



MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 8 November 2017

SWAMS celebrates two decades of Aboriginal health care

The South West Aboriginal Medical Service (SWAMS) is celebrating its milestone 20th birthday with a week-long festival of events being held across the South West from 16-22 December 2017.

SWAMS, an Aboriginal Community Controlled organisation, plays a pivotal role in improving the quality of life for Aboriginal people in the South West, through the delivery of culturally focused primary health care.

“Twenty years ago, no such service existed. Aboriginal people were dying from preventable disease, diabetes was rife, and a lack of cultural awareness in tertiary medicine made it difficult for Aboriginal people to get the specialist care needed,” SWAMS CEO Lesley Nelson said.

“All that has changed now. We are a thriving organisation with highly trained staff working across six clinics to improve the quality and quantity of life for thousands of Aboriginal people under our care,” Ms Nelson said.

“This isn’t just a celebration for SWAMS. This is a celebration for an entire community and for those community members who had a vision for better Aboriginal health care back in 1997.”

“We still have a long way to go, but I think it’s safe to say that they would be proud of the organisation SWAMS has become and the difference we make to the community.”

The celebrations will take place in Bunbury, Busselton, Manjimup, Collie and Harvey and will include a series of free family picnics in each town, featuring a BBQ lunch, birthday cake and entertainment.

The highlight of the festival programme is a ticketed *20th Anniversary Gala Evening* at the Bunbury Regional Entertainment Centre, with live entertainment by The Merindas and comedian Kevin Kropinyeri.

Gala tickets can be purchased from www.trybooking.com/329821 or from the SWAMS administration building located at 3/30 Wellington Street, Bunbury (cash only).

SWAMS 20th Anniversary Festival events:

Please refer to the attached schedule.

For more information on the SWAMS 20th Anniversary Festival, contact the office on (08) 9791 1166 or email info@swams.com.au.

For media enquiries please contact SWAMS Public Relations Officer Jo Mills on (08) 9791 1166.