

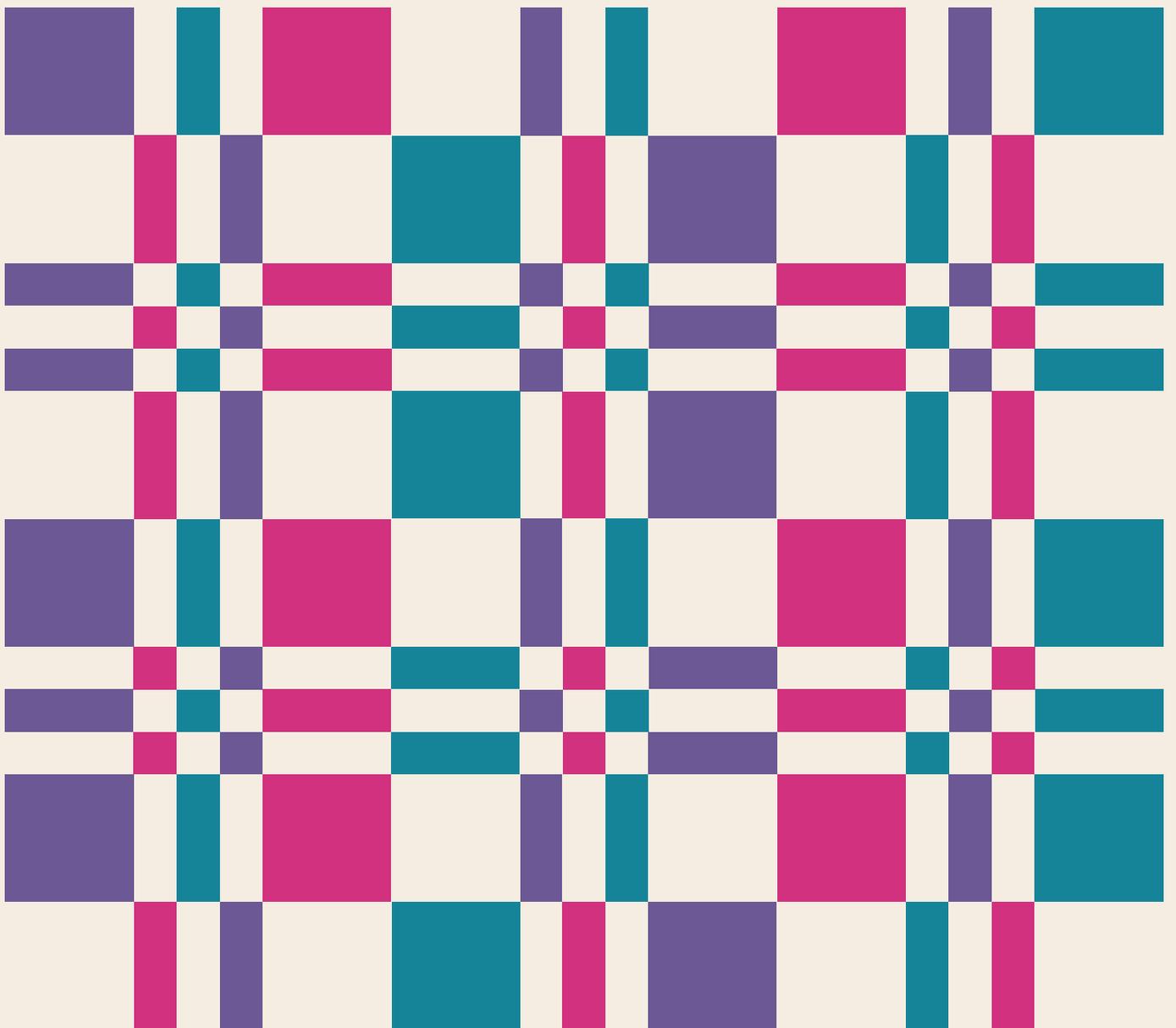


Flinders  
University

Rural & Remote  
Health SA & NT

# Kikirriu Dan Walmai Project

Progress Report 1: October 2023 to February 2024

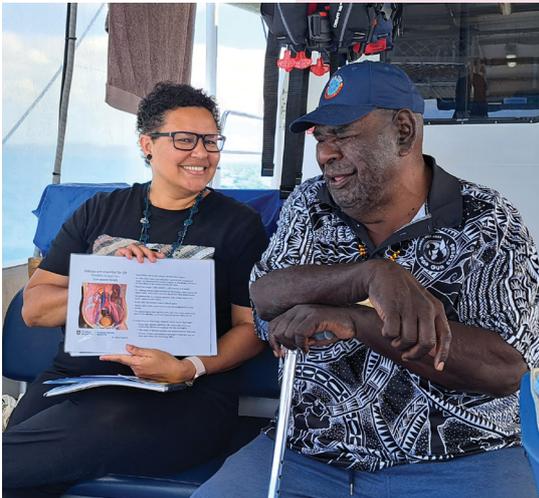


Karla Canuto, Candice Liddy-Stokes, Katie Cundale and Jaquelyne T Hughes

## Foreword

This report was commissioned by the W.A.B KWOD. The W.A.B KWOD Kuiku Mabaigal (Head People) – Wakaid Kuiku Mabaig Robert Sagigi, Aragun Kuiku Mabaig Dane Gagai, and Badhu Kuiku Mabaig Tom Baira – have also endorsed this report. Its purpose is to record and report the Kikirriu Dan Walmai (KWD) engagements from October 2023 until early February 2024. These records serve as evidence of community engagement with the Maluilgal (Torres Strait Islanders) living on Maluilgau nation group Badu Island, Moa Island, Mabuia Island, Waiben (Thursday Island), and Gimuy (Cairns) regarding the development of a remote dialysis unit on Badu Island, community-led restorative health activities to prevent chronic disease, and the need for dialysis.

## Acknowledgements



Firstly, KDW would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands on which we live and work: Kaurareg, Larrakia, Yolngu, Kurna, Gimuy Walubara Yidinji and Yirrganydji. We also acknowledge the traditional owners of Maluilgau.

We acknowledge every person who attended a meeting or gathering and talked to us opportunistically over this period. Many people have assisted in the success of our engagement from October 2023 to February 2024. We thank all who have helped behind the scenes to make KDW a success.

**Cover:** Graphic representation of the *minalay waku* (woven mat)

**Photos:** Taken by Karla Canuto (Maluilgau and Waiben, Oct 2023) and Katie Cundale (Cairns, Dec 2023)

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# Executive Summary

Kikirriu Dan Walmi (KDW) project is a community-led initiative to restore health to Maluilgal (Torres Strait Islanders), living on Maluilgau (Badu Island), Moa Island, Mabuig Island, Waiben (Thursday Island), and Gimuy (Cairns). KDW honours cultural protocol and acknowledges the leadership and responsibility of Kuiku Mabaigal (head people).

KDW project has two primary priorities:

1. To advocate for a dialysis unit to be built on Badu Island for Maluilgal, so people do not have to relocate to Waiben (Thursday Island) or mainland Australia to receive treatment;
2. To prevent and manage chronic diseases such as diabetes and chronic kidney disease by restoring health across Maluilgau.

In the last quarter of 2023, the KDW project team visited Maluilgau communities on Badu, Mabuig, and Moa Islands as well as Waiben (Thursday Island), and Gimuy (Cairns). The engagement visits had three objectives: to introduce the Maluilgal to the KDW project and the team; to discuss with them the need for dialysis and the possibility of a partnership to advocate for a remote dialysis unit to be built on Badu Island; and to gain support for the KDW project team to progress action towards the two priorities.

The team gathered information and sought guidance and perspectives from the community on how it could impact their life, family, and community, whether they would utilise a local facility, and issues or concerns related to potentially receiving dialysis treatment on the Island.

The community members at each meeting gave their support for KDW project to pursue both objectives. To demonstrate their support, they were offered the opportunity to sign a *minalay waku* (woven mat made from coconut fronds).

Community members also expressed the importance of keeping families at home and considered its impact on the family unit. They want the young to stay on the Island with their families and a dialysis unit on Badu Island would positively impact future generations by keeping families together. Additionally, a dialysis unit on Badu Island could provide opportunities for families receiving dialysis elsewhere to be able to visit the area if the Badu dialysis unit could offer 'holiday dialysis' (short-term dialysis) to facilitate cultural protocols.



**Robert Bongo Sagigi**  
Wakaïd Kuiku Mabaig  
W.A.B KWOD



**Dane Gagai**  
Aragun Kuiku Mabaig  
W.A.B KWOD



**Tom Jack Ebod Baira**  
Badhu Kuiku Mabaig  
W.A.B KWOD

## WAKAID, ARAGUN, BADHU TRIBES



(TRIBAL GOVERNANCE OF BADU ISLAND)

**Ya Luman Kulai Wagel Kaineh Ngapa Mizi Lagaka**  
Before you come to our island, you seek permission.

## Background of Kikirriu Dan Walmal

There is an urgent need to restore health to people living in isolated communities of Zenadh (the Torres Strait). Chronic disease rates have skyrocketed since the earliest public reporting in 1960 of diabetes-associated amputations occurring at Thursday Island hospital among adults of Mabuiag Island.<sup>1</sup> The situation is worsening. Diabetes continues to be a high-priority health condition strongly associated with chronic kidney disease (CKD) and kidney failure. It is survivable through regularly accessed haemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis, and transplantation. Currently, haemodialysis services are provided outside Maluilgau, requiring many family members to relocate to Waiben (Thursday Island) or to mainland Australia.

To restore health, we must first restore the mechanisms that contribute to health. Before colonisation, families lived in Zenadh for countless generations without chronic disease. One of the key mechanisms that maintained health was **cultural protocol**. The community-care system, embedded in cultural protocol and cultural leadership, keeps people well and has the power to restore health if we embrace culture and enact our sovereign right to determine our future.

In September 2022, following her milestone professorial appointment, Professor Jaquelyne (Jaqui) Hughes visited Waiben at the request of community for Cultural Caring and to participate, along with Senior Kulkalgal Elder Mr Phillip Mills MPH FRACP(Hons) OAM, in a deputation with the Queensland Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, and Science and Innovation. They discussed the formation of a Zenadh Health Science Education and Research

Council to support culturally governed processes to facilitate high-value science and research within the region. During that visit, Wakaid Kuiku Mabaig Robert (Bongo) Sagigi and Badhu Kuiku Mabaig Tom Baira spoke with Jaqui Hughes about the suffering of patients and their families in Gimuy living with haemodialysis and no hopeful prospect of seeing their island home again. This lack of hope was reinforced by conducting a cultural rite the magnitude of funeral, meaning that a living person leaves home and will not return alive. The community leaders expressed an urgency for solutions to alleviate the suffering of dislocated patients as well as the need to reduce the cycle of illness by intervening at a family, community, environment, and strategy level.

In early 2023, Kuiku Mabaigal (tribal leaders) of Badu Island – Wakaid Kuiku Mabaig Robert Sagigi, Aragon Kuiku Mabaig Dane Gagai, and Badhu Kuiku Mabaig Tom Baira, collectively referred to as W.A.B KWOD – along with Phillip Mills, the Iboedhay Mabaig (head advisor) of W.A.B KWOD and Jaqui Hughes, wrote to Senator the Hon. Malarndirri McCarthy, Assistant Minister for Indigenous Health, to advise their intention to promote health restoration, prevent diabetes, and bring relief to their tribal families, and gain information about the process for allocating funding. At the time, the Federal Government had recently announced \$43 million funding for better renal services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, which included the building of physical infrastructure within very-remote Australia, and up to thirty 4-chair haemodialysis units with the approximate capacity of 20 patients over a 6- to 7-day treatment week.

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<sup>1</sup> Winterbotham, H.J (1961) Diabetes Mellitus at Mabuiag Island, Torres Straits, 1960. Medical Journal of Australia 48(1):780-1. doi: 10.5694/j.1326-5377.1961.tb69142.x. PMID: 13785943.



Attendees at The State of Mind: Wellbeing Symposium, Badu Island, May 2023.

On the 26th of May 2023, National Sorry Day and the first day of National Reconciliation Week, W.A.B KWOD, Phillip Mills, and Jaqui Hughes, joined the third day of the *Ninu Wakainthamam Midikidh – The State of Mind: Wellbeing Symposium* at Ugaree Hall, Badu Island. W.A.B KWOD shared that they were advocating for health restoration involving kidney disease in the Badu community to take priority. They told of their participation at the Torres Strait Regional Authority Healthy Communities Forum (Cairns, February 2023), advocating directly with Senator McCarthy in her capacity as Assistant Minister for Indigenous Affairs and Assistant Minister for Indigenous Health. W.A.B KWOD received her reply to their letter that day, and both the initial letter and response were read out. Further discussions included community-level health and burden of disease, and illness experienced by Badu people. Support to progress the Badu Dialysis Unit was indicated by the above photograph, which was also published alongside an article in *Torres News* (1 June 2023).

In September 2023, because of their advocacy with Senator McCarthy, W.A.B KWOD gained a voice within the Better Renal Services Steering Committee. Their consumer representative position was filled by Jaqui Hughes, a Wagadagam woman, knowledgeable in chronic kidney disease, and having worked in a professional role alongside Zenadh people for over a decade. The Better Renal Services Steering Committee asked funding applicants to confirm the need for at least 20 patients with kidney failure who would utilise a very remote haemodialysis unit if infrastructure funding was to be awarded.

This report outlines the consultation plan, priority, and cultural protocol underpinning our Elder-invited process to welcome Maluilgau to Badu Dialysis Unit for family-supported haemodialysis care.

W.A.B KWOD invited Torres Strait Islander research academics Jaqui Hughes (Wagadagam) and Associate Professor Karla Canuto (Kulkalgal) from Flinders University to work in partnership to engage stakeholders and Maluilgau, understand community needs around kidney disease, and prepare a consultation report.

The team had two primary priorities:

1. To advocate for a dialysis unit to be built on Badu Island for Maluilgau, eliminating the need to relocate to Waiben or mainland Australia to receive treatment;
2. To prevent and manage chronic diseases such as diabetes and chronic kidney disease by restoring health across Maluilgau.

*Kikirriu Dan Walmai* means ‘Our Health Resurrected’ in Kala Lagaw Ya, the traditional language from the Western and Central islands of the Torres Strait. The name was gifted to Professor Hughes by her father, Koemabiag of Wagadagam, Mabuig Island, and linguist, Athe Patrick Whap.

W.A.B KWOD is utilising *Kikirriu Dan Walmai* as a collective name for the many projects that will work to improve and restore the health of Maluilgau.

## Kikirriu Dan Walmai Project Team

The KDW project team has many members with different roles and responsibilities. W.A.B KWOD is responsible for the protection and cultural governance of Badu Island and her peoples. The Wakaid Tribal Council Inc. was formed in 2010 to address the social, economic, spiritual, and emotional wellbeing issues experienced by tribal people living on Badu Island and elsewhere in the Torres Strait and mainland Australia. We believe it is a basic human right to be able to represent our people for better treatment and equal human rights.

The tribal leaders have chosen a team who will honour, respect, and carry out the responsibility of meeting KDW objectives. Jaqui Hughes and Karla Canuto from Flinders University, based in Darwin on Larrakia Country, are responsible for leading and recording KDW engagement and applying for funding to support KDW project activities. They are supported by a team of Flinders University staff, including Candice Liddy-Stokes, Katie Cundale and Leah Newcombe, who provide project management, administrative support, and academic assistance. Badu Islander and clinical nurse, Naizel Enosa, has been identified by W.A.B KWOD to join the team, bringing his cultural and clinical knowledge, and ability to translate and broker the relationship between the Flinders University team and community. It is our hope that

Naizel will one day run the Badu Island Dialysis Unit. Likewise, Waiben resident, Deidree Whap, a well-known, experienced paramedic from Mabuia Island, provides insights into health service delivery across the Torres Strait and, like Naizel, brokers relationships and translates for the Flinders University team. Deidree is also a community observer for community engagement meetings.

### Badu Tribal Leads

- Wakaid Kuiku Mabaig Robert Sagigi
- Argune Kuiku Mabaig Dane Gagai
- Badhu Kuiku Mabaig Tom Baira

### Ipopoedhay Mabaig to Badu Tribal Lead

- Adjunct Associate Professor Phillip Mills, Kalkugal Senior Elder

### Flinders University

- Jaqui Hughes (Wagadagam)
- Karla Canuto (Kulkagal)
- Candice Liddy-Stokes (Aboriginal)
- Katie Cundale (non-Indigenous)
- Leah Newcombe (Wagadagam)

### Community Facilitators

- Naizel Enosa (Aragun)
- Deidree Whap (Panay)



W.A.B. KWOD – Robert Sagigi, Dane Gagai and Tom Biara – at the Waiben community engagement meeting.

# Community Engagement

## Purpose

Community engagement and connection are vital in every phase of Kikirriu Dan Walmai. Effective collaboration and co-design will result in meaningful outcomes for the people who are directly impacted. As a community-led initiative, cultural protocol will be informed by community elders, leaders, and members. The initial engagement included communities of Maluilgau, Malulgal<sup>1</sup> residing on Waiben, and Malulgal living temporarily in Gimuy, to receive kidney health care.

The purpose of the trip was for the KDW project team to visit Maluilgal communities to discuss the need for dialysis and the possibility of a partnership to advocate for a remote dialysis unit to be built on Badu Island. The team gathered information and sought guidance and perspectives from the community on how it could impact their life, family, and community, whether they would utilise a local facility, and issues or concerns related to potentially receiving dialysis treatment on the Island.

<sup>1</sup> As spelt by the local community.



Indigenous owned and operated charter company Malu Ventures took the team to Badu, Mabuig and Moa Islands on the Nakena II.

## Maluilgau and Waiben engagement

Visits to Maluilgau and Waiben occurred in October 2023. We travelled with Malu Ventures from Horn Island to Badu, Mabuig, and Moa Islands. The 18-metre charter vessel had a capacity to sleep 10 and was skippered and owned by experienced Torres Strait Islander, Captain James Mills, along with a local deckhand and cook. Amenities onboard included Wi-Fi, a toilet, shower, washing machine, and dryer. Travelling by boat allowed for greater flexibility and lessened the burden on the Islands' limited resources, such as accommodation.

Meetings were held on Badu Island, Mabuig, Kubin, and Waiben in local community halls. A meeting was planned for St Pauls community on Moa Island but was cancelled due to community sorry business. Meeting information and dates were posted on community Facebook pages and shared widely by text message.

In addition to community engagement meetings, the team took the opportunity to visit the Queensland Health Primary Health Care clinics at Mabuig, Kubin and St Pauls. During these visits, we shared information about Kikirriu Dan Walmai. We were welcomed, shown the facilities, and informed about their service provision. Queensland Health representatives also attended the meetings at Badu, Kubin and Mabuig Islands.

Opportunistic conversations were had with community members wherever possible, including at the beach (where Mabuig community members were loading up dinghies to travel to Bamaga for the Dan Ropeyarn Cup), in the streets, with taxi drivers, and every appropriate opportunity that arose.



KDW team members with acting clinic manager, Margaret Mau, at St Pauls Primary Health Care Clinic.



The KDW team being escorted back to the Kubin boat ramp by Aunty Samoa Tomsana who waved us yawo (goodbye).  
From L to R: Leah Newcombe, Jaqui Hughes, Aunty Samoa Tomsa, Naizel Enosa and Diedree Whap.



KDW project team with Wuchopperen staff at the Manoora site, Cairns.

## Cairns Engagement

A meeting was scheduled in Gimuy to connect face-to-face with Maluilgal not currently residing in Maluilgau communities and stakeholders with vested interests in the processes and outcomes of Kikirriu Dan Walmai. Invitations were sent out via email and text message. A flyer was also put up at El Dorado apartments, Queensland Health owned accommodation utilised by many Torres Strait Islanders residing in Cairns to receive life-saving haemodialysis treatment.

Unfortunately, severe weather post Cyclone Kiriilly caused local flooding, requiring emergency procedures to be put in place during our visit in Cairns. The original meeting arrangements scheduled for Sunday the 17th of December at the Shangri-La Hotel were disrupted, so a small meeting was held at Double Tree by Hilton in place of this. In attendance at the meeting were members of the KDW project team, community members from Badu Island currently living in Cairns to access haemodialysis services, and two Elders (via telephone).

On Monday the 18th of December, flood waters had receded. Since some interested community members were unable to attend the meeting on Sunday 17th December, Dick Williams organised for the team to hold a meeting and information session at El Dorado Apartments.

Later in the week, the project team met with staff from the community-controlled Aboriginal health organisation, Wuchopperen Health Service. The purpose of this meeting was to inform the local Aboriginal Health Service of the Kikirriu Dan Walmai project and build understanding on how the possible outcomes of the project could work in collaboration with local health services. The team was given a guided tour of the facility and given information regarding the services provided by Wuchopperen Health Service. Wuchopperen Health Service informed the KDW project team of the comprehensive care their organisation provides to Cairns residents, including Torres Strait Islander people who have relocated to Cairns to take up haemodialysis care.



Engagement meeting, Double Tree Hotel, Cairns.



Engagement meeting, El Dorado Apartments, Cairns.

## Engagement and Health Service Meetings

The following engagement meetings have occurred to date.

Community	Date	Venue
Badu	Mon 23 Oct	Badu Community Hall
Mabuiag	Tue 24 Oct	Mabuiag Community Hall
Mabuiag	Tue 24 Oct	QLD Health PHC, Mabuiag
Kubin	Wed 25 Oct	Kubin Community Hall
Kubin	Wed 25 Oct	QLD Health PHC, Kubin
St Pauls	Wed 25 Oct	QLD Health PHC, St Pauls
Waiben	Fri 27 Oct	TRAWQ Community Hall
Cairns	Sun 17 Dec	Double Tree Hotel, 121-123 Esplanade, Cairns City
Cairns	Mon 18 Dec	El Dorado, 243 Lake Street, Cairns City
Cairns	Wed 20 Dec	Wuchopperen Health Service, 6 Moignard Street, Manoora

See Appendix (p18) for attendance lists for each community gathering.

## Summary of Community Meetings

After Welcome to Country/Acknowledgment of Country and opening prayer, the KDW project team outlined W.A.B KWOD's idea of nurse-delivered haemodialysis on Badu Island. Information was presented on kidney health, dialysis, the present opportunity to advocate for a haemodialysis unit on Badu Island, and the Federal Government's commitment to fund the building of up to thirty remote-area dialysis units. We stressed the need for feedback and input from potential beneficiaries. The team also shared that the Federal Government's commitment includes building staff accommodation, however, does not include accommodation for patients and families of patients receiving treatment.

The purpose and desired outcomes of the Kikirriu Dan Walmai project were introduced at each community meeting. The need to bring dialysis closer to home was emphasised, with the understanding that kidney disease is on the international agenda. Federal Government support will be sought with this in mind. The team explained how information from Australia & New Zealand Dialysis & Transplant Registry (ANZDATA), which can describe the incidence and prevalence of Torres Strait Islander people since the 1960's with those first diagnoses of diabetes, can be used to stress the importance of the Kikirriu Dan Walmai project.

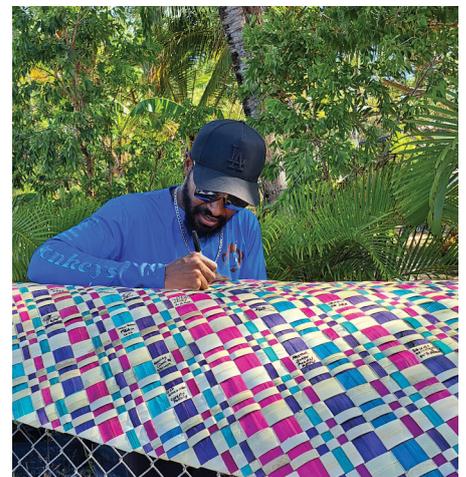
Each meeting was an opportunity for the project team to connect with local families and hear their insights into the project; for example, how a model of care could be designed and run by the community and what factors need to be considered for each community. Training opportunities for local Torres Strait Islander people in the field of dialysis and related health conditions were discussed.

The vision of W.A.B KWOD – to disrupt kidney disease at the community level – was explained, highlighting the need to address specific factors; for example, aiding prevention through proactive community engagement.

Discussion at community engagement meetings took place in both English and Kala Lagaw Ya. Naizel and Deidree translated the key messages for the benefit of team members not fluent in Kala Lagaw Ya.

At each meeting, attendees were asked if they endorse KDW project to do two things:

1. Pursue avenues with the Federal Government for the investment in a 4-chair dialysis unit to be built on Badu Island to service Maluilgau;
2. Pursue funding opportunities to support community-led restorative health initiatives.



W.A.B. KWOD signing the *minalay waku*.



The community members at each meeting gave their support for KDW to pursue both objectives. To demonstrate their support, they were offered the opportunity to sign a *minalay waku* (woven mat made from coconut fronds).

The research team's connection to Maluilgau was celebrated at each community meeting in the Torres Strait Islands. There was deep appreciation and gratitude that the Kikirriu Dan Walmai project is a Torres Strait Islander driven initiative with Torres Strait Island Elders and professionals leading the team. There was gratitude shown for the journey of the research team to the Torres Strait Islands with each warm welcome the team received at every gathering.

For the purposes of this report, the conversations have been summarised by themes. Common themes raised and discussed at each community meeting centred around the following:

- Model of care and staffing
- Primary health care
- Water (availability and quality)
- Power (requirement and consistency)
- Transport (safety and feasibility)
- Accommodation (for staff and patients and their carer)
- Community collaboration
- Healthy kaikai (food/eating)

# Themes Discussed at Community Meetings



## Model of Care & Staffing

The KDW Project team acknowledges the *Torres Model of Care*, as a cultural protocol of health, authorised by Zenadh Tribal Elders during the 1990's. The *Torres Model of Care* was therefore proposed as a guide to KDWP for the Badu Dialysis Unit and KDWP's associated health restoration activity.

The dialysis facility should be run by Maluilgal for Maluilgal. It needs to be a co-designed, community-led model of service delivery and care to local people. In Badu and Mabuiag, the importance of collaboration with local community members on infrastructure needs, health care initiatives, and community initiatives was highlighted. Community involvement in the planning and delivery of initiatives like care homes for the elderly is important for their success.

The dialysis unit will provide employment opportunities for staff – including nurses, health workers, doctors and cleaners – who will run, maintain, and support the dialysis unit. The importance of training local staff and how these skills can be transferrable in other areas of health service delivery, e.g., certification for provision of NDIS services, was discussed by Badu community members.

Importance of local leadership and a collaborative approach were discussed. Norma Whap was nominated as the point of contact for Mabuiag Island; Samoa Tomsana, for Kubin, Moa Island.



## Primary Health Care

Calls were made for on-the-ground services and specialists to support patients and families, to ensure attendance and participation in healthcare activities.

There were discussions on the need to promote health checks (Medicare Service Item 715), the importance of explaining test results to patients, and the need for health information to be delivered in local language. Translating information into local language will aid understanding. Community members in attendance at the Kubin meeting pledged to inform others in the community on renal conditions and the benefits of early health check-ups. Issues relating to the lack of nutritionists, specialists' infrequent visits within the outer islands of the Torres Strait, and the importance of regular support were discussed.

Plans for upgrading the primary healthcare centre on Badu Island were discussed, with a focus on co-designing clinics with the community. A large contingent comprising senior executives of Torres and Cape Hospital Health Service and the dialysis service at Thursday Island Hospital and Kowanyama participated in the Badu meeting. They demonstrated support for Kikirriu Dan Walmai project consultations and recorded this by reciprocal information sharing, signing *minalay waku* (the mat) and taking a group photograph at Badu. That intention of support, and the definition of the model of care preferred by Maluilgal, was shared at all subsequent meeting locations.



## Water

Haemodialysis requires large volumes of good quality, filtered and cooled water (relative to the local tropical environment). Concerns about the quantity and quality of water on Badu Island were raised. During large community events, such as inter-island sporting carnivals, water volume is often challenged. Potential solutions for increasing Badu Island's available water involve desalination and building a dam, which has been previously proposed.



## Power

Haemodialysis machines and the dialysis unit also require reliable electricity. Power interruptions are common on Badu Island and rely on Ergon Energy staff in Waiben to travel out to Badu Island to make repairs and restore power when there are problems. Back-up generators would be required to maintain reliable power during outages.



## Transport

Travel for patients to and from Badu Island from neighbouring Moa and Mabuiag Islands was discussed. Community members from Badu Island are very supportive of extending the services of a dialysis unit to other Maluilgau communities (Mabuiag, Kubin and St Pauls). Likewise, community members from neighbouring islands agreed that a dialysis unit on Badu Island would also benefit their communities. Transporting patients 3 times a week to Badu Island from neighbouring islands would require additional infrastructure suitable for all weather conditions and people with physical function impairment, which commonly occurs in people with Stage 4 and Stage 5 chronic kidney disease. There is no safe and reliable public transport service via sea for patients to travel back and forth, nor is there a wharf on Badu Island, essential for sea transportation to be feasible. The Queensland Ambulance Service did, for a time, utilise amphibian craft (hovercraft) between Horn Island and Waiben; this was one suggestion to safely carry a person from sea to land. An inter-island air service was also suggested, as was extending a road from Moa Island to the channel and then a short boat transit.



## Accommodation

Haemodialysis treatment duration is individualised and can vary in length between 3-5 hours. Units usually run so that a chair is booked for a morning and afternoon session, i.e., 2 patients per day per chair. The timing of treatments, and the fact that some people are unwell or weak after treatment, may require them to stay overnight on Badu Island before or after their treatment. Inclement weather could also require patients to stay for extended periods. Patient accommodation must also cater for carers of patients in appropriate configurations and must be suitable for varying physical function (as functional impairment is expected in people living with kidney failure and or with longstanding diabetes). It was noted to consider using existing housing stock, whether homes were vacated due to relocations for health support, and homes becoming overcrowded if patients returned home. All homes would need to be fitted for physical function support and it was noted that some renovations already included ramps.

Concerns were raised about housing and property management for local people undergoing treatment, bringing to light the stress and difficult choices families face when someone must be away from home for treatment.

Staff accommodation was also discussed, as this is a different service delivery model to some other remote dialysis units. The Badu unit will require housing for permanent staff as opposed to temporary fly-in, fly-out staff.

Accommodation for relief staff will also be required, as the unit will facilitate opportunities to maintain professional clinical skills within high-volume haemodialysis units that recognise and respond to emergent critical illness conditions. All this will provide clinical value to existing remote-area nurses, health workers and Indigenous clinic managers in the local primary health care service.



## Community Collaboration

There was recognition of the current disconnect between agencies and the community on Badu Island. A commitment was made to improve communication through the monthly inter-agency meetings and for Queensland Health to re-engage with these meetings. Community expressed a need for expertise and collaboration from education, health, and allied health professionals. Likewise, on Kubin, they pledged to encourage collaboration that will facilitate a community-led design for the project.



## Healthy Kai kai

Community members expressed the need for healthy kai kai (food) choices, support from Health and Wellbeing Queensland, and more on-the-ground assistance. Suggestions included cultivating a garden and initiating hydroponics. Water recycling from the dialysis unit was discussed for Badu Island, which is known for its rich soils and history of traditional farming and agriculture. Wild harvested seafood was evident in Mabuiag, brought by the families to Bamaga to feed the teams participating in the Dan Ropeyarn Cup.

## Funding

On the 1st of February 2024, KDW received notice from the Better Renal Services Steering Committee that the Minister for Health and Aged Care, The Hon. Mark Butler MP, had selected Badu Island for a Round 2 submission of a non-competitive grant application for building a Badu dialysis facility. After negotiations with the Better Renal Services Steering Committee, it was agreed that the late February/early March application would seek funding to hire a consultant to assist with engaging the necessary contractors and advisors to provide detailed quotes for the build and fit-out of the 4-chair centre and required accommodation. Costs would include travel for representatives from remote dialysis facilities in the Kimberly and Pilbara and other potential health service partners. The consultant would also assist in estimating costs associated with running and maintaining the facility, including staffing, utilities, and consumables.

## Next steps

Plans to keep the dialogue open regarding information relating to developments in the Kikirrii Dan Walmai project were discussed in Badu Island, including future meetings, sharing minutes of each meeting, and ways to seek funding for future work. It was agreed that meeting minutes and reports would be provided to Uncle Bongo for feedback prior to completion and a finalised report be distributed once completed. Engaged communities emphasised their intention to support the project and share the information with fellow community members not in attendance. There was, and will continue to be, a strong sense of unity and determination within the communities to address the challenges posed by kidney disease and the proposal of a much-needed dialysis unit on Badu Island, which will positively impact the health and wellbeing of local Maluilgal.

Jaqui Hughes and Karla Canuto are now seeking research funding to support the restoration of health in the region. The two grants to be submitted in February and early March are now with the Australia Research Council and the Medical Research Futures Fund. Additional opportunities to support KDW activities will continue to be explored.

The community engagement activities to date have been funded by two Fellowships held by Jaqui Hughes. These are her National Health and Medical Research Council Emerging Leadership Fellowship (GNT1174758, *'Yes We Will' – Implementing Indigenous-led Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kidney health in Northern and Central Australia*) and her Matthew Flinders Professorial Fellowship, a grant of approximately \$110,000. The Flinders University team is seeking additional funding sources to support future KDW project activities.



Healthy kaikai garden, Badu Island.

## Appendix – Participants at Community Gatherings

### Badu Island

Monday 23 October 2023

Badu Community Hall

10.00am–12.30pm

#### Community Members

Lily Ahmat  
Titom Nona  
Geiza Stow  
Cr. Ranetta Wosomo  
Nishel Gagai  
Simeon Solomon  
Rusellah Laza  
Lillian Laza  
Lasika Eseli

#### Queensland Health

Frank Grainer  
Dean Davidson  
Damian Arndt  
Daniel Winters-McAppion  
Sandra Glass

#### KDW Team

Robert (Bongo) Sagigi  
Jaqui Hughes  
Karla Canuto  
Naizel Enosa  
Deirdree Whap  
Leah Newcombe



KDW project team members and attendees at the meeting in Badu Community Hall, Badu Island. October 2023.

## Mabuiag

Tuesday 24 October 2023  
Mabuiag Community Hall  
10.00am–12.30pm

### Community Members

Norma Whap  
Frank Whap  
Abba Babia  
Bessie Whap  
Cr. Keith Fell  
Thowa Whap  
Sania Whap  
Norah Saylor  
John Allan Repu

### KDW Team

Jaqui Hughes  
Karla Canuto  
Naizel Enosa  
Deirdree Whap  
Leah Newcombe



KDW project team members and attendees at the meeting in Mabuiag Community Hall, Mabuaig Island. October 2023.

## Kubin

Wednesday 25 October 2023

Kubin Community Hall

9.30am–11.30am

### Community Members

Naizel Tomsana  
Samoa Tomsana  
Josie Nawia  
Katrina Hirning  
Ivy Trinkoon  
Akira Trinkoon  
Charlotte Yellub  
Pau Stephen  
Cr. Lama Trinkoon

### KDW Team

Jaqui Hughes  
Karla Canuto  
Naizel Enosa  
Deirdree Whap  
Leah Newcombe



KDW project team members and attendees at the meeting in Kubin Community Hall, Kubin (Moa Island). October 2023.

## Waiben

Friday 27th October 2023  
TRAWQ Indigenous Corporation  
10.00am–12.30pm

### Community Members

May Seriat  
Annie Seriat  
Alan Kris  
Milton Savage  
Conwell Kris  
Betty Sagigi  
Margaret Wymarra  
Ethel Millett  
Willie Baira  
Elsie Seriat  
Jack Sagigi  
Yen Loban  
Annie Mairu-Kaczmarek  
Nazareth Addi

### KDW Team

Robert (Bongo) Sagigi  
Tom Baira  
Dane Gagai  
Jaqui Hughes  
Karla Canuto  
Naizel Enosa  
Leah Newcombe



Attendees at the meeting at TRAWQ Indigenous Corporation, Waiben (Thursday Island), signing the *minalay waku*. October 2023.

## Cairns

Sunday 17th December 2023

Double Tree Hotel

2pm

### Community Members

Patrick Whap (via phone)

Horace Nona

Dick Williams

Terry Baira

Henrietta Baira

### KDW Team

Robert (Bongo) Sagigi (via phone)

Tom Baira

Dane Gagai

Jaqui Hughes

Karla Canuto

Naizel Enosa

Deirdree Whap

Candice Liddy-Stokes

Diana Mosca

Katie Cundale



KDW project team members and attendees at the meeting in Double Tree Hotel, Cairns. December 2023.

## Cairns

Monday 18th December 2023  
El Dorado Apartments  
2pm

### Community Members

Dick Williams  
Terry Baira  
Mabel Kanai  
Michale Kanai  
Rebecca Soloman

### KDW Team

Tom Baira  
Dane Gagai  
Jaqui Hughes  
Karla Canuto  
Naizel Enosa  
Deirdree Whap  
Candice Liddy-Stokes  
Diana Mosca  
Katie Cundale



KDW team members and attendees at the meeting at El Dorado Apartments, Cairns. December 2023.



**Flinders  
University**

Rural & Remote  
Health SA & NT

## Contact us

[cmph.ruralandremote@flinders.edu.au](mailto:cmph.ruralandremote@flinders.edu.au)

[Flinders.edu.au/flinders-nt](https://flinders.edu.au/flinders-nt)

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