aboriginal community. This workshop will also cover the crossover of service provision for Aboriginal people with a disability who are also in the out-of-home care or justice systems, or receiving other government services. We'll look at how this affects the participant and how they can make the most of the NDIS. In this session we will also debunk some myths around the NDIS and mental health, explain why mental health has been a late inclusion into the scheme, and deliver the most up-to-date information on NDIS eligibility for Aboriginal people with mental illness.

POLICY HACK-A-THON

AbSec

This session provides an opportunity for participants to engage collectively in shaping policy for the sector. In particular, this session will focus on the partnership between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal services in promoting greater Aboriginal community control of the design and delivery of services for Aboriginal children, families and communities, as part of the broader initiative to strengthen the principle of Aboriginal self-determination within the child and family system.



Venue map

Thank you to our exhibitors



CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

EMPOWERING CHILDREN

KNOWLEDGE CIRCLE

EMPOWERING FAMILIES

SUSTAINABLE

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

STRONG + CAPABLE



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Caring for Aboriginal children, families and communities