

## Mt Druitt OCHRE Healing Forum

Today the Baabayn Aboriginal Corporation hosted its OCHRE Healing Forum event on behalf of the Mt Druitt Aboriginal community - the first in a series of forums to be held across NSW during 2017 and 2018.

The statewide Mapu Yaan Gurri, Mapu Marrunggirr - *Healing Our Way* Forum held in 2014 was the beginning of a formal discussion on healing for Aboriginal communities in NSW. Following the *Healing Our Way* Forum Report, the NSW Government committed to continue the dialogue on healing with Aboriginal communities.

These Healing Forums are the first step in setting the vision for comprehensive healing in NSW. The OCHRE Plan, the NSW Government's Aboriginal affairs strategy, is the only state based Aboriginal plan where healing is one of the critical outcomes.

The OCHRE Healing Forums have been co-designed in partnership with Aboriginal Affairs, The Healing Foundation and Local Planning Committees in each site.

The composition and design of Local Planning Committees varies in each site, however all are being led by Aboriginal community organisations already involved in healing.

The forums will raise awareness of the impacts of intergenerational trauma on the local community and provide the opportunity for service providers to hear the community's healing needs and aspirations.

Richard Weston, CEO of The Healing Foundation said "These forums are the first step in engaging government and non-government organisations with the Aboriginal community in understanding healing and working towards creative solutions that are designed and led by the community."

"Today's event, with the amazing attendance of community members and service providers coming together, is the beginning of the healing process for the greater western Sydney area" said Margaret Farrell, Chairperson of Baabayn Aboriginal Corporation.

Karen Syed, coordinator of the Baabayn Wirringa Booris mums and bubs group, said 'Intergenerational trauma is one of the main concerns for our community. It's great that The Healing Foundation, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and service providers have come together so the community is being listened to. We know what needs to happen to heal our people and at last there's an opportunity to make sure results really happen.

Discussion outcomes from the forum were recorded and will be developed by The Healing Foundation into the Mt Druitt Healing Forum report, which will be publically available via The Healing Foundation and Aboriginal Affairs websites.

*The Healing Foundation is a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation that partners with communities to address the ongoing trauma caused by actions like the forced removal of children from their families. Our work helps people create a different future.*

**Media contact: Shivaun Inglis, 0451 148 380**