

17 March 2014

New Aboriginal Tobacco Control Project grants on offer

The Aboriginal Tobacco Control Project is offering community grants for activities to help encourage Aboriginal communities to quit smoking.

A total pool of \$9,000 is available, with applicants able to request up to \$2,000 (including GST) for community activities or resources that help support the aims of the Aboriginal Tobacco Control Project.

As we approach Close the Gap week 2014 - tobacco smoking remains the leading cause of preventable morbidity and mortality in Australia.

South Western Sydney Local Health District Health Promotion Service Acting Director Mandy Williams said the grants provided an opportunity for community organisations to find new ways to help reduce smoking rates in Aboriginal communities.

“These grants will help community groups continue to work with Aboriginal community members to improve health and reduce smoking,” Ms Williams said.

“We know people in our area want to quit. A survey of 685 community members in the south west and inner west of Sydney found that 71.5 per cent were seriously considering or had decided to quit smoking in the next six months.

“The first round of grants commenced in 2012 and was very popular. They have resulted in some great local initiatives and activities,” she said.

Wollondilly Mayor, Cr Benn Banasik said the grant the council received helped engage and support local work on tobacco issues.

“The community grants have been great. Wollondilly Council has had the ability to run a health information day and have a number of people signed up for an upcoming quit group,” said Cr Banasik.

“The grants have also made it possible for Council to engage and support other organisations to work in the area on tobacco issues,” he said.

Applications from community groups, community workers and government organisations working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within south western Sydney will be accepted. Closing date for applications is 5pm Friday 11 April 2014.

For more information about the community grants scheme or to apply call Wendy on 4640 3537. To find out more about the *Aboriginal Tobacco Control Project*, visit – www.iqitbecause.org.au

About the Aboriginal Tobacco Control Project

The *Aboriginal Tobacco Control Project* is a partnership project of the Aboriginal Medical Service Redfern, Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation, Babana Aboriginal Men's Group and the Health Promotion Service (HPS) and Aboriginal Health Units for South Western Sydney and Sydney Local Health Districts.

The project aims to reduce smoking prevalence in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population residing in the south west and inner west of Sydney by 5 per cent.

The project was launched in October 2011. It has run three phases of advertising along with local activities like quit groups for the community. The project was designed with input from local residents and Aboriginal organisations. Billboards and bus shelter advertisements have been placed at Redfern, Bankstown, Liverpool and Campbelltown over the past three years and have advertised various messages such as the harmful effects of passive smoking and more recently smoking during pregnancy.