20 March 2015

Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Community program connects with local youth

An innovative Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service (SCHHS) community program is helping local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth.

The Black Swan initiative is part of the health service’s ‘Cultural Healing Program’. It provides liaison, advocacy and support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and referral to health services where required.

Jennifer McClay, Cultural Healing Program Clinical Nurse Consultant said: “The program supports local families through community based solutions that are both culturally appropriate and outcome focused.”

“Black Swan aims to provide the necessary tools required for youth to address the challenges they may face in their daily lives, in an environment that fosters encouragement and support,” she said.

On Sunday (22 March), the Black Swan meeting will feature special guest Shea Spierings who is a former Sunshine Coast resident and the Australian youth representative to the United Nations.

Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service Aboriginal Health Worker, Anne Humbert said it was wonderful Shea was able to take time from his busy schedule to share stories with Sunshine Coast youth.

“Shea spent the entirety of his teens growing up on the Sunshine Coast. And as the 2015 Australian youth representative to the United Nations, he is bringing innovation, energy and enthusiasm to his new role, as well as first-hand experience of the issues facing Australian youth,” Anne said.

This year Shea plans to expand upon previous engagement efforts and personally engage with more than 25,000 youth across the nation.

Before becoming the Australian Youth Representative, Shea had previously spent a number of years working in foreign policy, construction, security, as well as working in community mentoring roles, youth advocacy, and indigenous engagement initiatives.

Shea holds a Bachelor of Arts with a double major in International Relations, and Peace and Conflict Studies, from the University of Queensland.

As a fellow Murri, and former Sunshine Coast local, Shea is excited to hear the stories of indigenous youth on the Sunshine Coast.
Black Swan’s next meeting is Sunday, 22 March 2015 at the Nambour Police Youth and Citizens club, Youth Avenue Nambour at 11.30am.

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