



BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

APUNIPIMA COEN WELLBEING CENTRE

Coen Commissioner Maureen Liddy commenced in her new role as Team Leader for the Apunipima Wellbeing Centre in Coen on 1 April 2017, transitioning across from a similar role with the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Maureen explains, “After a bumpy start ironing out the new policies and procedures, my focus was on building relationships for a sustainable future of health and wellbeing”.

From Maureen’s perspective, living in community means working to support the community. The two do not exist separately, but meld to form the definition of what a community member is or should be. Maureen has always provided support to family, friends, community members and visitors alike, in good times and in tough times. She carries these values into her new position as Apunipima Team Leader where she strives to strengthen her own knowledge for the benefit of the community and enhance her connections with the community. Maureen is consistently looking for better ways to improve connections within and outside her work environment, living the mission, vision and values of Apunipima which includes seeing measurable wellness outcomes, creating a skilled workforce, building community ownership and capacity, and being a leader in remote health care. She believes that living these values creates harmony, and that building and nurturing these values must be done whilst also building and nurturing cultural knowledge – “strong culture, strong spirit”.

Along with providing crucial mental health and wellbeing services to FRC clients in Coen, the Apunipima team visits outstations on a regular basis with the intention of working collaboratively with other partners and stakeholders who visit these outstations. Maureen believes that bringing people together for community events and raising awareness for important national and local issues such as White Ribbon, National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week, Domestic Violence Month, Mother’s and Father’s Day, Mental Health Week, Children’s Week, Elder’s Week and Australia’s Biggest Morning Tea for the fight against cancer is vital to community spirit. Maureen states, “It is important to connect community to much bigger national issues facing many Australians to give a sense of connection to the rest of the country when living remotely. The Apunipima team co-ordinate and promote these events along with support from other local service providers, to educate Coen residents on the importance of such occasions”.

Maureen has been developing and sharing her own intricate methods and strategies to assist when working with visitors to the community, encouraging them to share the knowledge they bring with all the residents and local service providers. One of the visual strategies Maureen uses to share with others is a detailed map of community connections. This map enables her team to focus on a much wider, connected support system, and is one that is shared with visitors, stakeholders and community members alike. Maureen believes this map encourages and enhances engagement, and provides a more enriched vision and bigger picture of a healthy connected community. The map shows the Wellbeing Centre (community hub) at the centre of community services with connections to the many options and opportunities Apunipima offer FRC clients, the wider Coen community, service providers and visitors.