

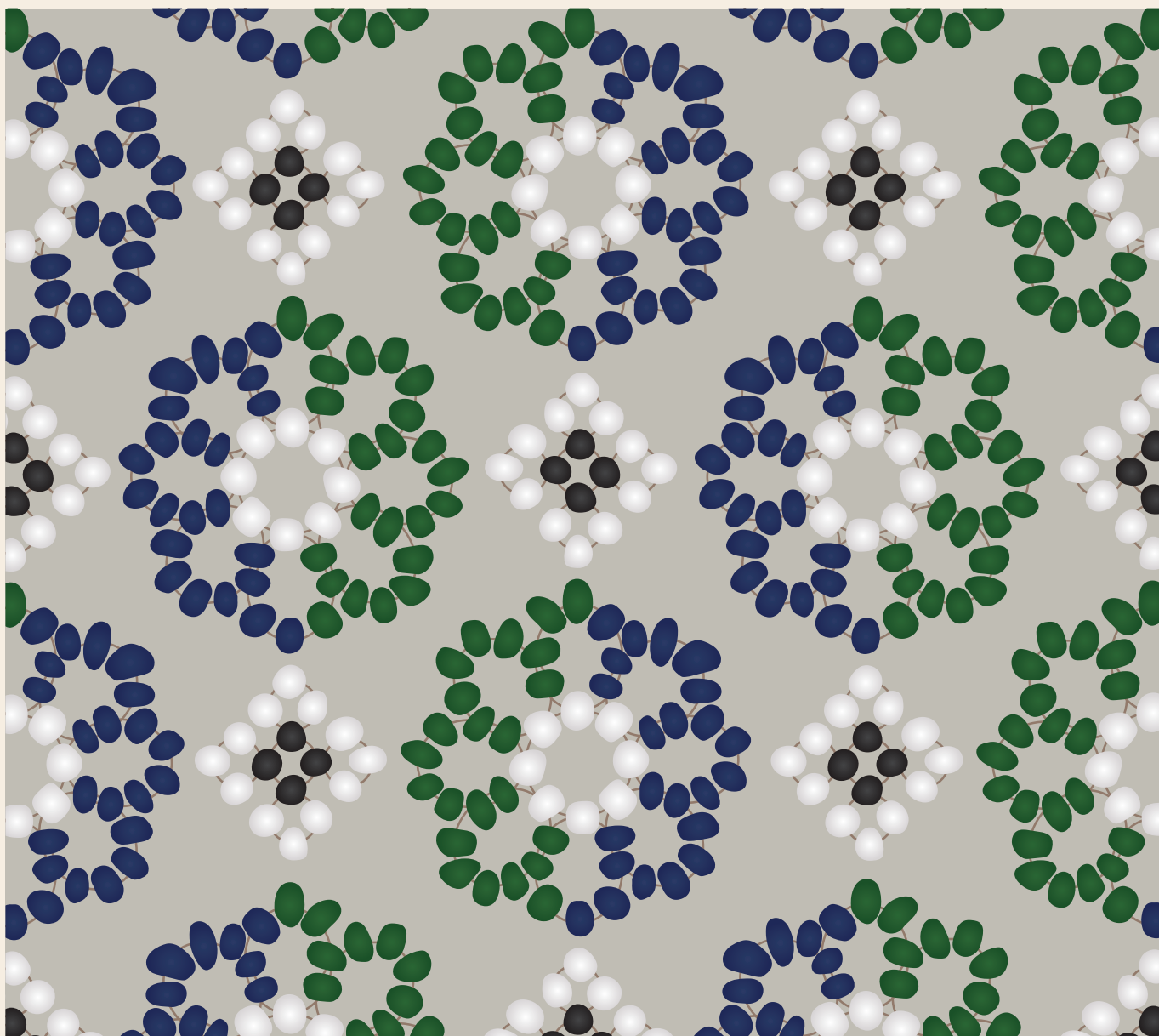


Flinders
University

Rural & Remote
Health SA & NT

Kikirriu Dan Walmai Project

Annual Report: March 2024 to February 2025



Karla Canuto, Katie Cundale, Gracie Ah Mat and Jaquelyne T Hughes

Foreword

This annual report documents the activities of the Kikirrii Dan Walmai (KDW) Project from March 2024 until February 2025 and follows on from the previous report, Kikirrii Dan Walmai: Progress Report 1: October 2023 – February 2024.

Acknowledgements of Country and Peoples

Firstly, KDW Project would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders lands on which we live and work: Kaurareg, Larrakia, Kurna, and Yirrganydji. We also acknowledge the traditional owners of Maluilgau.

We acknowledge and appreciate every person who attended a meeting or gathering and took the opportunity to talk with us over this period. Many people have assisted in the success of our engagement from inception. We thank all who have helped behind the scenes to make KDW Project a success.

Photography Acknowledgment

All photographs have been used with express permission from the photographers or are available publicly. Where appropriate, photographers have been acknowledged for their contribution.

Suggested Citation

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Funding Acknowledgment

The KDW Project community engagement activities were supported by two funding sources held by Professor Jaquelyne Hughes: the 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 grant, the total cost of which for the period from March to November 2024 was approximately \$110,000.

The KDW Project also acknowledges the in-kind support from Flinders University which included several hours of the KDW Project's Flinders staff, the Rural and Remote Health Research Business

Manager, Jack Kelly, and the Flinders University operations support, finance, legal, and human resources teams.

The Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) provided a Healthy Communities Programme grant to the value of \$2,429 for the cost of the charter boat that transported Elders, delegates, and guests from Thursday Island to Badu Island for the meeting on the 21st of October, 2024.

Cessa's Beads (Cover Artwork)



Cessa Nakata (nee Mills) is a Torres Strait Islander Elder (Kulkalgal, with bloodline to Panai, Mabuyag Island) who resides on Thursday Island. Admiring other people's beads around their necks she was inspired to start beading around 15 years ago, and at 97 years of age, she still beads today. It is a hobby that keeps her busy and focused, and she loves to create unique colour combinations and make beautiful necklaces for people to wear.

Cessa's younger sister, Rita, is Karla Canuto's grandmother and the beads that feature on the front cover belong to Karla, made with love by Aka Cessa. The beadwork has been digitised by artist Gracie Ah Mat who has kept the 'rawness' of the beads, each unique in their shape and size, coming together to form an elaborate, beautiful handcrafted design.

Pictured: Cessa Nakata at the Cairns Ukulele Festival 2016. Photo from 'Cairns Ukulele Festival' Facebook page, 24 August 2016.

Cover Artwork

Cessa's Beads by Cessa Nakata. Digitised by Gracie Ah Mat.

Warning: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are warned that this document may contain the names and/or images of deceased persons.

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KDW Project Annual Report Authors



Associate Professor Karla Canuto (nee Fell) (Kulkalgal)

Karla is a Torres Strait Islander, descendant of the Naghir Tribe of the Kulkalgal Clan, and a recognised national leader in Indigenous health promotion. Her connections to family and culture, and her work experience across the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area inform her approach to research which addresses community-identified needs with community-designed solutions.



Katie Cundale (Non-Indigenous)

Katie is a non-Indigenous researcher and public health professional from Oxford, England. She has worked with Professor Hughes for many years on the National Indigenous Kidney Transplantation Taskforce and carries out research and support for the KDW Project team.



Gracie Ah Mat (Wagadagam)

Gracie is a descendant of the Wagadagam tribe of Mabuiag in the Torres Strait Islands, as well as Western and Eastern Arrernte (Mparntwe) and Gurindji (Wave Hill). She graduated from high school in 2021 and has worked in health research at Flinders University for two years. Gracie joined the KDW Project team in 2024 to provide administrative support and gain research experience.



Professor Jaquelyne Hughes (nee Whap) (Wagadagam) Nephrologist and Clinical Researcher

Professor Jaquelyne Hughes is Wagadagam of Mabuyag Island of Torres Strait. She is a kidney specialist physician and clinical researcher, invited through eldership (which recognises her own title of Koike of Medicine, as Pulipul Mabiag–Wagadagam tribe and Panay tribe) to assist and support the Torres Strait nation with her clinical professional skills. It is from this position that Hughes has been involved with the KDW Project Annual Report from March 2024 to February 2025.

Photographer credits:

1. Judith Aisthorpe, Media and Communications, Rural and Remote Health, Flinders University.
2. Nharla Photography, NIKTT Gathering 2025.
3. Jordyn Ah Mat, Indigenous Allied Health Australia.
4. Judith Aisthorpe, Media and Communications, Rural and Remote Health, Flinders University.

Executive Summary

Kikirriu Dan Walmai (KDW) Project is a Torres Strait Islander-led initiative to restore health to Maluilgal.¹ KDW Project honours cultural protocol and acknowledges the leadership and responsibility of Kuiku Mabaigal² and elected leaders.

In 2023-2024, the KDW Project had two objectives:

1. Advocate for a dialysis unit to be built on Badu Island for Maluilgal;
2. Prevent and manage chronic diseases by restoring health across Maluilgau.

During October to December 2023, the KDW Project team visited Maluilgau communities on Badu, Mabuiag, and Moa Islands, Waiben (Thursday Island), and Gimuy (Cairns). The engagement visits aimed to:

1. introduce the region of Maluilgau to KDW Project and the team;
2. discuss with Maluilgal (the people of the near west region), the need for dialysis and the possibility of a partnership to advocate for a remote dialysis unit to be built on Badu Island;
3. gain support for the KDW Project team to progress action towards the two objectives.

The KDW Project team gathered advice and feedback, and sought guidance and perspectives from the community on the impact on their life, family, and community, their preference to utilise a local facility, and issues or concerns related to potentially receiving dialysis treatment on Badu Island.

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

Community members 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 visit the area if the Badu dialysis unit could offer 'holiday dialysis' (short-term dialysis) to facilitate cultural protocols.



Community leaders, Elders and invited delegates at the KDW Project Progress Report 1 handback event (21 October 2024) outside of the Ugarie Hall, Badu Island. Photo credit: Torres Strait Regional Authority

¹ The people of Maluilgau, the near western cluster, Torres Strait.
² Head people.

Kikirriu Dan Walmai (KDW)

Kikirriu Dan Walmai means ‘Our Health Resurrected’ in Kala Lagaw Ya, the language from Western and Central islands of the Torres Strait. The name was gifted in 2023 to Professor Hughes by her father, Koemabiag of Wagadagam, Mabuiag Island, and linguist, Athe Patrick Whap. Flinders University is utilising ‘Kikirriu Dan Walmai Project’ as a collective name for the many projects that will work to improve and restore the health of Maluilgau, led by Torres Strait Islander people in partnership with Flinders University.

KDW Project is a Torres Strait Islander-led research and community action program of work in response to the urgent community-identified need to restore health to people living in isolated communities of ZENADH (the Torres Strait).

Our forefathers were strong and healthy – strong in their culture and tradition, and healthy in body and mind. The healthy traditional lifestyle was interrupted, creating a pathway for chronic diseases and shortened lifespans. Obesity, high blood pressure, heart and vascular diseases, type 2 diabetes, and chronic kidney disease are some

of the common conditions behind disability and shortened lifespans in the Torres Strait.

To restore wellness, all relevant factors contributing to these disabling and life-limiting diseases need to be recognised and addressed. Torres Strait culture recognises the importance of restoring. To do so, we must first restore the mechanisms that contribute to health, including the community-care system, embedded in cultural protocol and cultural leadership. This culturally embedded, community-caring system empowers us to restore health by embracing Torres Strait culture and enacting our sovereign right to determine our futures.

In 2024, KDW Project supported tribal leaders from Badu Island – Wakaid Tribal Council – to receive Commonwealth Government funding for the design and build phase of a dialysis unit on Badu Island to service Maluilgau. In doing so, objective 1 of KDW Project was achieved. KDW is now focussed on the prevention and management of chronic diseases such as diabetes and chronic kidney disease by restoring health across Maluilgau.

The KDW Project Team

KDW Project is led by Professor Jaquelyne Hughes and Associate Professor Karla Canuto. They are supported by a team of Flinders University staff, including Candice Liddy-Stokes, Katie Cundale, Gracie Ah Mat and Leah Newcombe, who provide project management, administrative support, and academic assistance.

The team engages casual staff for specific tasks, such as clinical nurse, Naizel Enosa (Aragun tribe, Badu Island), and paramedic, Deidree Whap (Panay

Tribe, Mabuyag Island). Naizel and Deidree provide valuable community facilitation by offering cultural advice, language translation, and relationship brokerage for the KDW Project team during community consultations. KDW Project also engages technical experts as needed, including statistician, Associate Professor Shahid Ullah. The team will continue to grow and evolve as required to meet KDW Project objectives.

Scan or click the QR code for more information.



KDW Project Activities

The KDW Project team has had a busy and productive 12 months with the following significant activities to report in the period from March 2024 up until February 2025.

- Renal Dialysis Unit Badu Island Partnership
- ZENADH Scoping Review
- ANZDATA Project
- Youth Social and Emotional Wellbeing on Badu Island
- ZENADH Health Science Research and Education Council
- Sharing the impact and value of the work
- Grants

Timeline

KDW Project's involvement in the Badu Island dialysis unit is shown in the image on pages 12 and 13. The artwork reflects the KDWP team's work of supporting the health and wellness of Maluilgal. The beauty of the image, created by Gracie Ah Mat, reflects KDWP Torres Strait Islander members' deep connection through bloodline to Maluilgau.

The rocks peeking through the strait between Badu Island and Mua Island in the Torres Strait symbolise the remnants of time. They stand as a quiet reminder of continuity and connection to those who have navigated these waters for generations.



Pictured:

1. Associate Professor Lisa Whop and Professor Jaquelyne Hughes at the launch of the MJA Indigenous Health Special Issue held at the South Australian Health and Medical Institute, Tarnanya (Adelaide) on the 5th of July 2024. Professor Hughes was a guest editor for the issue and the publication includes the paper by Professor Hughes, Associate Professor Canuto and Associate Professor Mills entitled 'Securing surviving futures: Zenadh Health Science Research and Education Council'. Photo by Ben Searcy: bensearcy.com.au
2. Associate Professor Karla Canuto and Professor Jaquelyne Hughes at the Batchelor Institute's 50th Anniversary Gala Dinner held at the Darwin Convention Centre, Garramilla (Darwin) on the 17th of August 2024. Associate Professor Canuto and Professor Hughes attended as guests of the Lowitja Institute. Photo by Charlie Bliss, Charlie Bliss Creative.
3. Sunrise at TI Wharf, 21 October 2024. Photo by Karla Canuto.
4. From left to right: Minister Ged Kearney, Dr Melanie Beacroft, Associate Professor Karla Canuto and Professor Jaquelyne Hughes at Badu Island Community Meeting on the 21st of October 2024. Photo by Isaiah Omamogho, Minister Kearney's Office.



Chronic Kidney Disease and Haemodialysis

Kidney (pulipul), help blood waste made by the body, to move to the urine (mimi), and so is removed from the body. Healthy kidneys, keep the blood waste level low all the time, because healthy kidneys are constantly detecting waste, and moving the waste to the urine (mimi).

Disease of the kidney prevent the kidney from properly removing blood waste. That blood waste can stay in the blood and can stop other parts of the body from working properly. A person with kidney failure can be very sick. Kidney failure is a cause of death.

A haemodialysis machine is a specialised blood-filtering machine, to detect blood waste from kidney failure, and moves it out of the body, discarded in the drain or sink. When a haemodialysis machine is connected to that person's blood (by a needle and tubes) for enough time (usually 4-5 hours) and regularly in the week (three times a week), the blood waste levels can be low. The persons health can be improved by using haemodialysis regularly as part of their overall health care plan.

A person who has self-care haemodialysis, have one haemodialysis machine and chair in their own home, which they use over the course of the week. In a shared haemodialysis facility, up to four people can use 1 machine (and its chair) over the course of a week, if the facility operates two dialysis shifts per day (morning and afternoon, each 4-5 hours), and each person uses the machine three times a week.

Pictured:

Wakaid Tribal Council Elder, Robert Sagigi receiving haemodialysis treatment at the Cairns Private Hospital, September 2024. Photo by Brendan Mounter, ABC News: abc.net.au/news/2024-09-27/torres-health-system-failure-preventable-disease-deaths/104384190

Better Renal Services for First Nations Peoples Budget Measure

In early 2023, the Federal Government announced the Better Renal Services for First Nations Peoples Steering Committee would oversee the delivery of a \$73.2 million budget measure to

1. design and build in very remote Australia, up to thirty haemodialysis units and;
2. in each of those dialysis units, to fund the initial purchase costs for four-haemodialysis machines and related equipment, and;
3. a local accommodation facility for two health professionals trained to deliver haemodialysis treatments in those respective dialysis units.

This budget measure, involving four dialysis machines could therefore offer approximately 16 people to live in very remote Australia with locally accessible life-sustaining haemodialysis supported by a trained dialysis nurse, health worker or health practitioner.



Elder and linguist of Mabuiag, Mr Patrick Whap, has suggested the Kalalagawya terminology, *Kulkaw-midiu-malil* (blood-purification-machine), meaning a machine that dilutes blood waste (purifies) from a person with 'kikir' of their 'pulipul' (kidney disease).

Renal Dialysis Unit Badu Island Partnership

Wakaid Tribal Council Elders raised the opportunity for people of near west Torres Strait, of using a dialysis unit locally on Badu Island for Maluilgal, at the Ninu Wakainthamam Midikidh – State of the Mind: Wellbeing Symposium on Badu Island in May of 2023. Professor Jaqui Hughes, a Clinical Research Professor at Flinders University attended the meeting as an invited guest of Wakaid Tribal Council. Professor Hughes is a Wagadagam woman (Mabuiag Island), and nephrologist based in Darwin.

The BRS funding application process required evidence of need and community support of the dialysis unit. Wakaid Tribal Council and Flinders University Kikirriu Dan Walmai project team worked together to plan and deliver five regional consultations, to learn about the extent of support from community to build, operate and use a four-chair haemodialysis facility, for people of Badu, Mabuiag, St Paul and Kubin. Wakaid Tribal Council members and delegates and Flinders University project team travelled to Badu Island in October 2023, for the first of five community consultation meetings held during October- December 2023. Professor Jaquelyne Hughes' National Health and Medical Research Council Investigator Grant provided the funds for the KDW Project team for the engagement meetings and consolidate community input and advice.

Following consolidation of community meetings, Wakaid Tribal Council hosted a stakeholder meeting on Thursday Island on the 4th of April 2024 to discuss partnerships to assist Wakaid Tribal Council to build a renal dialysis unit on Badu Island. The meeting was attended by representatives from Wakaid Tribal Council, Flinders University, and Torres and Cape Hospital Health Service. At the meeting, Flinders confirmed their support of Wakaid Tribal Council and agreed to enter a partnership to assist with the application and planning stage of the funding submission. Torres and Cape Hospital Health Service provided in-principal support to the project, consistent with their stated support gained at the Badu Island consultation in October 2023.

In May 2024, Assistant Minister Indigenous Health, Senator Malarndirri MacCarthy, visited Torres Strait, and met with Wakaid Tribal Council and other Elders of Maluilgal, to discuss community-identified needs to safely sustain haemodialysis care in isolated Badu Island that were unfunded in the Budget Measure. Discussions focussed on water quality and volume, electricity, inter-island transport, and community housing. Local media documented the meeting. Following the meeting, Wakaid Tribal Council submitted a BRS Round 2 application, and was subsequently awarded a \$3.5M (+GST) grant through Better Renal Services, funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care, to build a four-chair dialysis unit on Badu Island for Maluilgal.

Flinders University was appointed the administrative partner to Wakaid Tribal Council and travelled with Wakaid Tribal Council to announce the funding success, discuss next steps and deliver the KDW Project Progress report 1, a meeting was held at the community hall, Ugarie on Badu Island on 21 October 2024. The invitation list was generated by the Wakaid Tribal Council and included the Honourable Minister Ged Kearney, Senator Nita Green, Dr Mel Beacroft from Better Renal Services Steering Committee, and representatives from Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA), including the Chair, Pedro Stephen AM. Torres Strait Island Regional Council (TSIRC) Councillors from Badu Island, Mabuiag Island and Moa Island, Ranetta Wosomo, Keith Fell, Iona Manus and John Levi, were invited but they were unable to attend due to business engagements on another island.

Attendees travelled from Thursday Island with Indigenous owned and operated charter company, Time and Tide Transport FNQ, on a ferry named Baba Zorro to Badu Island. The 15-metre ferry had capacity for 34 passengers and was skippered by experienced Torres Strait Islanders skippers, Mr Willie Wigness and Mr David Sabatino. The journey took approximately 2.5 hours each way and gave the passengers an opportunity to meet, liaise, and reflect. For those from elsewhere, it gave an appreciation for the isolated location of Badu Island, and the need for crucial infrastructure



and connection of a new health service in one of Australia's most isolated locations. This trip was largely funded by Professor Jaquelyne Hughes' NHMRC Investigator Grant. The Torres Strait Regional Authority funded the cost of the charter boat hire. The meeting was well attended and generated dialogue in local languages and in English, and both-ways discussion between Torres Strait Islander people, and Torres Strait Islander people with regional and national elected officials, and the BRS Steering Committee representative. Concern about the growing burden of kidney failure beyond the capacity of a locally built four-chair haemodialysis unit, offered in the current infrastructure funding, generated concern about expanding kidney failure services after the initial building, and activity and programs that reduce chronic kidney failure among Maluilgal. Decision and agreement to progress the Badu Dialysis Unit

was confirmed, and attendees demonstrated their support for the meeting by posing for a photograph during the lunch break. The notes from the meeting are available on request. In addition, Torres News covered the story in their publication on 31 October 2024.

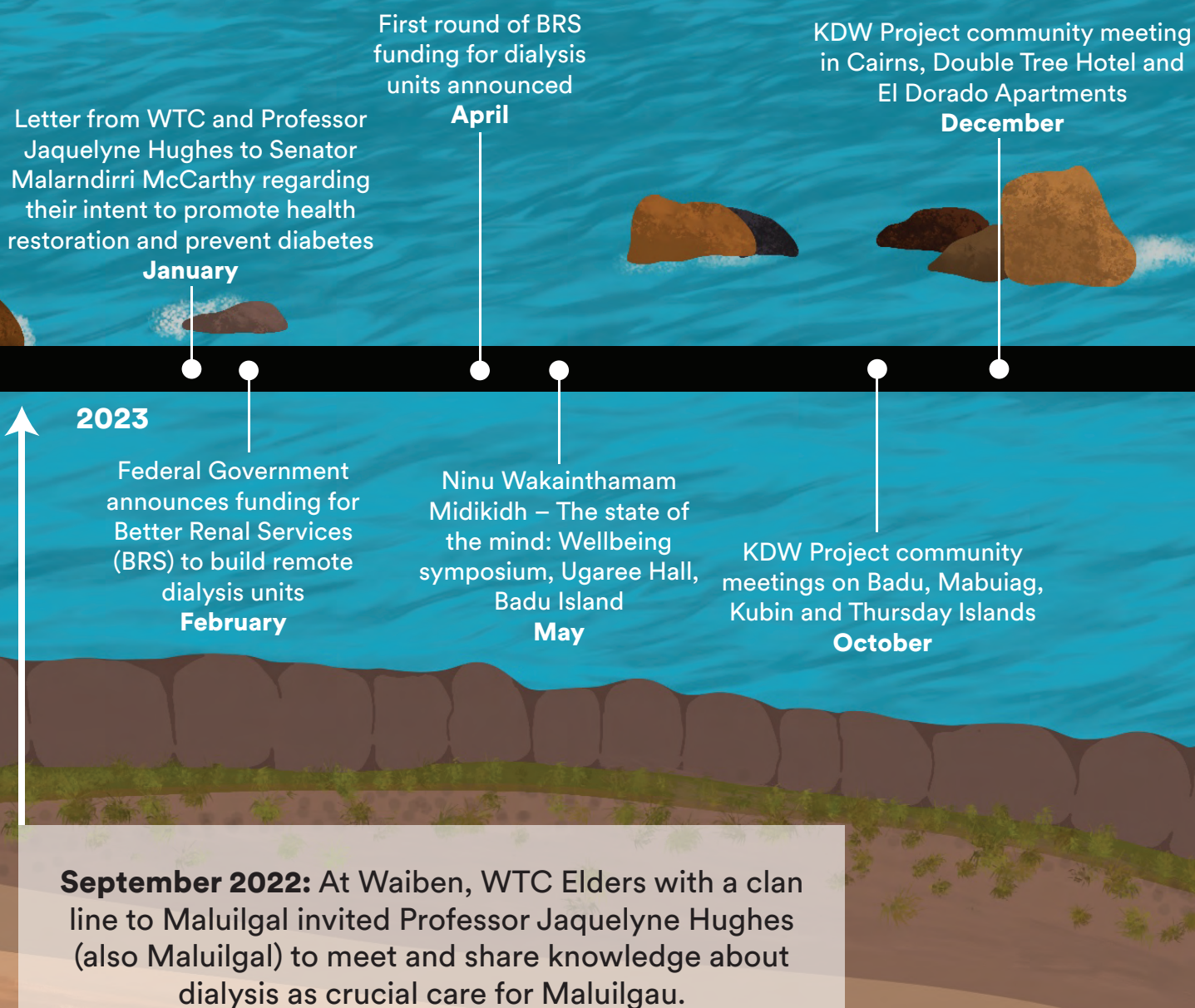
The application for the Commonwealth funding required Wakaid Tribal Council to have a partner organisation that could assist with the administration of funds. While Flinders University was actively supporting that role during 2023-2024, by December 2024, Wakaid Tribal Council was in a position to lead the project without assistance. The drafted contract between Wakaid Tribal Council and Flinders University was never executed. The KDW Project team completed their commissioned tasks to assist the Wakaid Tribal Council to successfully obtain the funding, and Wakaid Tribal Council hold full control over the project.

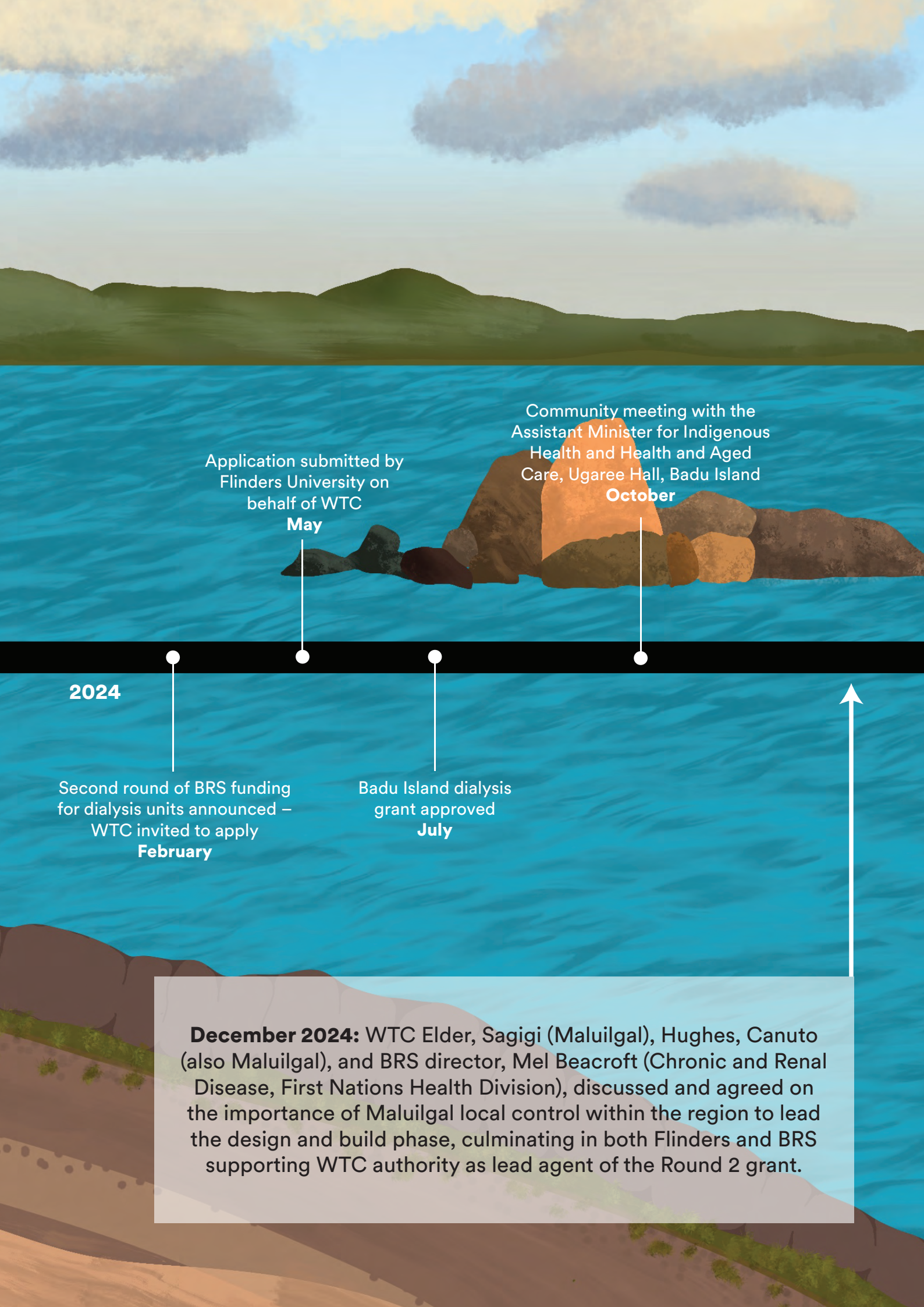
Pictured above and overleaf:

1. Wakaid Tribal Council Badu Island dialysis unit partnership meeting with Dr Mel Beacroft from BRS and representatives from Flinders University, Queensland Health pictured with Thursday Island AITHM staff at the James Cook University campus building on Thursday Island, 4 April 2024. Photo posted by Kaz Sagigi on Facebook.
2. Historical meeting of Wakaid Tribal Elders with Minister McCarthy to discuss a potential remote dialysis unit on Badu Island. 1 May 2024, Waibene (Thursday Island). Photo by Carli Willis. Published in the Torres News on 2 May 2024, SBS and NITV.
Back row L-R: Dr Melanie Beacroft, Mr Willie Misi, Mr Nishel Gagai, Mr Don Elliot Whap (Snr), Dr Jaqui Hughes
Front row L-R: Mr Willie Baira, Mr Willie Wigness, Mr Robert (Bongo) Sagigi, Hon. Malarndirri McCarthy, Minister for Health and Ageing, Mr Tom Jack Baira, Mr Dane Gagai (Snr)
3. Robert Sagigi, Willie Wigness, Tom Biara and Dane Gagai on Baba Zorro on the 21st of October 2024, travelling from Waibene to Badu Island on Baba Zorro, a 15m ferry owned by the Indigenous charter company Time and Tide. Photo by Karla Canuto.
4. Community leaders, Elders and invited delegates at the KDW Project Progress Report 1 handback event (21 October 2024) at Ugarie Hall, Badu Island. Photo by Lani Sprague, Senator Green's Office.



Timeline of Kikirriu Dan Walmai Project's Involvement in the Badu Island Dialysis Unit





Application submitted by
Flinders University on
behalf of WTC
May

Community meeting with the
Assistant Minister for Indigenous
Health and Health and Aged
Care, Ugaree Hall, Badu Island
October

2024

Second round of BRS funding
for dialysis units announced –
WTC invited to apply
February

Badu Island dialysis
grant approved
July

December 2024: WTC Elder, Sagigi (Maluilgal), Hughes, Canuto (also Maluilgal), and BRS director, Mel Beacroft (Chronic and Renal Disease, First Nations Health Division), discussed and agreed on the importance of Maluilgal local control within the region to lead the design and build phase, culminating in both Flinders and BRS supporting WTC authority as lead agent of the Round 2 grant.



ZENADH Scoping Review

Throughout consultation across Maluigau, the KDW Project team has been asked many times about the ‘data’ that exists about us, who has it, and what it says. In terms of research, there has been a plethora of research projects over the years that have collected potentially useful data that may inform future health research in the region. To answer the question, the KDW Project team is conducting a scoping review of existing published health and health research materials (publications). The aim of the scoping review is to collate the published research, including findings for communities within the region.

This scoping review will not include collected data from the region collated with data from elsewhere and not reported separately. The purpose of the scoping review is to identify studies that report specifically on data from the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area (see Figure 1). It should, however, be noted that several studies that can and should inform future studies are not included but nonetheless provide information on the types of studies that have been completed and the type of data that has been gathered.

A total of 1849 documents were extracted for screening, with 550 full texts reviewed. 162 studies have been included for data extraction for the review. Early findings indicate that topics published on the regions include health conditions such as diabetes, mental health, infectious diseases, and asthma, with research methods ranging from case studies and health surveys to qualitative interviews. Data extraction and analysis are ongoing.

The KDW Project team aims to publish and share the scoping in 2025 on our website.

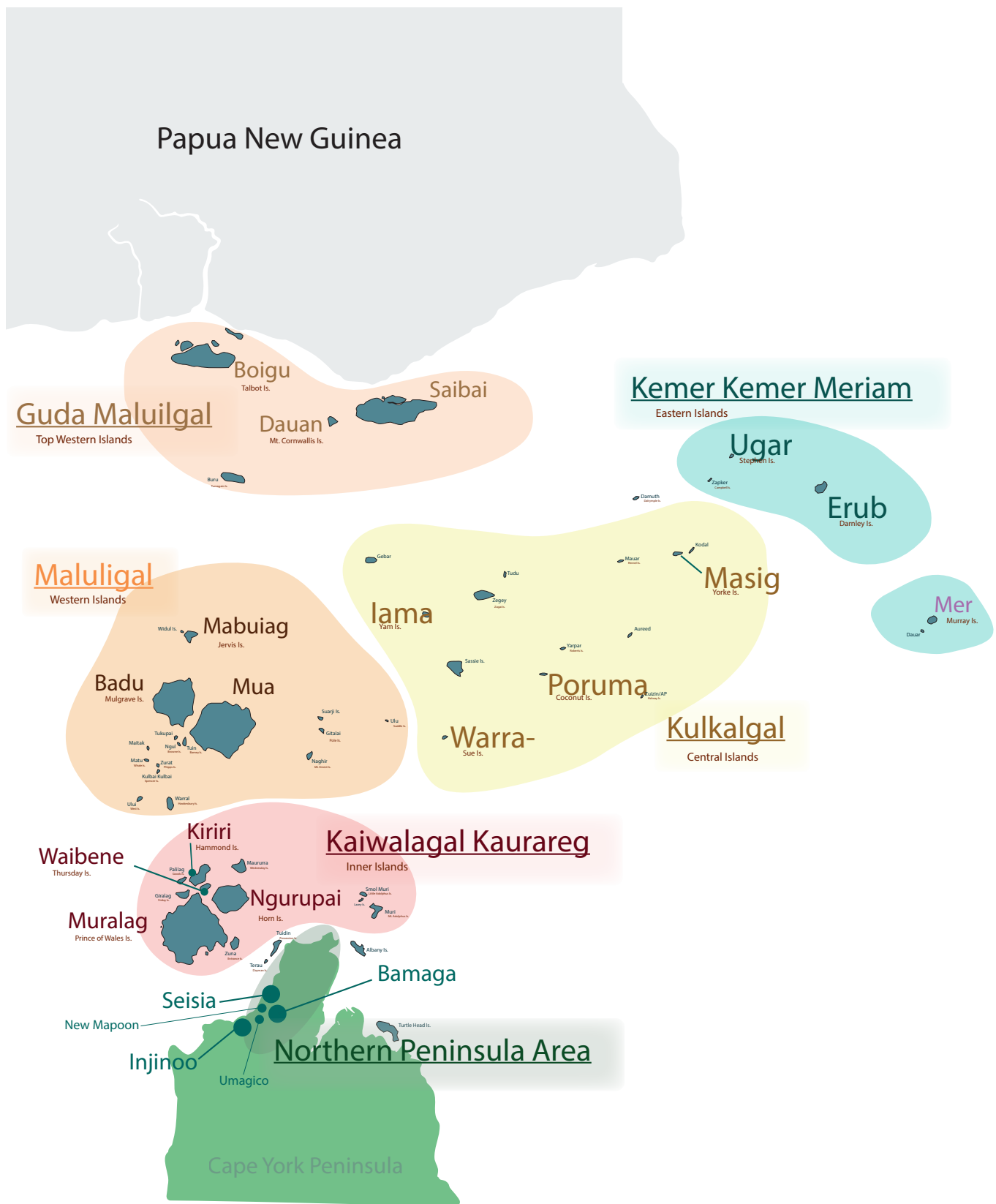


Figure 1. Map of the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area regions. Modified version of '5 traditional island clusters within the Torres Strait' by Gur a Baradharaw Kod, from gbk.org.au/pbcs. (Language groups removed for readability and the 5 communities of the Northern Peninsula Area added by K. Cundale)

ANZDATA Project

The Australian and New Zealand Dialysis and Transplant Registry (ANZDATA) is a clinical-quality registry that collates information annually on people who receive dialysis and transplantation. It produces de-identified and aggregated reports which can reveal dialysis and transplant service activity across Australia. Within the KDW Project, we will generate information on Torres Strait Islander peoples' use of dialysis and kidney transplantation since the 1960s, when the ANZDATA Registry began. This will be the first-ever ANZDATA report specifically on Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Data for Torres Strait Islander peoples has always been aggregated with Aboriginal peoples. KDW Project has accessed the de-identified data for all registered persons who identified as either Torres Strait Islander or both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander from ANZDATA records. The aim is to uncover the burden of kidney failure among Torres Strait Islander peoples. This will help us identify the future kidney health needs for Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This information was first presented in August 2024 as a poster presentation at the Australia and New Zealand Society of Nephrology Annual Scientific Meeting and was also presented at the American Society of Nephrology Kidney Week 2024.

Additional information such as publications will be shared in the Torres Strait and made available on our website.



Professor Jaquelyne Hughes with the KDW Project posters presented at the 59th Australian and New Zealand Society of Nephrology Annual Scientific Meeting (31 August – 4 September, 2024), Adelaide, Kurna Yarta, South Australia. Photo by Katie Cundale.

ZENADH Health Science Research and Education Council

In July 2024, the Medical Journal of Australia published a perspective article, co-authored by Professor Hughes and Associate Professor Canuto, along with Associate Professor Uncle Phillip Mills FRACP(Hons) OAM. The article is important as it identifies a culturally responsible way of governing Torres Strait Islander resources and processes which drive better health. While a ZENADH Health Science Research and Education Council awaits formalisation, KDW Project will observe and uphold cultural respect and Torres Strait sovereignty.

Please visit our website or follow the link to access the article.

doi.org/10.5694/mja2.52351

Youth Social and Emotional Wellbeing on Badu Island

In December 2024, Councillor Ranetta Wosomo, TSIRC representative from Badu Island, reached out to Associate Professor Karla Canuto for advice and support following incidents of youth suicide and self-harm on Badu Island. At the urgent community meeting, it was raised that the community needed support to start men's and women's groups or programs.

Professor Jaquelyne Hughes, Associate Professor Karla Canuto and Councillor Ranetta Wosomo met to discuss what support the KDW Project team could provide. Potential funding opportunities have been identified and shared for the community to consider. The KDW Project team has also offered assistance with funding applications, program design and evaluation.

We look forward to being of assistance in any way that we can to support the social and emotional wellbeing of our young people.

Sharing the impact and value of this work

The KDW Project team shares information and findings through a range of channels, including community meetings, direct communication with partners and stakeholders, public updates on our website, and dissemination via academic publications and presentations at relevant events and conferences.

The community meeting on Badu Island in October 2024 served a dual purpose: to provide an update for Community and invite questions regarding the Commonwealth-funded renal dialysis unit, and to share information about Kikirrii Dan Walmai Project activities, including the analysis of renal data held by ANZDATA and the Scoping Review which identify existing and relevant health research data to the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area.

In May 2025, Professor Hughes and Associate Professor Canuto will visit Thursday Island and Mabuiag Island to meet with stakeholders and to share the KDW Project 2024-2025 Annual Report.

The following content describes KDW Project work shared at recent conferences and professional meetings.

Adelaide, Kurna Yarta, South Australia 31 Aug – 4 Sep 2024

Two posters were presented at the 59th Australian and New Zealand Society of Nephrology Annual Scientific Meeting by Professor Jaquelyne Hughes. See photo on previous page.

The posters were:

- Historical and Contemporary Burden of End-Stage Kidney Disease Among Torres Strait Islander People of Australia, 1963 – 2022
- Planning for Locally Provided Haemodialysis Care in Badu Island in the Torres Strait: Kikirrii Dan Walmai Project

Cairns, Queensland 18 Oct 2024

Associate Professor Karla Canuto was invited to give a Keynote presentation. The title of the presentation was ‘Kikirriu Dan Walmai Project: an initiative of the Tribal Leaders of Badu Island to restore wellness’.

San Diego, California 24 – 27 Oct 2024

Associate Professor Shahid Ullah presented a poster during American Society of Nephrology Kidney Week on behalf of Professor Jaquelyne Hughes and the KDW Project team.

The poster was:

- Historical and Contemporary Burden of End-Stage Kidney Disease Among Torres Strait Islander People of Australia, 1963 – 2022

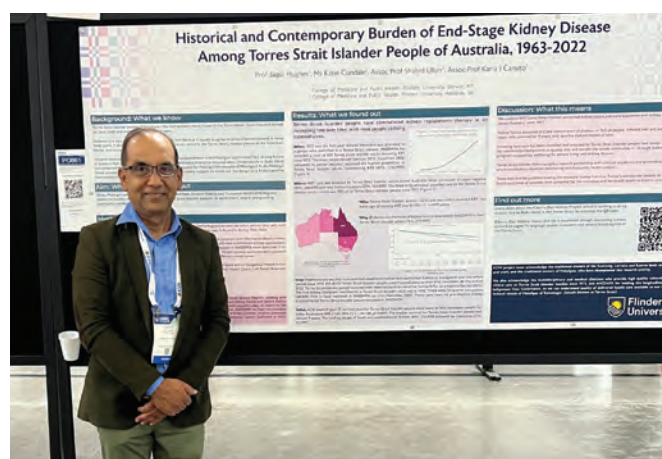
Darwin, Northern Territory 11 – 14 Nov 2024

Professor Jaquelyne Hughes was invited to deliver a keynote presentation at the 28th ANZ Prevocational Medical Education Forum. Her presentation was titled ‘Survival Stories: Research led by and delivered for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have high health care needs’.

All these posters are available to view on our website.

KDW Project work shared through peer-reviewed publications:

Hughes, J.T., Canuto, K.J., Mills, P.J. (2024). Securing surviving futures: Zenadh Health Science Research and Education Council. *Medical Journal of Australia*, doi.org/10.5694/mja2.52351



Pictured:

1. Associate Professor Karla Canuto's keynote presentation at the Cairns Research and Innovation Symposium on 18 October 2024, Cairns, Gimuy, Queensland. Photo by Michelle Whap, Torres Strait Islander woman and Senior Physiotherapist Cairns Hospital.
2. Associate Professor Shahid Ullah with the KDW Project ANZDATA poster at the American Society of Nephrology Kidney Week, 24-27 October 2024, San Diego, California. Photo by Katie Cundale.
3. Professor Jaquelyne Hughes' keynote presentation at the Prevocational Medical Education Forum, 14 November 2024. Photograph published on the Prevocational Medical Education Forum 2024 Facebook page.

Grants

In February 2025, two major grants were awarded to KDW Project team members recognising them as national leaders in their respective fields. This 5-year funding will commence in January 2026.

NHMRC Investigator Grant (Leadership Level 2)

Awarded to Professor Jaquelyne Hughes
And We Are: Determined as Indigenous Leaders to Advance First Nation Kidney Health

\$2,954,575.00

NHMRC Investigator Grant (Leadership Level 1)

Awarded to Associate Professor Karla Canuto
Community-led Health Promotion in the Torres Strait

\$2,818,905.00

Scan or click the QR code to learn more about the 2025 Investigator Grants awarded to Professor Jaquelyne Hughes, Associate Professor Karla Canuto, and other Flinders University recipients.





Contact us

Click or scan the QR code to keep up to date with our latest news and learn more about KDW Project.

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We acknowledge Torres Strait Islander people are First Scientists of Kaiwalagal or ZENADH. As Torres Strait Islanders and nationally recognised leaders in our fields, we strive to consistently demonstrate our cultural and academic integrity, and seek to be known as trusted researchers working for our people. We acknowledge that trust relies on building and maintaining relationships, mutual benefits, and a commitment to meaningful partnerships. The KDW Project is committed to working in partnership with local communities and stakeholders for the benefit of the peoples of ZENADH.