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MEDIA RELEASE

WIMMERA HEALTH CARE GROUP ACKNOWLEDGES TRADITIONAL OWNERS IN DIMBOOLA

More than 30 people attended a ceremony to honour the region's Traditional Owners at Wimmera Health Care Group's Dimboola campus today.

The ceremony, jointly organised by the health care group and Barengi Gadjin Land Council, included a Welcome to Country Ceremony and unveiling of a Traditional Owners' plaque.

The plaque, which is displayed in the hospital foyer, features the artwork of Aunty Nancy Harrison. Aunty Nancy, a Wotjobaluk Elder who lives in Dimboola, spoke proudly about her childhood growing up in Antwerp and the stories behind the images in her artwork.

Chief Executive of Wimmera Health Care Group, Mr Chris Scott, said that the ceremony was a significant occasion for the health care group and the local Koori community.

"We wanted to pay our respects to the five Traditional Owner groups; the Wotjobaluk, Wergaia, Jupagalk, Jadawadjali and Jaadwa people and their Elders, both past and present."

"We held a similar ceremony in Horsham on 29 May. We believe that we are the first Victorian hospital to pay our respects to our Traditional Owners in this way" he said.

Mr Sandy Hodge, Chief Executive of Barengi Gadjin Land Council said that he appreciated the close relationship between both organisations. "Both ceremonies have been arranged in close consultation with Barengi Gadjin on behalf of the Traditional Owners in a way that has been very respectful both culturally and in encouraging community involvement. We are very pleased that plaques acknowledging the Traditional Owners are now proudly displayed in prominent positions at both hospitals" he said.



From left Sandy Hodge (Executive Officer, Barengi Gadjin Land Council), Chris Scott and Bonnie Thompson (Wimmera Health Care Group), Aunty Nancy Harrison, Uncle Richard Marks, Aunty Faye Marks (front), and Aunty Irene Harrison (back right) pictured with the traditional owners plaque at Dimboola

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