



Public Health Emergency Operations Centre (PHEOC)

Tuesday 10 August 2021

Pilot WA Public Health Officer Training Program (WAPHOTP) Communique

The pilot WA Public Health Officer Training Program is nearing the mid-way point of its nine month timeframe. After unexpected delays due to COVID-19 surge responses, we have “safe-guarded” the program by pro-actively rostering additional staff in PHEOC to ensure that trainees can attend learning activities.

Meet a WAPHOTP trainee, mentor and line manager.



*WAPHOTP trainee Whitney Melville and her mentor, Emeritus Professor Mike Daube
(and Mike's dog - Dr Olivia Doll, [Perth's Smartest Dog!](#))*

Whitney Melville started her journey into health in 2007 with a Certificate IV in dental nursing. Since this time Whitney has completed a Bachelor of Health Science majoring in Oral Health Therapy (Curtin University, 2013) and is currently completing both a Graduate Diploma in Health Promotion and a Master of Public Health (Curtin University, 2019). She is currently working part-time as a Dental Hygienist and as a Surveillance Officer at PHEOC.

This journey into public health was impelled by Whitney's desire to learn about the broader aspects influencing health and an opportunity to make a difference in society. Whitney also has a desire to move away from working clinically at the point of care and to get involved with "the bigger picture".

“It is a real privilege to be part of the WAPHOTP mentoring program. WA has a rich history of public health pioneers, leaders, researchers, advocates and contributors at all levels, and there are important roles for all of us to play. I have benefited enormously from the support of mentors at all stages of my career, and I hope that those of us who have been around for a while can help in providing similar levels of support to the next generations.” - Emeritus Professor Mike Daube



Maree Hose, Nurse Coordinator, PHEOC

“Having worked in WA Health regional and metropolitan public health units as a disease control nurse for many years, I am very excited to be able to support the WAPHOTP. I have met most of the enthusiastic trainees, both those that are based in PHEOC Operations and those from other health services. We have been fortunate to have some of the trainees work as PHOPs surveillance officers in the recent community outbreak - getting first-hand experience of pandemic work! The public health workforce in WA has not had, until now, an education program that provides a pathway into public health and I am very excited that this pilot program might lead to an ongoing education program and be the basis of a solid WA public health workforce into the future.” - Maree Hose

Since the last communique, the program has successfully delivered the following training sessions:

- Media and Communications Workshop
- Using Quantitative and Qualitative Research to Improve Health Service Delivery
- Data Science and the Application of Whole Genome Sequencing to Public Health
- Ethics Workshop
- Introduction to Aboriginal Health including a Rapid Cultural Orientation



Dr Anna Beswick presenting the Ethical Workshop Training Session held Wednesday, 28 July 2021

Health Leader Speaker Series

The WAPHOTP has continued a health leader speaker series which provides the trainees with the unique opportunity to hear from various leaders outlining their career journeys and roles in the healthcare system.

In July and August, trainees had the privilege of hearing the following speakers:

- Mr Joe Boyle - Chief Executive, PathWest
- Ms Wendy Casey - Director of Aboriginal Health, Western Australia

- Dr Laura Kirkland - Principle Epidemiologist, WA Health
- Hon. Jim McGinty - Former Attorney General and Minister for Health (2003 – 2008)
- Panel Discussion on ethical dilemmas facilitated by Dr Anna Beswick with Dr Paul Armstrong, Prof. Paul Effler, Dr Robyn Lawrence and Prof. Donna Mak.



Hon. Jim McGinty, Former Attorney General and Health Minister, speaking about his career journey as part of the Health Leader Series

Aboriginal Health Placements

The trainees will commence their Aboriginal health placements from 9 August to 30 August 2021. This will comprise of a visit to one of the following Aboriginal health service providers in Western Australia.

- Aboriginal Health Council of WA
- Arche Health
- Derbarl Yerrigan Aboriginal Health Service
- East Metropolitan Health Service
 - Moorditj Djena
 - Aboriginal Acute Care Coordination Program
 - Aboriginal Community Health Programs
- Mooditj Koort
- Nirrumbuk
- North Metropolitan Health Service
 - Immunisation Outreach
 - Metropolitan Communicable Disease Control Weekly Surveillance Meeting
 - Homeless Health Care Rounds and visit to Tranby with the Aboriginal Health Liaison Officer



Kind regards

Pilot WA Public Health Officer Training Program Team
Public Health Emergency Operations Centre (PHEOC)

Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Health acknowledges the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation as the Traditional Owners of the land we work on. We extend this recognition to the Aboriginal people of the many traditional lands and language groups of Western Australia. We value the wisdom of Aboriginal Elders both past and present and pay respect to Aboriginal communities of today.



Let's keep
WA safe



PHYSICAL
DISTANCE



WASH
HANDS



STAY HOME IF SICK
& GET TESTED



USE THE
SAFEWA APP



GET
VACCINATED