

Media statement

9 December 2016

Proud achievement for Indigenous mental health graduates

Eleven Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people today proudly received their Certificate IV qualification in Mental Health at a graduation ceremony at Brisbane's Gallang Place Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation.

Queensland Mental Health Commissioner Dr Lesley van Schoubroeck and Gallang Place CEO Noeleen Lopes warmly congratulated the new graduates on their achievement.

The Mental Health Commissioner said the graduates had done very well and now had increased skills, knowledge and self-assurance to positively influence their families and communities.

Ms Lopes said the group would contribute to the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through the delivery of culturally appropriate counselling and healing.

The 11 graduates successfully completed the training which focuses on rehabilitation and support for people affected by mental ill health, as well as mental health promotion work, improving mental health literacy and delivering community-based activities.

The group included eight graduates from Kuranda and Cherbourg who were supported by the Queensland Mental Health Commission as part of the National Empowerment Project (NEP) which works with those two communities to build cultural, social and emotional wellbeing.

Since early 2014 the Commission has supported the NEP Queensland pilot project, delivered by Ngoonbi Community Service Indigenous Corporation in Kuranda and Cherbourg.

Dr van Schoubroeck said: "It is very important that graduates and communities are empowered to develop and deliver services that meet their own local needs, particularly in regional and remote areas.

"We also congratulate Gallang Education and Training for delivering this training which incorporates healing and cultural activities to strengthen communities, build resilience and address issues of mental ill health, alcohol and drug use."

Ms Lopes said the training was the first step towards fulfilling Gallang Place's goal of promoting mental health and wellbeing skills in every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in Queensland.

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About QMHC: The Queensland Mental Health Commission was established to improve the mental health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders by driving ongoing reform.