Closing the gap on Indigenous health this Heart Week

Indigenous Australians are 70 per cent more likely to die from cardiovascular diseases.

This Heart Week, Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service’s (SCHHS) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team is running a free Indigenous event at Nambour on **Tuesday, 1 May 2018**.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heart health is still lagging behind that of non-Indigenous Australians and Sharon Barry, SCHHS Program Manager for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, said: “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders have higher levels of risk factors such as smoking, physical inactivity, overweight and obesity, diabetes and high blood pressure.

“We know that giving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and individuals the skills and education to make decisions and drive outcomes in respect to these risk factors is critical. And, as with all healthcare, prevention is better than cure, which is why events like these are so important.

“We’ll be playing traditional games, holding a yarning circle, discussing any heart health questions participants might have and taking the time to share the programs SCHHS has on offer for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community,” Ms Barry said.

“With an ambitious Australian Government target to close the gap on life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a generation (by 2031) there is a lot of work to be done.”

Ms. Barry said the event was an opportunity to create a genuine partnership with Indigenous leaders, elders and communities to continue working towards closing the gap.

The Heart Week event will be held on **Tuesday, 1 May from 9am to 12pm** at the PCYC, 3 Youth Street, Nambour. To register your interest, call Luke 5479 9852, Ronnie 5470 6318 or Kay 5202 0022.

Don’t forget your hat and water bottle!

**ENDS**

Follow us!  
Media contacts: Alexia Kelly/Alicia Diaz | 07 5202 0083 | 0408 713 747

**Media Opportunity:**
Join us at the event for photos of the event and an interview opportunity with Luke Snabaitis, Senior Clinical Exercise Physiologist, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Preventable Hospitalisation Program.

When: **Tuesday, 1 May, 10am**
Where: **PCYC, 3 Youth Street, Nambour (meet at the front entrance)**