



ANNUAL REPORT 2019/2020

THE PEAK PROFESSIONAL
BODY FOR THE REMOTE AND
ISOLATED HEALTH WORKFORCE

www.crana.org.au

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CRANApplus acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of Australia, many of whom live in remote areas, and pays its respect to their Elders both past and present. CRANApplus contributes significantly to improving the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by building the strength of the remote and isolated health workforce.



FROM OUR PATRON

Photo: Sasha Hadden.



It is important for all organisations to have new officers and fresh ideas. Initially it was hoped that I would be farewelled as Patron at the 2020 CRANPlus conference, to be held in Canberra in October 2020. These plans came unstuck because of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a major theme of my remarks this year. No one could have foreseen the unexpected impact of the coronavirus. We all fervently hope that it will soon be behind us and our country.

Australians who live and work in rural, remote and regional parts of our nation, realise more than most the impact of distance and its challenges, including for health professionals. CRANPlus has participated in Australia's national response to this frightening time. Like our Federal Ministers, I acknowledge the heroes of CRANPlus.

CRANPlus Bush Support Services has been specially precious during the pandemic. The 24/7 psychological support line has witnessed a 50 percent increase in calls in recent months. I pay tribute to the rural and remote health professionals. They have reached out to provide timely, personalised support to our members and their needs.

The cancellation of usual face-to-face clinical courses, vital for mandatory training (especially for emergency care) has imposed new stresses on CRANPlus. Reduced and adjusted schedules have adapted to the pandemic.

All of us have had to make rapid adjustments to accommodate webinars and new technology. With this technology have come new opportunities to bring skilled experts virtually to our fingertips. But the new technology can be stressful and tiring but also liberating.

When, hopefully, we have put COVID-19 behind us and look back on these times, we will be proud of how CRANPlus rose to the challenges.

The pandemic has not been the only crisis CRANPlus confronted in the last year. The impact of drought and bushfires last summer called on the resilience of CRANPlus and its health professionals. These have not been easy times. However, they encourage health professionals to draw on their social and emotional experience and sensitivity in the outcomes of the survey conducted prior to the pandemic. I praise and honour the work of the organisation in hard times.

When, hopefully, we have put COVID-19 behind us and look back on these times, we will be proud of how CRANPlus rose to the challenges. Nature can throw drought, bushfires and pandemics at us. But we come bouncing back. Inspired by the privilege to serve and to help others in need. This is the abiding spirit of CRANPlus. Never has it been more evident and necessary than in 2020.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Kirby".

The Hon. Michael Kirby AC CMG
Retired Justice of the High Court of Australia
Patron of CRANPlus

CEO'S REPORT



This financial year has been marked by many challenges that have been experienced across the health sector, both on a professional and personal level. CRANApplus has risen to those challenges and I am pleased to report the organisation has continued in its unwavering support of the remote and isolated health workforce through drought, bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the past months, CRANApplus has proved itself once again to be the voice of remote health and has had significant achievements in providing the remote and isolated health workforce with high level support, advocacy and educational opportunities.

In February, the Board of Directors and Executive team collaborated on the development of the CRANApplus Strategic Plan for 2020–2025. The strategic plan sets out key priorities over the coming five years to grow the organisation from strength to strength. The priorities are interlinked, with no priority being held in precedence over another. This clearly highlights the complex nature of remote health.

CRANApplus received a Commonwealth grant in the early part of this year to deliver mental health training to health professionals in drought and bushfire affected areas. CRANApplus has developed a series of online resources for health professionals including webinars and podcasts and is also working with health services and stakeholders in bushfire and drought affected communities to deliver local workshops with health professionals. This service is providing timely support to the workforce who have been doing it tough for so long.

CRANApplus received a Commonwealth grant in the early part of this year to deliver mental health training to health professionals in drought and bushfire affected areas.

The work of the CRANApplus team has been outstanding and I acknowledge and thank them for their hard work and dedication. The team quickly adapted to new ways of working due to the impact of COVID-19 and have embraced technology and innovation to ensure that we have kept the 'show on the road', even if it has been from kitchen tables or home offices. I also thank the Executive team for their collaborative approach and collegial support that has ensured that the organisation was able to quickly adapt to the shifting landscape and changing needs of the workforce.

CRANApplus couldn't deliver our services without the help of all the volunteers who donate a significant amount of their time each year. It is truly rewarding for the CRANApplus team to work with these people, individuals who are often working in rural and remote locations themselves and have a passion to teach and support the workforce.

Finally, I would like to thank Fiona Wake for her support as Board Chair in my first year as CEO. Our Board of Directors led by Fiona has provided sound governance and leadership during these difficult times and has ensured that the organisation is well placed to go from strength to strength over the coming years.

Katherine Isbister
Chief Executive Officer
CRANApplus

CHAIR'S REPORT



This time last year the world was certainly a different place, not just with the horrendous bushfires and drought impacting on so many lives but now the COVID-19 pandemic that has swept the world off its feet leaving no one untouched. For CRANplus, with its strong leadership, important decisions and changes were effectively made to enable adaptation of staff and their programs to the 'new normal' environment.

What has not changed is the CRANplus team's passion, resilience and commitment to supporting the remote and isolated health workforce. These characteristics have never been more evident within the organisation over the past year as staff have gone above and beyond, from setting up home offices to the increased use of technology.

CRANplus continues to deliver unique and high-quality courses that support and develop remote and isolated health professionals. With the recent limitations on face-to-face training, the Education team have done a terrific job providing educational options, including the expansion of the online training platform.

This year CRANplus has increased its voice at the highest levels to advocate and provide expert advice in rural and isolated workforce matters. This has been especially important in relation to the impact of the bushfire crisis, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic, on health workforce and communities.

Our psychological services through CRANplus Bush Support Services have been extra busy this past year. Calls to CRANplus Bush Support Services have increased significantly and I thank the psychologists and the support staff who work so diligently 24/7 to provide counselling for our remote and isolated workforce and their families.

CRANplus continues to deliver unique and high-quality courses that support and develop remote and isolated health professionals.

On behalf of the Board I would like to acknowledge and thank all of the CRANplus staff for their dedication, adaptability and solution driven approach this year. Thank you to our members, supporters and hard working volunteers: you are an integral part of CRANplus' existence.

The organisation remains in a solid financial position and I would like to thank Steven Dangaard, Chief Finance Officer, for providing sound financial management and advice through this turbulent economy to ensure CRANplus remains financially viable into the future.

To the whole Executive team and my fellow Board Directors, thank you for your dedication, innovation and drive to continue to achieve and strengthen the CRANplus strategy and vision to be the leading experts in supporting our unique workforce.

And finally to Katherine Isbister, Chief Executive Officer, whose leadership has been strong, responsive and steadfast through her first year in office. It has been a pleasure to work with such a skilled and committed leader.

CRANplus could not be in safer hands.

Fiona Wake
Chair
CRANplus



BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Fiona Wake
Chair



John Wright
Deputy Chair



Dr Nicholas Williams
Secretary



John Ryan
Board Appointed Member
Treasurer



Lynette Byers
Board Member



Claire Boardman
Board Member



Caitlin Steiner
Board Member



Belinda Gibb
Board Appointed Member



Vanessa De Landelles
Identified Aboriginal
and/or Torres Strait
Islander Board Member



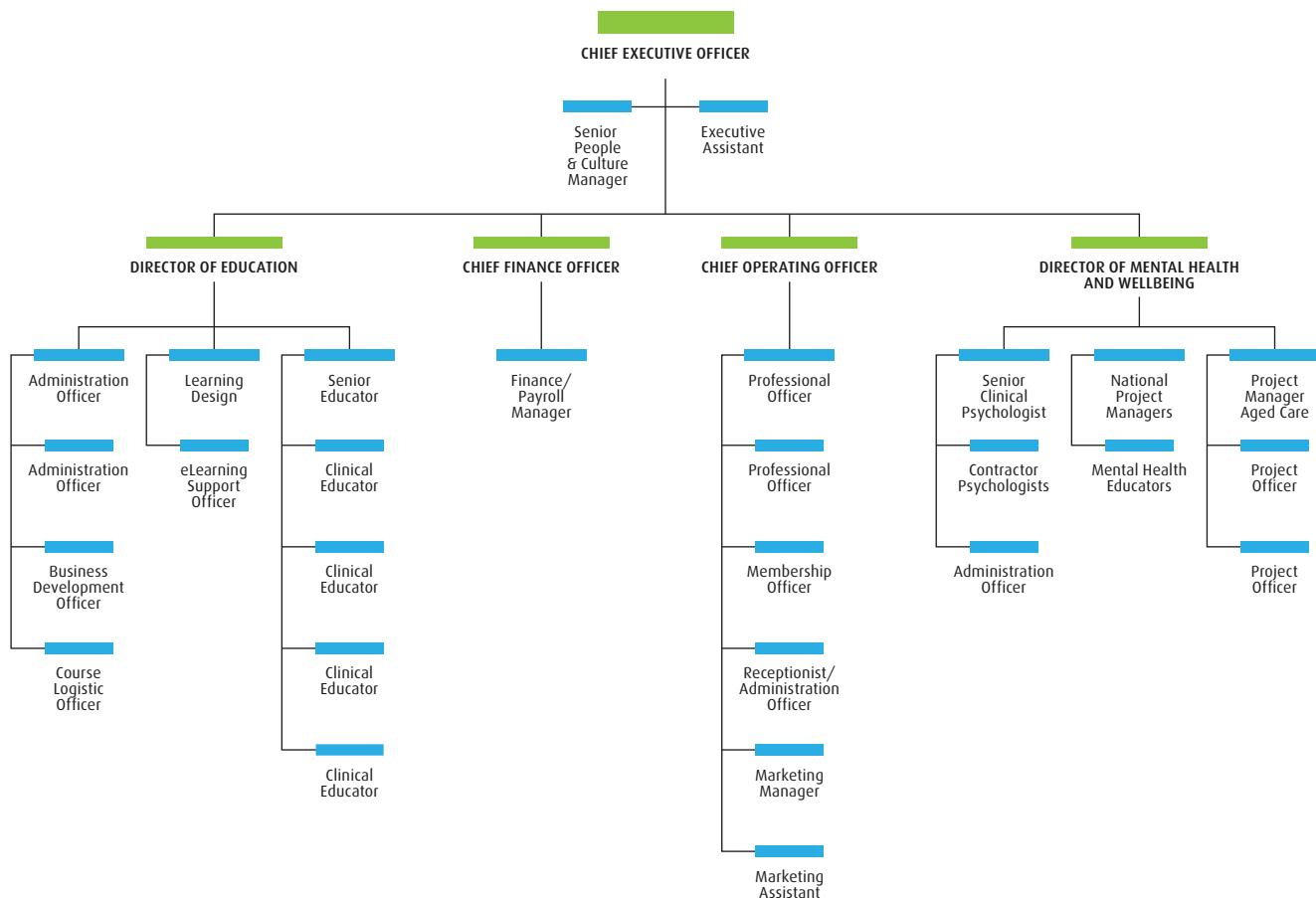
Katherine Isbister
Chief Executive Officer



Steven Dangaard
Chief Finance Officer

ABOUT US

Current Organisational Structure



CRANApplus STRATEGIC PLAN 2020 - 2025



Our Vision

To be the leading experts supporting the remote and isolated health workforce

Increase our competitiveness and strengthen our resources

Lift our voice to advocate for remote and isolated health

Through a strengths-based approach contribute to improving the health and well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who live in rural and remote Australia

Grow, develop and up-skill the workforce

Respond to health impacts from social determinants and a changing climate

Our Mission

To represent, support and educate the remote and isolated health workforce to promote the development and delivery of safe, high-quality healthcare.

Our Values

- Integrity
- Social Justice
- Excellence
- Respect
- Inclusiveness
- Accountability
- Safety



ABOUT US

Representation on External Committees

Chief Executive Officer

- Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care – Advisory Committee for the Primary Health Care Standards
- Coalition of National Nursing and Midwifery Organisations (and NMSRG COVID-19 Response Group)
- Commonwealth Department of Health – Primary Reform Consultation Group
- Commonwealth Department of Health – Rural and Remote COVID-19 Stakeholder Group
- Commonwealth Department of Health – Primary Health Care COVID-19 Response Group
- Commonwealth Department of Health – Ministerial Rural Health Roundtable
- National Rural Health Alliance – Council
- National Rural Women’s Coalition
- Northern Territory PHN – Nursing & Midwifery Collaborative Working Group
- Queensland Nursing and Midwifery Office – Peak Nursing and Midwifery Bodies Group
- Queensland Health – RIPEN Transition Advisory Group
- Rural Locum Assistance Program – Steering Committee

Chief Operating Officer

- Australian Health Protection Committee – Syphilis Enhancement Response Working Group
- Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council – Midwifery Advisory Committee
- Climate and Health Alliance Coalition
- Close the Gap Campaign – Steering Committee
- Northern Territory PHN – Health Workforce Stakeholder Group
- Northern Territory PHN – Administrator’s Medals in Primary Health Care Panel
- Stillbirth Centre of Research – Clinical Practice Guidelines Working Group

Chief Finance Officer

- Centre for Remote Health – Remote Primary Health Care Manuals Governance Committee

Director Education Services

- ASHM Stigma and Discrimination Project
- Health Workforce Queensland – Health Workforce Stakeholder Group
- Rural Doctor’s Association – Codeine Project Steering Committee

Senior Remote Clinical Educator

- Australian College of Midwives National Council, Rural and remote Advisory Committee and Birthing on Country National Steering Committee

Remote Clinical Educator

- Rheumatic Heart Disease – Midwifery Education Advisory Group
- Stillbirth Centre of Research Education Working Group

Professional Officer – Workforce Development

- ACCRM Rural and Remote Digital Innovation Group
- Central Australia Academic Health Science Centre – Remote Research Collaboration

CRANApplus Fellow

- Independent Hospital Pricing Authority – Small Rural Hospitals Working Group
- National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce

CRANApplus Member/s

- Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care – Primary Care Committee
- Department of Veterans’ Affairs – Coordinated Veteran Care Program
- National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce

MEMBERSHIP

Members are part of the large CRANplus family that enjoy the expertise of the only health organisation that has remote health as its sole focus. Our aim is to ensure that those who choose to work in this often demanding sector, are as prepared as they can be for the challenges they will face.

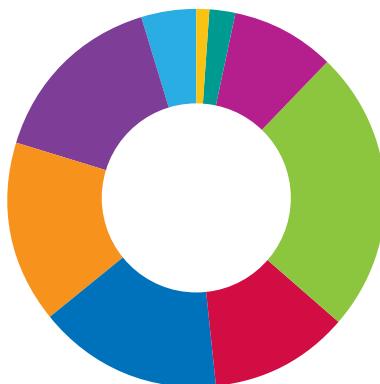
CRANplus welcomes as members, all remote health professionals, students and all those who have an interest in the remote health sector. For individuals there is access to professional support, advice, representation and relevant publications. For organisations there is access to a niche group of remote health professionals and stakeholders and new opportunities for recruitment and communication via corporate membership. CRANplus partners recognises a relationship of mutual benefit with organisations that support the behaviours, values and activities of the other.

We provide expert advice on key issues involving remote health and facilitate networks of interest in key areas, fostering communication between all parties. We provide a platform for connection and sharing our expertise. We communicate and connect with our members and supporters through our widely read weekly e-newsletter and quarterly magazine, as well as social media. The CRANplus website provides access to a wealth of information, and a gateway to our many services and resources.

Through membership and other opportunities, CRANplus is working to connect and strengthen the remote and isolated health workforce. Our annual national conference brings together speakers and delegates from all over Australia. Awards and Fellowships are awarded at the conference and recognise excellence in remote health practice. Our scholarships and sponsorships programs encourage health students to experience remote practice.

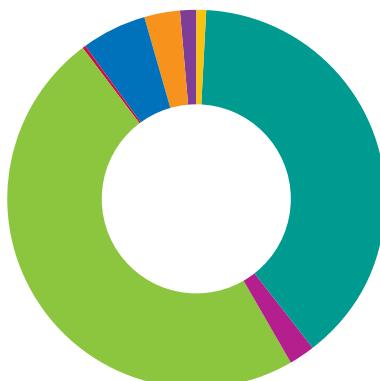
The CRANplus Aurora Award is the highest possible accolade within the remote and isolated health profession. Nominated by their peers, the recipient of this award is a leader in their field, who shows a commitment to quality, safety, and professionalism. Please refer to the Engage section on page 25 for details regarding this year's winners and recipients.

Membership by Location



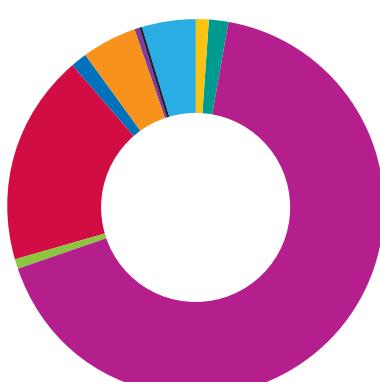
ACT	1%
NZ & International	2%
SA	8%
QLD	24%
NT	11%
NSW	17%
VIC	17%
WA	16%
TAS	4%

Membership by Type



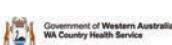
Concessional retiree and Fellow retiree	1%
Concessional Corporate Employee Membership	37%
Fellow (BOM appointed) Membership	2.5%
Full Membership	47%
Lifetime Member	.5%
Associate Member	0%
Undergraduate Student Membership	6%
Corporate Members	4%
CRANplus Mates	2%

Membership by Profession



ENs	1%
Doctor (GP)	2%
RNs	68%
RMs	.5%
RN/RMs	18%
Nurse Practitioner	1.5%
Students	4.5%
Allied Health	.4%
ATSHP and ATSHW	.1%
Corporate	4%

Corporate Members and Partners



INNOVATE RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN (RAP)

CRANplus' reconciliation vision for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is for self-determination, equality and equity. This vision is achievable through education and understanding, whereby building of trust, having respectful relationships, creating meaningful and sustainable opportunities. Evidenced through the acceptance of national histories, culture and rights inclusive of our first nation people, a shared national identity, and national unity.

We continue to progress our second 'Innovate' RAP, launched in 2018, for completion in 2020. The past year has seen CRANplus further enhance cultural understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' culture, histories and achievements. Various events and activities were undertaken by staff which strengthened our understanding and engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. In addition, CRANplus has provided opportunities to support the building of a sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander remote health workforce, through the provision of scholarships, sponsorships, consultations and collaborations in programs and workshops.

Due to the disruption from COVID-19 health crisis in 2020 there were a number of social events that were either postponed or cancelled. However, throughout the year the CRANplus' RAP working group successfully sourced for staff a number of events, activities, and online videos, workshops and forums included:

- NAIDOC (National Aborigines & Islanders Day Observance Committee) week: *Voice. Treaty. Truth. Let's work together for a shared future:*
 - Raise awareness of NAIDOC Week activities via our social media platforms.
 - Attendance at William Barton's performance with Australian String Quartet, Adelaide Festival Theatre.
 - Distribution of ACOSS Statement on constitutional recognition of Australia's First people.
 - Employees encouraged to view *Deadly Futures* Insights, SBS showed First Nations trailblazers from across music, sport, media, science and business, discuss breaking ground, success and advice to the next generation.
 - Staff visited *Signal Point Gallery* in Goolwa in SA.
- Attendance at *Through the Stars* art exhibition by Gavin Wanganeen, (AFL star), SA Lion Art Festival.
- Artwork purchased for the CRANplus Adelaide office by Indigenous artists Rama Kaltu-Kaltu Sampson, Theo (Faye) Nangala Hudson, Amanda Nakamarra Curtis and Jeffrey Jangala Gallagher with artists profile posted alongside artwork.
- CRANplus staff viewed:
 - The John Chalmers Oration: Professor Alex Brown: Theme Leader, Aboriginal Health Equity, SAHMRI presentation (emailed video link).
 - Employees encouraged to view *The Australian Dream* documentary, Adam Goodes (AFL player) story about race, belonging and identity.
 - *Narragunnawali and National Reconciliation Week 2020 Webinar*.
- Staff attendance at *Bangarra Dance Theatre* – 30th Anniversary Season at Adelaide Festival Centre.
- The CRANplus 37th Annual Conference provided engaging speakers which included:
 - *Welcome to Country* by Uncle Warren Taggart, Elder of the Wonnarua People.
 - Banok Rind, Deputy Executive Officer, Koorie Youth Council; *The Future is Ours*.
 - Rosamond Gilden, Research Assistant, Indigenous Eye Health, University of Melbourne, Indigenous Eye Health, *Diversity and connection will close the gap for vision*.
 - Heidi Atkins, Principal Policy Officer, QLD Child and Youth Clinical Network, *Connecting and empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander maternal child and youth health workforce to drive cultural change and improve health outcomes*.
- CRANplus engaged Melanie Robinson, CEO of CATSINaM to provide a Cultural Safety Training Workshop to employees.
- CEO message CRANpulse acknowledged *Reconciliation Week*.
- Staff attendance at the *2020 Adelaide Reconciliation Action Plan Learning Circle* one-day forum in Adelaide.
- Staff participated in Reconciliation SA's, *Stepping it up – For Reconciliation*.
- Annual contribution to *Close the Gap* campaign – for publication and launch of the 2020 *Close the Gap* campaign report.
- Staff supported *Black Lives Matter* protest march through Adelaide city.
- CEO's message in CRANpulse reported *Indigenous Coalition of Peaks Report*, 2019 community engagements with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for the inclusion into the new National Agreement on *Closing the Gap*.
- CRANplus Parliamentary submission *Food pricing and food security in remote Indigenous communities*.

Our RAP provides the framework for CRANplus members, staff and stakeholders to work together in their daily lives and work practises to improve health, economic and social opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities. Closing the life expectancy gap for our first nation people and build a celebratory platform for a stronger united Australia.

MEDIA AND PUBLICATIONS

CRANApplus utilises many forms of media and publications to stay in touch and help build that feeling of connectedness.

- Our weekly newsletter is emailed to over 8,000 contacts worldwide each week.
- Our quarterly magazine shares stories, information, and photos.
- Follow us on Facebook and Twitter for up-to-date news and information.
- As always, you can get the year in review through our Annual Reports.

Keeping our members up-to-date and connected throughout the year with our various publications.



EDUCATION SERVICES



Sue Crocker
Director
Education Services

The Education team at CRANAPLUS is dedicated to the development and delivery of high-quality education programs contextualised to the needs of the remote health workforce. Education material is continually reviewed and updated to ensure content is contemporary and engaging with the learner central to the design and delivery. This year CRANAPLUS continued to deliver quality face-to-face courses, commenced review of all eLearning modules on eRemote and commenced the delivery of webinars in both emergency and maternity streams.

Our team farewelled three long standing Remote Clinical Educators, Wendy Bowyer, Anne-Marie McNamara and Sue Orsmond. Our Senior Clinical Educator, Glenda Gleeson has also been on extended leave. These staff have contributed significantly to the development and delivery of CRANAPLUS education products and to the organisation as a whole during their many years of service. With goodbyes come new faces and this year we welcomed to the team Kylie Fischer into a permanent Remote Clinical Educator role and both Rita Ball and Julie Lantas as temporary Remote Clinical Educators. All bringing with them extensive clinical and education experience.

CRANAPLUS scheduled 85 courses for the year across emergency, triage, clinical skills, midwifery, paediatrics and mental health streams. The REC pre course material review was completed December 2019 and released to the first cohort of 2020. The workshop review quickly followed with the new program trialled for the first time July 2020. The review of the REC course saw the development of the CRANA framework. The framework ensures content is sequenced and reflective of the thought process and the tasks that are required on the job by remote area health clinicians. We featured this framework in the June edition of the CRANAPLUS Magazine.

Like the rest of Australia and the world the COVID-19 pandemic impacted significantly on our ability to deliver face-to-face courses. Of the 85 courses scheduled 45 courses were delivered and 40 cancelled. The unforeseen cancellation of our courses affected 900 health professionals nationally.

EDUCATION SERVICES

Course Type	Number Delivered	Number Cancelled
Basic Life Support	2	0
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander REC	0	4
Provide First Aid	0	1
MEC	10	10
AREC	4	1
MIDUS	2	3
REC	13	10
ALS	5	2
PEC	2	3
TEC	2	4
FLTC	4	2
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communication, Consultation & Competency in Clinical Skills	1	0

Webinar delivery was high on the CRANplus education plan for 2019/2020 year, with work commencing in 2019. This was very fortuitous and with the IT infrastructure well underway we were well positioned to commence the delivery of webinars in response to the need to cancel face to face courses. The team moved quickly and undertook a steep learning curve to successfully develop the material and successfully deliver the webinars. We worked closely with stakeholders to identify priority topics, resulting in the development and delivery of the following webinars.

Webinar	Total delivered	Total attended
Assessment and Management of Trauma	10	142
Preterm Labour	1	10
Post Partum Haemorrhage	6	64
Assisting with Childbirth	12	134
Newborn Life Support Algorithm	6	85

Feedback from webinar participants has been very positive:

"I love the confidence that I get by having these important emergencies presented in such a logical and straightforward manner."

"A really good webinar. Not a complex topic perhaps, but an important one, as it can be hard to be systematic and logical in an emergency. this really broke it down logically, beyond simple CPR steps, and you could really imagine the newborn in front of you as she discussed it. Well done."

"Thoughtful presentation giving good examples to enhance learning."

"I participated in this webinar in preparation for working in rural and remote locations. It reinforced that I still have the understanding required for future employment."

eRemote, our online learning platform, celebrates its 10th anniversary this year. The Hon. Warren Snowdon launched eRemote on 29 June 2010 in Alice Springs. All of the online modules are undergoing an extensive clinical review and will be presented using a dynamic eLearning authoring tool that will provide users an improved learning experience accessible on most devices.

We have developed a new suite of assessment modules to be released September 2020 that include the following:

- Cardiovascular Assessment
- Abdominal Assessment
- Musculoskeletal Assessment
- Neurological Assessment
- Neurovascular Assessment
- Respiratory Assessment
- Skin Assessment
- Mental Health Assessment
- Renal Assessment
- Eye Assessment
- Ear Assessment

EDUCATION SERVICES

eRemote Course Enrolments

eRemote Modules	Numbers
Building a Respectful Workplace	115
Fire Awareness	114
Intro to Infection Control	113
Managing Difficult Behaviours	116
Manual Handling inc Ergonomics	116
Medication Calculation	123
Medicolegal Documentation	113
Natural Disasters	116
Professional Development	116
Clinical Upskilling – 12 Lead ECG	158
Clinical Upskilling – Airway Management	86
Clinical Upskilling – Arrhythmia Interpretation	99
Clinical Upskilling – Blood Results Interpretation	93
Clinical Upskilling – Chest Pain Assessment	96
Clinical Upskilling – Defibrillation	83
Clinical Upskilling – Intravenous Cannulation	84
Clinical Upskilling – IV Narcotic Pain Relief	83
Clinical Upskilling – Non Invasive Positive Pressure Ventilation	92
Clinical Upskilling – Plastering	120
Clinical Upskilling – Suturing	127
Clinical Upskilling – Clinical Deterioration	86
Primary and Secondary Survey Assessment Including Triage	94
Neurological Assessment	93
Spinal Assessment	93
Respiratory Assessment	90
Cardiovascular Assessment	89
Abdominal Assessment	89
Paediatric Assessment Including Pain Management	90
Ear Assessment and Management	46
Eye Assessment and Management	37
Working Safe in Remote Practice	1301
Advanced Life Support	344
Basic Life Support	657
Diversity in Aged Care	255
Working Safely in Community Night Patrol	119
Introduction to Culturally Safe and Inclusive Practice	225
Basic Counselling Skills Part 1	317
Basic Counselling Skills Part 2	66
TOTAL	6,254



Feedback from participants reinforce we are on the right path:

"I am very impressed with the CRANAPLUS online learning system of courses and webinars – this is the best online, remote health/clinical education structure that I have seen and used! (And I have used many over the years, but this is the best by far!). The registration, log-in and sign-on procedures are easy to use; the courses are well written, pertinent and easy to navigate through and, finally, I really feel well supported in my profession. Thank you for looking after us all who require these learning sessions. Thank you also for making so many of them free of charge as that is also very helpful."

2019/2020 was certainly like no other year. In times of adversity and upheaval the Education team responded professionally and with purpose to the changing landscape bought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Reflecting back on the year I am proud of the team and what they have achieved in times of uncertainty and in the face of challenges never experienced before. Their ability to adapt and respond to the needs of the remote workforce and the way CRANAPLUS can support the workforce has been nothing short of impressive and they need to be congratulated for their energy and commitment to CRANAPLUS and its vision.



SUPPORT SERVICES



CRANApplus Bush Support Services' support line had its busiest ever year with close to 1,500 calls received from health workers and their families living and working in rural and remote areas across Australia.

The number of calls to the line has been steadily increasing over the last few years, however, the emergence and impact of COVID-19 resulted in an 80 percent increase in calls during the peak of the first wave, with 57 percent of all calls relating to the pandemic during that time. Issues raised by callers included concerns about personal safety, concerns about safety of vulnerable communities, lack of PPE, an overload of information, feelings of personal and professional hopelessness and helplessness, and questioning whether remote health was now too risky an occupation. Workplace bullying and harassment were also exacerbated by poor coping in the workplace during COVID-19.

Other common reasons for contacting the service included high levels of day-to-day workplace and personal stress, professional issues, conflict in the workplace and relationship issues. Many callers reported a combination of reasons for calling, reflecting the difficulties faced by the isolated workforce.

Following the completion of the 'Supporting the Carers' project in June 2019, which visited 67 towns in drought affected NSW to provide face to face mental health interventions and workshops, Bush Support Services continued to receive requests for further workshops. Six further workshops were delivered in locations across NSW. The workshops covered the areas of secondary traumatisation, self care and helpful conversations for referral to mental health services. In addition, Bush Support Services delivered 'Resilience Building and Reflective Practice' workshops in both Katherine and Alice Springs.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, workshops were specifically designed to help build resilience and overall wellbeing during a health emergency. They explored the importance of reflective practice as a core resilience building strategy as well as introducing the idea of 'active hope'. The workshops were delivered online via zoom.

SUPPORT SERVICES



CRANplus Bush Support Services celebrated its 200th 'Mindfulness Monday' email message this year. Written by our Senior Clinical Psychologist, Dr Annmaree Wilson, these messages help to build emotional and psychological resilience and enhance overall satisfaction with home and work life. Mindfulness Monday is a free subscription available on the CRANplus website. Those who register are sent the weekly email each Monday morning.

Comments from current subscribers include:

"I love the Mindfulness Monday sessions. They're really good reaffirmation and encouragement. Thank you."

"Very inspiring and beautifully articulated."

"Thank you. Times are pretty trying at the moment, but your thoughts are always comforting."

"I just wanted to say that I absolutely love reading these weekly emails. The content is always very timely and well delivered."

"Thank you for all the reflections you have sent through over these many months. They are very encouraging, inspiring and helping to keep the focus on the importance of mindfulness and mental and physical health."

CRANplus Bush Support Services also released two new eRemote courses this year. 'Basic Counselling Skills – Part 1', released in August 2019, was designed to support health professionals who are not in a counselling role but are engaged in one-to-one relationships with their colleagues, clients and patients. It is for health professionals who want to add depth and breadth to their core clinical work by developing interpersonal skills that are both caring and helpful.

Following on from the success and popularity of the first course, 'Basic Counselling Skills – Part 2' was launched in April 2020. This course further develops the core skills of congruence, empathy and positive regard as they apply to conversations centring on more difficult themes. This course promotes the importance of self-reflection and it encourages participants to practice the identified skills in everyday life.

Basic Counselling Skills – Parts 1 & 2 are currently available for free on the CRANplus website.

The most significant change for CRANplus Bush Support Services this year has been the resignation of the Director of Support Services, Colleen Niedermeyer. After leading the service for over 12 years, Colleen has stepped down to pursue other opportunities. CRANplus, the Board of Directors, the Executive team and all staff acknowledge Colleen's long-standing contribution and her deep commitment to CRANplus Bush Support Services.

We thank her for her service and wish her all the best for the future.

ENGAGE



CRANplus is committed to providing information to members and the broader remote health sector on issues that impact our workforce. This includes informing individuals, governments, NGOs, agencies and all other relevant stakeholders.

Through this work we advance a better understanding of the unique context of remote and isolated health care and the impacts on consumers and the workforce. Our efforts in the latter part of the financial year were heavily influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic, however, there were other policy and advocacy achievements of note throughout the year.

Amelia Druhan
Chief Operating Officer

Key Issues Brief

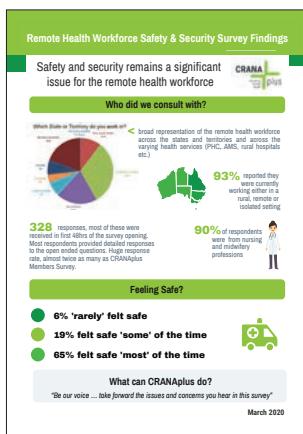
The advocacy priorities for remote and isolated health in Australia are outlined in the CRANplus Key Issues brief, which was updated and revised in 2020. The brief outlines the changes required to improve the health of people living in remote Australia, and the changes required to better support and grow the health workforce that serves them. It also describes the necessary regulatory changes to achieve these outcomes.

This document frames and guides all advocacy and representation on behalf of the remote health sector. It is available on the CRANplus website.

Safety and Security

Building on the 2017 *Remote Area Workforce Safety and Security Project*, CRANplus again reached out to the workforce early 2020 to explore perceptions and experiences. This was achieved via a widely disseminated survey that achieved a high response rate. The survey confirmed that safety and security remain significant issues for the remote health workforce.

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Common themes included having to work alone and a need to improve safety standards in staff accommodation, clinic facilities and communication equipment. The need to further challenge the culture that feeling unsafe is just "part of the job" was also identified.

The survey also found that where improvements

such as implementing a second on-call worker; upgraded infrastructure (improved staff accommodation, clinic facility, communication equipment, stronger community engagement) the workforce experienced increased feelings of safety.

The message was clear and strong about the need for CRANplus to continue to advocate the safety and security issues on behalf of this workforce. To guide these efforts, the Executive and Board of Directors approved an official position statement on remote health workforce safety and security.

The statement clearly outlines what CRANplus resolves to do, and a series of recommendations for key stakeholders.

Position Statements

Three new position statements were published and are available on the CRANplus website:

- The Impacts of a Changing Climate on Remote Health.
- Remote Health Workforce Safety and Security.
- Blood Donation in Australia (an issues brief prepared in partnership with the Australian College of Nursing).

Stakeholder Engagement and Representations

CRANplus was represented at 45 individual events, including workshops, symposia, consultations and working groups. We maintain representation on 42 ongoing committees related to rural and remote health.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic CRANplus significantly increased advocacy efforts on behalf of rural and remote health professionals.

Representations of note during this period include:

- The Federal Minister for Regional Health's Rural and Remote Health COVID-19 Stakeholder Group.
- The Commonwealth Department of Health Primary Health Care COVID-19 Response Group.
- The Commonwealth Department of Health Nursing and Midwifery Strategic Reference Group COVID-19 Roundtable.

CRANplus was also represented by a Fellow, a Director from the Board, and a general member on the National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce. The Taskforce was responsible for creating 'living guidelines', which are high priority, evidence based clinical COVID-19 guidelines updated weekly.

CRANplus' ongoing contribution throughout the pandemic as the peak professional body representing remote and isolated health was acknowledged by the Minister for Health, The Hon. Greg Hunt and The Minister for Regional Health, the Hon. Mark Coulton in their respective addresses on International Nurses Day in May.

Strengthening the Voice From the Frontline

To assist with the many consultation and submissions CRANplus makes, this year we implemented several measures to open direct lines of communication with the remote health workforce. We value this input and know that our advocacy is strengthened by regular, insightful feedback from those on the frontline.

One such initiative was the introduction of YourStory@CRANplus. Via YourStory members and other stakeholders can email us their experiences, feedback, issues and concerns. Launched during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, YourStory proved vital for ensuring the many representations made on behalf of the sector were authentic and informed by the issues that mattered most to the remote health workforce.

Another approach has been bringing together focus groups of members to inform submissions to consultations, inquiries and commissions. These groups strengthen our submissions by providing contemporary case studies and examples from the ground.

Our efforts to strengthen the voice of those we represent have been well-received by members and stakeholders. These initiatives, and more, will continue into the future.

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CRANplus, Professional Services is committed to the delivery of high-quality, practical and relevant programs and services. We aim to build the capacity and capabilities of the remote health workforce for the ongoing provision of competent, safe and quality healthcare to remote and isolated communities.

2019/2020 Highlights

RAN Certification

The RAN Certification program is in its third year of paving a way for the professional recognition of Remote Area Nurses. A steady stream of nurses are undertaking self-directed and peer assessment against the nine Professional Standards of Remote Practice. Various promotional materials have been used to enhance the visibility of this program, such as social media.

In October 2019, a review of the RAN Certification Program surveyed 'in progress' applicants. The review resulted in six recommendations to safeguard the future sustainability of the program, with a staged approach undertaken to address each of the recommendations.

Guest Speaker Webinar Series

Professional Services successfully implemented an innovative Guest Speaker Webinar Series, which is ongoing. The presenter program included CRANplus Fellows, delivering a range of evidence-based topics related to their speciality of practice and/or research. The webinar series remains popular and features various aspects of COVID-19 clinical management practices, as well as other clinical topics.

Fellows of CRANplus

Fellows are recognised for their outstanding professional leadership and contribution to remote and isolated health, CRANplus and the broader community. Fellows are invited to provide their expert advice to the work undertaken by CRANplus. During the year, CRANplus welcomed new Fellows, Dr Kylie McCullough, Edith Cowan University and Susan Markwell, Royal Flying Doctor Service, Cairns.

Remote Management Program

CRANplus continued to provide a tailored course for remote and isolated clinical managers. The 12-week program provides remote managers an opportunity for consolidation of their learnings through the implementation of a quality improvement project related to their workplace.

Networks of Interest Groups

CRANplus' Facebook page hosts a number of Network of Interest (NOI) groups that support the diverse professional and clinical interests for the remote workforce. NOIs serve as an avenue for networking, sharing information and topical issues, challenges and opportunities. Over the past year there has been significant growth in the Rural Nursing NOI group, with membership reaching over 770.

LINKS Mentoring Program

As an attraction and retention strategy for our current and future remote workforce, the mentoring program is actively promoted through student forums, conferences and workshops. Capturing interest from undergraduate students, newly graduated or those new to rural and remote sectors.

Scholarships

CRANplus continues to provide a range of scholarship and grant schemes for members and non-members, to access funds to support continuous professional development activities and clinical placements.

Gayle Woodford Scholarship

This annual Scholarship is jointly sponsored by CRANplus and the Centre for Remote Health and covers all course fees for the Graduate Certificate in Remote Health Practice. The Scholarship attracted a high calibre of applicants, with the successful recipient being Ms Monika Geisselbrecht, employed at Mount Barker Hospital, South Australia.

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Undergraduate Scholarships

This popular scholarship provides students with financial assistance to undertake a remote or rural clinical placement.

This year 12 scholarship were given to recipients from various health disciplines including nursing, social work, occupational therapy, dentistry, and medical science radiation therapy.

CRANApplus continuously seeks external sponsorships for these valuable scholarships.

Nurses Memorial Foundation of South Australia Grant

This grant provides subsidies for members of CRANApplus to undertake our professional and clinical courses.

This year 12 scholarships were awarded.

CWAA Nursing and Midwifery Professional Development Grant

These grants are administered via a collaborative partnership between CRANApplus, National Rural Health Alliance and Country Women's Association of Australia.

Grant monies provide professional development funds for rural and remote Registered Nurses, Enrolled Nurses and Midwives.

This year the grant remained outstandingly popular, with six successful applicants receiving grants.

2019 CRANApplus Awards

Aurora Award

The prestigious Aurora Award recognises individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to remote health. This year's recipient was Susan Markwell, Flight Nurse, employed by the Royal Flying Doctors Service, Queensland Section.

Excellence in Remote Health Practice Award

Awarded to Johanna Neville who is Registered Nurse and Midwife employed by Apunipima Cape York Health Council. Sponsored by James Cook University – Rural and Remote Health.

Excellence in Education or Research in Remote Health Award

Awarded to Katie Pennington, Registered Nurse and researcher employed by Punturkunu Aboriginal Medical Service, Western Australia. Sponsored by Centre for Remote Health.

Outstanding Novice/Encouragement Award

Awarded to Tiffany Callanan, Registered Nurse employed by Pormpuraaw Primary Health Care Clinic, Queensland. Sponsored by Remote Area Health Corp.



AFTER HOURS AGED CARE PROJECT SUMMARY



The CRANAPplus After Hours Aged Care Project continues its success in facilitating educational opportunities, with the aim to increase the knowledge and skills of Residential Aged Care Facility (RACF) staff. Funding from the Northern Queensland Primary Health Network is now secured until June 2022, testament to the valuable contribution this unique project is providing across six RACFs in Far North Queensland and collaborative partnerships made with the regions local hospitals, GPs, pharmacy and allied health specialists.

Over 20 face-to-face education workshops were delivered during 2019/2020 responding to a diverse array of training requests. Whilst COVID-19 dramatically changed the landscape for aged care, the project still managed to rapidly innovate and deliver education via online modalities demonstrating its flexibility and commitment to the workforce. Building local capacity and improving coordination and communication systems between RACFs and service providers continues to underpin the success of this project which has now employed two part time Professional Officers to assist in responding to increased training requests.

Project Aims

- To upskill Residential Aged Care Facility (RACF) staff and other service providers to deliver comprehensive aged care, thereby assisting in the management of after-hours service needs.
- To strengthen coordination and collaborative systems between RACFs and other relevant service providers including local hospital, GPs, pharmacy, allied health, after-hours services and local palliative care communities.
- Improved resident care to acquire the care they need at the right time in the right place.

AFTER HOURS AGED CARE PROJECT SUMMARY



Project Objectives

- Development and implementation of a comprehensive training needs analysis to understand, identify and prioritise training/education needs and preferred modes of delivery.
- Development and delivery of a range of identified training/education activities.
- Promote existing resources to RACF staff to improve knowledge of services available, particularly in the after-hours period.
- Strengthen referral pathways for residents of RACFs through better coordination with local health service providers.
- Enhance access for RACF staff to relevant services/education/training via use of smart technology including webinars; elearning, digital learning and video conferencing.
- To identify primary health care models that support the older person in a RACF.
- Quarterly workshops for RACF employees to offer networking and educational opportunities.
- To operate in a partnership model with identified organisations or individuals to provide an integrated system of care for residents in RACFs, across the after-hours period.

Types of Educational Opportunities Delivered 2019/2020

Advance Care Planning
Antimicrobial Stewardship Training
Applying a Problem-Solving Approach to Behaviours
Asthma/COPD
Capacity
Consent
Dancewise Project Demonstrations
Delirium
Dementia
Dementia and Challenging Behaviours
Dementia and Sexualities
Falls Prevention
IDC Training and Catheter Care
Nutrition and Dysphagia
Nutrition for the Older Person
Palliative Care
Person Centred Care
Skin Integrity
Recognising and Responding to the Deteriorating Patient
Working in Culturally Diverse Teams
Zoom Training
Diversional Therapy Workshop

AFTER HOURS AGED CARE PROJECT SUMMARY



Implementation Process

- Intensive face to face engagement with facility management and staff across each site.
- Development of comprehensive training needs assessment per facility.
- Identification of key stakeholders, service providers, individuals and organisations to fulfil training requirements. (This has relied on considerable good will from presenters).

Key Successes to Date

- Improving education for care providers in RACFs, especially around palliative issues. Improved coordination and communication systems between RACFs and local hospital, enhancing effective continuity of care.
- Incorporation of advance care planning and palliative care programs into RACFs considered core business for RACFs.
- Improved competencies of staff and strengthened capacity of RACFs to work collaboratively with other primary care providers.

- Creation of forums for dialogue between RACFs, GPs, hospital, pharmacy and allied health has been very positive.
- Formalising of processes for transfer of information when transferring residents.
- Establishment of a collaborative partnership with Cairns Hospital Older Persons Integrated Health Service Program, that incorporates the projects extensive facilitation experience together with the Health Service's clinical expertise and knowledge of the specific challenges faced by local RACFs. 45 percent of presenters have been staff from Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service.
- The flexible, responsive and tailored approach to the project sites and region has been critical to project success.
- Ensuring every presentation was delivered by a local respected expert in the field, has strengthened relationships and increased access.
- RACF employees are engaged, feel supported and very keen for professional development opportunities.

FINANCIAL REPORT 2019/2020



Steven Dangaard
Chief Finance Officer

This year the 2019/2020 financial statements were prepared and audited by BDO. A full set of the Financial Statements are available to all members. Copies can be provided on request by emailing cfo@crana.org.au.

It is with great pleasure that I announce this year's audit report was again completed with no qualifications. The financial position of the organisation remains healthy, with net assets growing to just over \$3.47 million, while achieving a net annual profit of \$299,770.

Recently, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, CRANAPlus moved quickly to introduce many changes to its business structure and service delivery models. These necessary changes placed the organisation into a resilient financial position whilst continuing to maintain capacity to deliver services during periods of significant disruption and uncertainty. Due to these changes, it is forecasted that CRANAPlus will continue to remain financially stable and solvent during the course of the 2020/2021 financial year, even if heavy COVID-19 restrictions remain in place across the country.

Moving into the next financial year CRANAPlus has the important task of continuing to innovate and provide flexible solutions to meet the needs of the remote health workforce along with all our funding agreement commitments. The core funding agreement with the Department of Health remains a critical component to the organisation's ongoing operations, and over the next nine months CRANAPlus will continue to work with Government in securing another three-year agreement.

FINANCIAL REPORT 2019/2020

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the year ended 30 June 2020

	2020 \$	2019 \$
Revenue and Other Income		
Grant Revenue	4,288,611	4,613,214
Other Income	2,032,887	2,213,669
	6,321,498	6,826,883
Expenditure		
Employee Costs	(3,105,917)	(3,456,972)
Depreciation	(145,532)	(120,966)
Amortisation	(168,450)	(226,446)
Conference Costs	(344,977)	(337,530)
Consultants and Subcontractors Fees	(405,112)	(434,643)
Course Costs, Catering and Facilitators	(131,793)	(230,834)
Donations	(30,146)	(42,044)
Interest Expense	(58,105)	(44,573)
IT Costs	(416,440)	(401,540)
Postage, Printing and Stationery	(262,426)	(372,969)
Rent and Utilities	(55,322)	(115,063)
Travel and Accommodation	(374,131)	(694,148)
Loss on Disposal of Assets	(41,963)	(16,397)
Other Expenses	(481,414)	(543,675)
	(6,021,728)	(7,037,800)
PROFIT BEFORE INCOME TAX EXPENSE	299,770	(210,917)
Income Tax Expense	–	–
PROFIT AFTER INCOME TAX EXPENSE	299,770	(210,917)
Other Comprehensive Income		
<i>Items that will not be reclassified to profit or loss</i>		
Increase in Asset Revaluation Reserve	66,250	116,680
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME	366,020	(94,237)

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