

Date: 27 May 2012

National Sorry Day

Fairfield Hospital commemorated National Sorry Day today with a BBQ lunch, didgeridoo performance, a flag raising and stories from Aunty Val Linow and Aunty Rita Wenberg who will share their experiences as part of the Stolen Generations.

National Sorry Day is an annual day of commemoration and remembrance of all those who have been impacted by the government policies of forcible removal of children that have resulted in the Stolen Generations.

Fairfield Hospital Director of Nursing and Midwifery, Barbara Chapman said during Sorry Day it was important to recognise and honour members of the Stolen Generations within the local community.

“Members of the Stolen Generations and of the Aboriginal community in general have greater health challenges and lower life expectancy than non-Aboriginal people,” Ms Chapman said.

“Acknowledging National Sorry Day is very important for the Hospital as it reaffirms our commitment to the spiritual and emotional wellbeing of the Aboriginal Community.

“All staff are undergoing *Respecting the Difference* Aboriginal Cultural Awareness training where they learn about the history, customs and cultures of Aboriginal people.

“By learning about the Aboriginal culture and history, we’re able to better understand why some Aboriginal people don’t feel comfortable engaging with mainstream health services. It also helps us provide more culturally appropriate care,” she said.

Historically, the Aboriginal clan group around Fairfield was the Cabrogal clan of the Darug nation. The Cabrogal were named after the cohbra (or cahbra) grubs they harvested at the banks of the Georges River especially near Cabramatta Creek.

Evidence of an Aboriginal presence has been found in the rural areas west of Wallgrove Road, upper Orphan School Creek, Clear Paddock Creek and around the Prospect Reservoir.

Of the 27 suburbs that make up the Fairfield LGA, the names of three suburbs originate from the Cabrogal language:

- Carramar - shade of trees.
- Yennora - walking or to stroll.
- Cabramatta - understood to have taken its name from the Cabrogal clan who occupied the land that Cabramatta sits on.

National Sorry Day has been commemorated every year since 1998 following the release of the *Bringing Them Home* Report. The Report recommended that a National Sorry Day be held each year on 26 May to commemorate the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families.