2008 Aboriginal Health Worker Named

A woman with more than 20 years experience in the Northern Territory health sector has been named the 2008 Aboriginal Health Worker of the Year.

Cheryl Patullo from the Palmerston clinic of the Danila Dilba Health Service beat 12 other finalists to take out the top award at a ceremony at Parliament House this evening.

The Health Minister Chris Burns said Ms Patullo was a deserving winner.

“Cheryl began her training on Groote Eylandt and continued to work there in a variety of positions including the management of three health centres.

“She has held many positions in both clinical and management areas and has contributed to the quality of health care in East Arnhem and the urban areas of Darwin and Palmerston.

“Cheryl has professionally extended her practice and holds numerous qualifications in health and management areas of practice.

“She is a true role model for Aboriginal people.”

Dr Burns said there were 76 nominations for the four categories in this year’s award – remote, urban, specialised and new practitioner.

“In the Territory, we have about 300 registered Aboriginal Health Workers. To have a quarter of those practitioners nominated for an award highlights the high regard Aboriginal Health Workers are held in the community.

“I congratulate Cheryl and all the finalists for their outstanding work in filling such an important role in the delivery of health services in the Territory.

“I’d also like to acknowledge the ongoing support of the Rotary Club of Darwin Sunrise and their sponsorship of these awards again this year.

“Service above self is the motto of Rotary, and I certainly believe our Aboriginal Health Workers live up to that ideal.”
The category winners were:

**Remote**

*Tony McMasters – Apatula Health Centre, Central Australia Remote Health*

Tony began his training as an Aboriginal Health Worker in 1992 at Central Australian Aboriginal Congress. In addition to clinical employment in Alice Springs, Groote Eylandt, Belyuen and Apatula, Tony has worked as research assistant with Menzies on a renal study.

Tony has been based in Apatula or Finke for the past 4 years and is currently the acting health centre manager.

During his career, he has maintained and expanded his clinical skills by attending and completing numerous courses and training. He has initiated the Jump Rope for Heart program in the community of Apatula.

Tony was granted a scholarship for 2009 to assist him to complete his graduate diploma in health management through the Centre for Remote Health.

**Specialised**

*Patrick Ah Kit – Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation*

Patrick has been an Aboriginal Health Worker for 26 years. He trained at Central Australian Aboriginal Congress where he worked as an Aboriginal Health Worker Manager and Educator.

For the past 7 years, Patrick has chosen public health as his area of employment. He is currently working at Anyinginyi Health Centre in the area of men’s health.

Patrick’s main motivation in his work is to give health promotion as much emphasis as direct clinical care.

**New Practitioner**

*Katherine Coultard – Ti Tree Health Centre, Central Australia Remote Health*

Katherine began her Aboriginal Health Worker training in 2006 and graduated from Central Australian Aboriginal Congress education branch at the beginning of 2007.

Before graduating, Katherine had been working with Congress medical centre on the bush mobile program. She continued in that position for a few months before moving to Central Australia Remote Health where she was been employed at Finke Health Centre for 10 months. Katherine has recently moved to Ti Tree where she is currently employed.

Being a single mother of 2 daughters, Katherine found it hard to study but had a large amount of support from work colleagues, family and friends to encourage her to complete her studies.

**Urban**

*Cheryl Patullo – Danila Dilba Health Service, Palmerston*

As well as winning this category, Cheryl was named the overall 2008 Aboriginal Health Worker of the Year.
Remote finalists
- Lisa Ngurrwuthun – Gapuwiyak Health Centre
- Anthony McMasters - Apatula Health Centre
- Jeffery Oliver - Santa Teresa - Ityentye Apurte Community Health Centre
- Anne Murrungun - Numbulwar Community Health Centre
  (Anne was also highly commended)

Specialised finalists
- Patrick Ah Kit - Anyinginyi Health Services
- Elaine Campbell - Congress Alice Springs
- Margaret Lankin - Helping Hands
- Ross Cole - Remote Health Alice Springs
  (Ross was also highly commended)

New Practitioner finalists
- Katherine Coulthard - Ti Tree Health Centre
- Alison Williams - Wurli Wurlinjang Health Service

Urban finalists
- Ronald Ogilvie - Wurli Wurlinjang Health Service
- Cheryl Patullo - Danila Dilba
- Natalie Newman - Clinical Learning
  (Natalie was also highly commended)

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