

Koolungar Moorditj Healthy Skin Newsletter

Kaya everyone! We are excited to share the first edition of the Koolungar Moorditj Healthy Skin newsletter with you...

Meet Taleah

Taleah Ugle is a proud Menang – Ballardong woman from Albany.



(Pictured above: Glenn Pearson, Taleah Ugle and Val Swift)

The Healthy Skin and ARF Team were honoured to host Taleah over 4 weeks in early 2023 as an Intern through the Aurora Foundation. The Aurora Internship is an opportunity for Indigenous students to participate in a paid internship in line with their field of study. Taleah is studying biomedical science majoring in biochemistry and molecular biology (elective units focusing on Indigenous culture) and is currently in her second year. Taleah is aiming for medicine as a post-graduate degree, hence her choice of the health industry. "I had chosen TKI as my first preference and I was lucky enough to be chosen. So far, I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at TKI. Ainslie and Jacinta have been amazing to work with. They have given me all the resources and background information on the KMHS project and have allowed me to participate in ways that don't just involve mundane administrative jobs. What I have enjoyed most so far is the thematic analysis. I enjoy seeing how the koolungars think and how they interpret certain information (there are some little funny answers in there!). But seeing how they respond and retain the information from the health promo video is very satisfying. I am looking forward to working on this project for the remaining of my internship." Taleah made a great contribution to the thematic analysis of responses to the Moorditj Healthy Skin quiz. Keep on reading to check out some highlights from the preliminary analysis!

Congrats Heather



Congratulations to one of the project's Investigators, Dr Heather-Lynn Kessarlis, for recently being selected to join the 2023 Australasian College of Dermatology's Training Program – the first Aboriginal Registrar to join the Program in WA!

Together Magazine

Moorditj Health Starts with Moorditj Skin – the KMHS project was showcased in an article in the latest Telethon Kids Institute Together magazine! You can check this article out on pages 24 and 25 in the link below...

[Together Summer 22/23
\(telethonkids.org.au\)](https://www.telethonkids.org.au)



Meet the KMHS Community advisory Group Members



Roni
Forrest



Annette
Garlett



Sally
Smith



Joanne
Hill



Larissa
Perry

Nan
Melba
Wallam



Kristy
Jetta



Delys
Walton

To provide local leadership, direction, and cultural guidance on all aspects of the KMHS project and to lead the development of culturally appropriate health promotion resources for community, two Aboriginal Community Advisory Groups were formed in May last year. The Whadjuk CAG represents the Whadjuk boodjar (Perth) community, and the Wardandi CAG represents the Wardandi boodjar (Bunbury) community. We are so grateful to them for sharing their expertise, support, and guidance along this journey – we really could not do the work without them. We can't wait to share the moorditj song and eczema storybook that they have developed, which celebrate Noongar language and takes a strengths-based approach to sharing knowledge about looking after your skin and management of skin conditions.

Cultural Awareness

Thank you to Uncle (Dr) Noel Nannup and his wonderful team for a beautiful day on a Journey on Boodjar around Boorloo in November 2022. We are so grateful to you for sharing your knowledge and wisdom with us.



2022 Screening Week Highlights

Last year, we held fantastic skin screening community events at SWAMS in Bunbury and DYHS in Perth. Over two weeks in September and October, we saw over 160 moorditj koolungar and had great yarns with families and community members about skin health. The Starlight Captains and Noongar Radio out-reach broadcast were great fun, and we've received positive feedback from the community and our partners. We saw lots of moorditj healthy skin and learnt more about the skin health needs of urban-living Aboriginal koolungar.

164 participants
66 at SWAMS & 98 at DYHS

12% use bush medicine as a part of everyday skincare & 44% when they have a skin problem

62% Recall previous sunburn
23% of these describing > 10 Occasions

History of past bacterial skin infection, fungal skin infection and scabies in 28%, 26% & 5%, respectively.

15% with current eczema symptoms

8% with current severe eczema symptoms

34% of koolungar at both SWAMS & DYHS received same-day treatment - mostly for fungal skin infections and eczema



More Highlights...



Thank you to everyone who contributed to and supported these screening weeks – from the fantastic volunteer clinicians to the incredible team in the Telethon Kids lab – we could not have done it without you. Special thanks to Derbarl Yerrigan Health Service (DYHS) and South West Aboriginal Medical Service (SWAMS) for hosting the screening events, and for the support of two incredible Aboriginal Health Practitioners – Nadia Rind (DYHS) and Brenda Carter (SWAMS)!

National Healthy Skin Guideline Update

To ensure that these findings from our research make it into the clinics of clinicians across Australia, we have been working to update the National Healthy Skin Guidelines to a second edition. This has been supported by a dedicated group of clinicians across Australia with expertise in healthy skin. We look forward to releasing these guidelines in the coming months as well.

Thematic Analysis

At the skin screening events, koolungar were invited to participate in a quiz, before and after viewing a short presentation on skin health narrated by Uncle Noel – check it out here:

[Lets Learn About Moorditj Healthy Skin! with Uncle Noel - YouTube](#)

45 moorditj koolungar took part, with 41 responses deemed 'valid.' The median age of participants was 9 years. Thematic analysis was applied to children's answers to the question 'how to keep our skin moorditj.' Personal hygiene, sun protective behaviours and general health measures were common themes among responses to this question. All '6 steps for moorditj skin' were reported more frequently after viewing the presentation. Check out the '6 steps' graphic below – it was co-designed with the CAG members – isn't it awesome!



Here are some of the moorditj responses to the question 'how do we keep our skin moorditj'

“Respect your elders”

“Be kind to your skin”

“If it's hot and you have no sun screen and go swimming stay in the shade”

Health Promotion Updates

Music Video & Children's Storybook

Aboriginal community members have been leading the development of two fantastic health promotion pieces over the past 9 months.

The Whadjuk Community Advisory Group have developed a moorditj healthy skin song in collaboration with The Digital Factory, a Supply Nation Certified creative agency who have lots of experience in song writing and video production. Filming for the video clip has recently taken place on Noongar boodjar. We can't wait to share this with you soon.



The Wardandi Community Advisory Group have been working on 'Kaal Tackles Eczema,' a storybook for koolungar that follows Kaal, a proud Noongar boy who loves footy but tackles a new and unexpected challenge in his footy season – eczema. The storybook will be illustrated by a Noongar artist, and we can't wait to see the final result. We hope this will be the start of a series of storybook's which provide culturally appropriate information on the recognition, prevention, and treatment of a range of common childhood skin conditions and diseases.

Thank you to community members for leading and guiding the song and storybook.

We will be hosting a launch event in June to showcase these amazing pieces – Save the Date - Monday, 12 June 2023 at 10.00-11.30am!



Paediatric Dermatology Clinic Update & Future Plans

Monthly paediatric dermatology clinics have been taking place at DYHS East Perth since March 2021, and SWAMS Bunbury since May 2022; with invaluable support from Aboriginal Health Practitioners (AHPs) - Lorraine Hansen (DYHS), Nadia Rind (DYHS), Ellesha Gale (SWAMS) and Brenda Carter (SWAMS). We recently welcomed Child Health Nurse Sonia Talamo, in her role co-ordinating and supporting the paediatric dermatology clinic at DYHS.

A component of the KMHS project has been investigating the spectrum of skin diseases in urban-living Aboriginal children requiring specialist dermatology care. To this end, we have been collecting data from the paediatric dermatology clinics since September 2021 at DYHS and May 2022 at SWAMS. The children seen in these clinics include 'new patients' referred by the GPs within the ACCHOs, as well as children attending follow-up from the KMHS skin screening weeks.

32 Clinics in total
21 at DYHS and 11 at SWAMS

218 episodes of care for Aboriginal children
142 at DYHS and 76 at SWAMS

78 Aboriginal children 'new patients' referred and assessed
52 at DYHS and 26 SWAMS

74% Average attendance rate (overall)
73% at DYHS and 76% at SWAMS

Paediatric Dermatology Clinic Update Continued...

72 newly referred Aboriginal koolungar were recruited into the prospective audit. Our recruitment rate was 92% (72/78) with 3 koolungar not invited to participate as first consult was via telehealth and 3 koolungar not invited to participate as they had previously participated in KMHS screening week study. The median age was 8 years, with slightly more females than males. 100% identified as Aboriginal and 100% were urban-living. We look forward to sharing the clinical results with investigators at our next meeting.

We continue to develop clinical factsheets on childhood paediatric skin conditions for use in the clinics. At last count we had 20! We have received very positive feedback from parents and caregivers on their readability, utility and acceptability.

With the support of both DYHS and SWAMS we are currently exploring funding options to continue to provide a clinical dermatology service for children and also adults, ensuring the ongoing sustainability of these clinics. We hope to be able to continue to provide timely specialist care to Aboriginal patients within the ACCHO setting, ongoing dermatology teaching and up-skilling for ACCHO clinical staff, and culturally respectful training of Dermatology registrars within the ACCHO setting. We are hopeful we will have good news to report on these funding endeavours in our next newsletter!



South West AMS Head lice

What is it?
Head lice are tiny insects that can live on your scalp and lay eggs (called nits) that stick to your hair. They can make your scalp very itchy and they spread easily to other people through sharing hair brushes, hair ties, hats, beanies, hoodies, pillows or head-to-head contact. They can be all over the scalp but their favourite place to live is behind the ears and the back of the neck.

How can we treat it?
A combination of chemical removal with a medicated shampoo, lotion or mousse AND daily wet combing with conditioner works best.

Chemical removal with a medicated shampoo, lotion or mousse
• These are available at the chemist and are used to kill the head lice.
• Follow the instructions on the packet, some need to stay in your hair overnight, others for a short period.
• Repeat the treatment in 8 days* - this is important to kill any eggs that hatched after the first treatment.

Wet combing with hair conditioner
• This is a cheap and effective way to treat head lice.
• You will need a fine-tooth nit comb, hair conditioner and paper towel.
• First, brush out the hair to detangle it. Then coat dry hair with lots of conditioner. Comb down the hair from the scalp using the fine-tooth nit comb. Each time, wipe the comb onto the paper towel to collect the lice and eggs. Repeat the combing for every part of the head at least 4-6 times. Repeat this every 1-2 days for 10 days.

How can we stop it from spreading?
• Everyone who has had close contact or who lives in the same house should check for head lice and also get treated at the same time.
• Don't share combs, hair brushes, hair ties, hats, beanies, hoodies or pillows.
• Keep hair tied back when at school. (Leaving conditioner in can help).
• Regularly check for head lice after it has been treated.

Your skin care plan:

Want more information?
• Meet a nurse with one of our doctors at 08 9388 1111
• Visit www.telethonkids.org.au/dermatology

KIDS TELETHON WESTERN AUSTRALIA CENTRE FOR VACCINES & INFECTIOUS DISEASE
Last updated 9 April 2023



DERBARL YERRIGAN HEALTH SERVICE Eczema (atopic dermatitis)

What is it?
Eczema is a very common skin condition in children that usually starts in the first few months of life. It causes a red, rough and itchy rash. Children (and their family members) with eczema are more likely to have other allergic conditions like asthma or hay fever. Eczema cannot be cured but can be managed well. Most children grow out of their eczema, but they will always have sensitive skin.

How can we look after our skin every day (even when there is no itchy rash)?
Avoid triggers that can make eczema worse:
• Soaps, shower gels and bubble baths.
• Friction or rough fabrics.
• Things that can cause allergies like animal hair and grass.
• Overheating and overdressing.

Bathing/showering:
• Bath or shower once each day.
• Use warm (not hot) water and keep it short (less than 5 minutes).
• Both oil can be added to the bath.
• A soap-free wash can be used on dirty parts of the body at the end of the bath/shower. It can also be used for hair washing.

Keep the skin moisturised:
• Moisturise the whole body and face at least once each day, more often if the skin is dry.
• Put on moisturiser straight after showering on damp skin.
• Use a moisturiser that is thick, like a cream or an ointment.

Try not to scratch eczema as this makes it worse - this is known as the "itch-scratch cycle".
• Distraction or putting on more moisturiser may help.
• Keep the nails trimmed short to reduce skin damage from scratching.

Your recommended products:

KIDS TELETHON WESTERN AUSTRALIA CENTRE FOR VACCINES & INFECTIOUS DISEASE
Last updated 9 April 2023

"Baby is so much better. She is like a new child. Very grateful."

"Doing good, happy with treatment"

"Good for kids to learn to take care of their skin. Very helpful service. Would like to see more."

Grant updates

Inspired by the ideas of CAG members and addressing priorities which have emerged from the study so far, the team have recently submitted two grant applications. If successful, one grant will support us to evaluate the Kaal Tackles Eczema storybook and develop a series of skin storybooks with community members. The second grant will investigate Ngangk Ngabala Ngoonda (Sun Safety) of Aboriginal young mob of WA, to understand knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours among Aboriginal koolungar and apply these learnings to develop culturally appropriate and relevant health promotion messaging on sun-safety with community members. We will hear the outcomes from these soon and continue to look for new funding opportunities to continue this important work.

We also had a great conversation at our December Investigator meeting about innovative ways to make it easier to treat tinea. From this, we've progressed an idea to develop and test chocolate flavoured tinea medicine to improve treatment compliance for fungal hair and nail infections. We will be submitting a grant application to help bring this idea to life in the near future!

Recent Presentations

We continue to look for opportunities to showcase the wonderful work and collaborations as part of the KMHS project. If you spot a great conference or event to share the outcomes of the project so far, please let us know!

Poster presentations at the International Meeting on Indigenous Child Health, Tulsa, Oklahoma, United States of America, March 2023

- The formation of urban Aboriginal community advisory groups to develop and evaluate culturally relevant health literacy and health promotion resources on mooritj (strong) healthy skin.
- Describing skin health and disease in urban-living Aboriginal children: co-design, development, and feasibility testing of the Koolungar Mooritj Healthy Skin pilot project
- The burden of atopic dermatitis and bacterial skin infections among urban-living Indigenous children and young people in high-income countries: a systematic

Upcoming Presentations

Successful abstract submissions

- Mooritj Skin Means Mooritj Health: Community-led Research Strengthening Sovereignty For Skin Health will be presented as an Oral Presentation at the Science on the Swan, Perth, May 2023.
- The Koolungar Mooritj Healthy Skin Project: Aboriginal leadership and workforce help achieve mooritj skin for koolungar – Oral presentation, Lowitja Institute, 3rd International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference, Cairns, June 2023.
- Mooritj Skin Means Mooritj Health: Community-led Research in Western Australia Strengthening Aboriginal Sovereignty for Children's Skin Health – Poster presentation, World Congress of Dermatology, Singapore, July 2023.

Abstract submissions, outcomes pending

- Mooritj Skin Means Mooritj Health: Community-led Research Strengthening Sovereignty For Skin Health – National Conference on Allied Health, Perth, August 2023.

Team Movements

We congratulate Ainslie Poore (formally Senior Project Officer involved in the KMHS project), as she moves to a new role in the Healthy Skin Team as Senior Project Coordinator – STARFISH (Stopping Acute Rheumatic Fever Infections to Strengthen Health). Ainslie will transition to this new role in Mid-April, and we wish her all the best with this exciting new opportunity.

We also farewell Alex Whelan, Healthy Skin team Program Manager who has been an incredible support and contributor to the KMHS project since its inception in 2020. Alex has recently moved to Darwin to start a new adventure and we thank her for her commitment to the project and support of the team. Alex will continue to support the team in various ways so you may still see her in meetings!



(Pictured above: Ainslie Poore and Alex Whelan)

Ingrid Amgarth-Duff has been working with our team for the last year and is about to go on maternity leave for her second child. It has been great having Ingrid with her expertise in literature reviews, qualitative research and her dedication to progressing the National Healthy Skin Guideline 2nd edition.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to the team on KMHS@telethonkids.org.au We are coming to the end of the funding for these projects, and look forward to sharing more updates in the months ahead.

