

ANNUAL REPORT 2021/2022

THE PEAK PROFESSIONAL
BODY FOR THE REMOTE AND
ISOLATED HEALTH WORKFORCE

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CRANApplus acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land, waters and sky, and respects their enduring spiritual connection to Country. We acknowledge the sorrow of the past and our hope and belief that we can move to a place of equity, partnership and justice together. We acknowledge Elders past, present and emerging, and pay our respects to the cultural authority of First Peoples.

Cover: El Questro Mountain Range, WA – Hideaki – stock.adobe.com
Above: Finke Gorge National Park, NT – bennymarty – stock.adobe.com

CEO'S REPORT



As I reflect upon the previous financial year, I am pleased to share that CRANApplus has continued to achieve its strategic priorities and provide unwavering support to the remote health workforce.

As the world continued to grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic, the past 12 months brought further upheaval to our professional and personal lives. The remote health workforce has been steadfast in rising to the various challenges and demonstrated resilience and professionalism throughout the rollout of vaccines, changing public health advice, and in transition to the 'new normal'.

Remote area nurses, together with the broader remote area workforce, have worked tirelessly, often under very difficult circumstances, to provide care and support the health and wellbeing of those living in remote and isolated communities.

Throughout this time, CRANApplus membership has continued to grow. We welcomed many new nurses and midwives and retained long standing members, all of whom are committed to the values to which we aspire.

Despite the background of the pandemic, CRANApplus has been delivering high-quality education, specifically tailored to the remote context. We successfully delivered face-to-face courses across Australia and continued to provide a suite of online courses and modules for those working in remote practice.

The CRANApplus First Peoples' Strategy has guided broad actions and is embedded into all facets of the organisation. Our support of the workforce has seen a range of initiatives delivered by our Mental Health and Wellbeing Team, building on the service provided by the Bush Support Line. Our workshops and resources are designed to engage and inform and provide advice specific to the rural and remote context.

Remote area nurses, together with the broader remote area workforce, have worked tirelessly, often under very difficult circumstances, to provide care.

The Professional Services team assisted with career advice in a time of pronounced personal and professional isolation. CRANApplus represented and advocated for the workforce by providing straightforward advice to decision makers at all levels of state and federal government. As an organisation we are represented at many policymaking steering committees, stakeholder groups and forums.

Our volunteers donate significant time to support the organisation each year, and we are sincerely grateful for their commitment to 'give back' to their profession.

I commend the dynamic, highly skilled CRANApplus Team for their dedication and commitment to our strategic objectives and thank the Executive Team for their collegial support and leadership.

CRANApplus is greatly obliged to its Board of Directors who generously volunteer their combined experience and skills to govern the organisation, under the capable counsel of Fiona Wake, Board Chair.

CRANApplus acknowledges the ongoing support of the Australian Government, Department of Health and Aged Care for its continued funding through the provision of a Commonwealth Grant over 2021-2024. This funding ensures that the organisation can continue to build on its significant achievements in providing the remote and isolated health workforce with support, advocacy, and educational opportunities.

Katherine Isbister
Chief Executive Officer
CRANApplus

CHAIR'S REPORT



The unity, passion and resilience of the CRANApplus team is evident as staff continue to go above and beyond to deliver optimal outcomes.

It is evident that the 'new normal' environment has settled in for the longer term. Notwithstanding the many challenges faced over the past 12 months, CRANApplus has continued to adapt and grow in its vision as the peak professional body for the remote and isolated health workforce. Strong leadership and effective decision-making by the CEO and her Executive Team have enabled the organisation to adapt and remain focused.

The unity, passion and resilience of the CRANApplus Team is evident as staff continue to go above and beyond to deliver optimal outcomes. Hybrid working models and increased use of technology have been implemented and embraced by the team. Their demonstrated commitment to supporting the remote and isolated workforce is truly commendable.

The CRANApplus Education Team continues to develop and deliver a suite of unique courses to support the remote and isolated health workforce. It is encouraging to note that face-to-face training has been increasingly reinstated over the past year, despite the current challenges presented by travel disruptions and pandemic waves.

The Mental Health and Wellbeing, and Professional Services Teams have been very busy this year developing and improving the support and resources specific to the requirements of those who live and work in rural, remote and isolated environments. I thank the psychologists and professional officers who provided advocacy on behalf of the workforce in relation to their safety, mental health and wellbeing.

Over the past year, the Commonwealth has reaffirmed its confidence in CRANApplus' expertise and understanding of the needs of the remote and isolated health workforce via increased requests for input at the highest level. CRANApplus' representation has ensured that this unique workforce has an increasingly stronger voice at national forums.

Steven Dangaard, the Chief Finance Officer, must be recognised for his ability to capably steer the organisation through these turbulent times with sound financial management and advice.

I extend sincere thanks to the CRANApplus family of supporters, volunteers and members – your continued loyalty and support is very much appreciated. To my fellow Board Directors and the entire CRANApplus Executive Team – thank you for your combined expertise, time and dedication towards achieving the CRANApplus vision.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I pay tribute to the grounding leadership provided by Katherine Isbister, Chief Executive Officer. Katherine's sound judgement, clear vision and passion for the people in her portfolio is unwavering. Thank you for skilfully guiding CRANApplus through these challenging times.

Fiona Wake
Chair
CRANApplus Board of Directors

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Fiona Wake
Chair



John Wright
Deputy Chair



Dr Nicholas Williams
Secretary



Lynette Byers
Treasurer



Belinda Gibb
Board Member



Caitlin Steiner
Board Member



Emma Barritt
Board Member



Naomi Zaro
Board Member



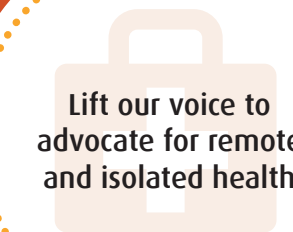
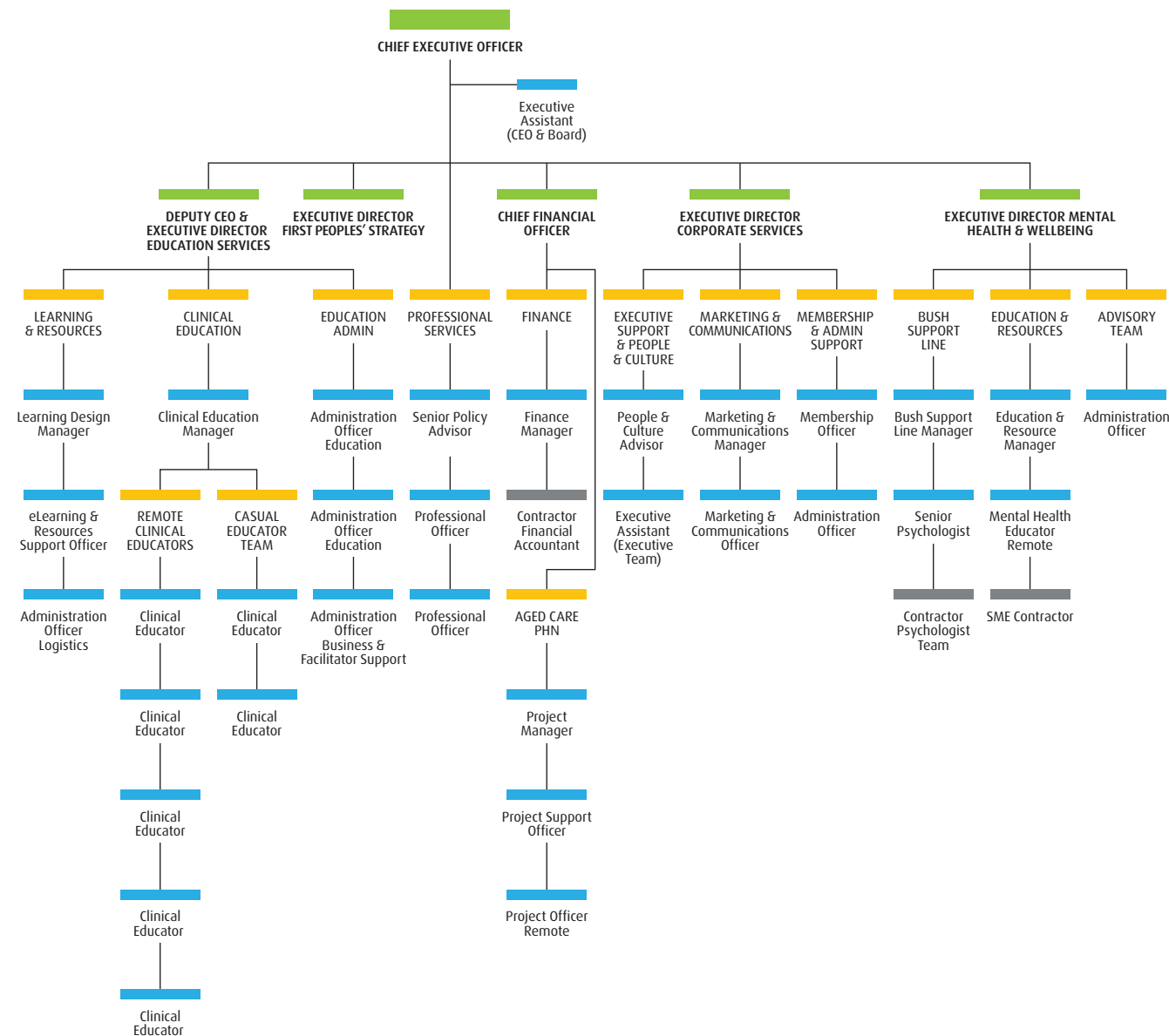
Katherine Isbister
Chief Executive Officer



Steven Dangaard
Chief Finance Officer

ABOUT US

Current Organisational Structure



Lift our voice to advocate for remote and isolated health



Increase our competitiveness and strengthen our resources



Our Vision

To be the leading experts supporting the remote and isolated health workforce



Through a strengths-based approach contribute to improving the health and well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who live in rural and remote Australia



Grow, develop and up-skill the workforce



Respond to health impacts from social determinants and a changing climate

Our Mission

To represent, support and educate the remote and isolated health workforce to promote the development and delivery of safe, high-quality healthcare.

Our Values

- Integrity
- Social Justice
- Excellence
- Respect
- Inclusiveness
- Accountability
- Safety

ABOUT US



Dallas McKeown
Executive Director
First Peoples'
Strategies

First Peoples' Strategy

The CRANApplus First Peoples' Strategy has moved into each area of the organisation and is being embedded into all facets of our business.

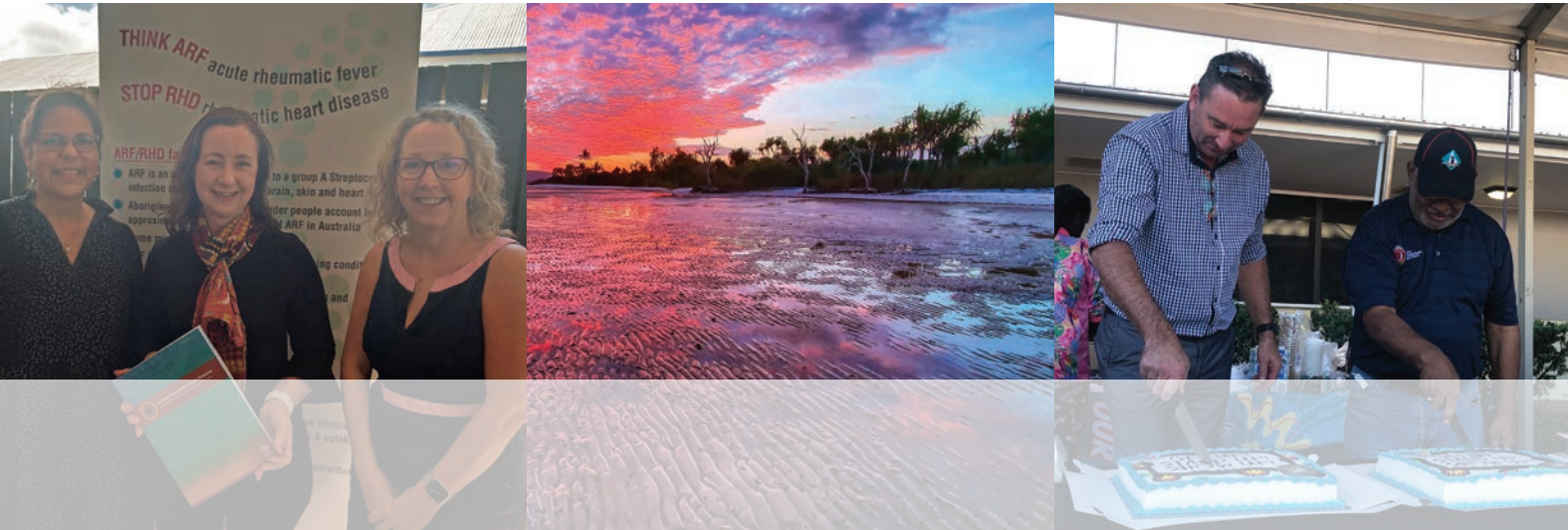
The Education Team is developing the Mirii course, which provides Aboriginal Health Workers and Practitioners with the skills and support to effectively use clinical manuals and guidelines, such as CARPA and PCCM, in their daily work practice and in response to common patient presentations. Working closely with Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education in the NT, we will pilot the course in late September 2022 and finesse the context according to organisation and industry requirements.

The year has seen our relationship with the Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives (CATSINaM) grow and mature as we work closely with their staff and members to promote and encourage CRANApplus membership. We have seen a steep incline in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses and midwives joining CRANApplus as members, and that can be attributed to consistent communication and sharing of ideas and strategies between the two organisations.

Throughout the year, CRANApplus staff have undertaken the CATSINaM Murra Mullingari Cultural Safety course which has added a valuable learning platform to support the work we do in rural and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Left: Ellery Creek Big Hole, Alice Springs – Trung Nguyen – stock.adobe.com Above left: Katherine Isbister, Joy Savage, Tricia Dixon and Lynette Dewis at the Queensland strategy launch. Above right: Get up! Stand up! Show up! cake at the Wuchopperen NAIDOC event.

ABOUT US



We have attended events throughout the year to mark days of significance including Mabo Day, Close the Gap Day, Sorry Day, NAIDOC Week, Reconciliation Day, and the International Day of Indigenous Peoples. We attended Wuchopperen Health Service's NAIDOC activities and COVID-19 vaccination community events. CRANApus was also invited to the launch of the Queensland Health, *Ending Rheumatic Heart Disease: Queensland First Nations Strategy 2021-2024* event, in Cairns.

Internal staff development has included webinars and face-to-face courses delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander guests including Professor Roianne West CEO CATSINaM, Dr Sanchia Shibasaki, and Professor Yvonne Cadet-James.

The CRANApus weekly newsletter and social media channels have been utilised to promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander topics and issues of importance. I have authored Pulse articles throughout the year, and contributed to the triannual CRANApus magazine, which now has a dedicated First Peoples section.

Dallas McKeown
Executive Director First Peoples' Strategies
CRANApus

Top, from left: Dallas, Minister for Health & Ambulance Services Queensland Yvette D'ath and Katherine Isbister at the launch of the *Ending RHD Queensland First Nations Strategy 2021-2024* in Cairns; Elim Beach, Cape York – electra kay-smith – stock.adobe.com; The Hon. Craig Crawford, Queensland Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, and Wuchopperen Board Member, Uncle Rod Burke, cut the NAIDOC celebration cake. Above: Artwork for the Mirii course, by Yuwaalaraay artist Gary (Gus) Draper.

CRANApus First Peoples' Strategy 2021 - 2025

Our Vision

To be the leading experts supporting the remote and isolated health workforce

Lift our voice to advocate for remote and isolated health

- Engage with peak bodies and key stakeholders on identified health issues.
- Develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, and organisations to support positive outcomes.
- Contribute to the Professional Learning sessions (webinars).

Through a strengths-based approach contribute to improving the health and well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who live in rural and remote Australia

- Increase engagement and advancement across cultural knowledge, cultural safety and recognition.
- Establish relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to access resources that enable the delivery of CRANApus services.
- Develop a talent pool of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Facilitators for delivery of relevant education courses.

Respond to health impacts from social determinants and a changing climate

- Engage in research collaborations and projects.
- Develop leadership to build cultural respect, reducing discrimination and racism.
- Increase meaningful representation of First Peoples' presence in our workplace to stay well-informed with current issues.
- Value and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's capacity to co design and deliver evidence-based programs and services with their communities.

Increase our competitiveness and strengthen our resources

- Be an organisation of choice for staff and volunteers and support a professional, flexible and mobile workforce.
- Review our services and applicability to First Peoples' requirements.
- Promote CRANApus to attract and retain more client business.

Grow, develop and up-skill the workforce

- Develop a proactive approach to identifying opportunities for First Peoples.
- Develop a Community of Practice forum for First Peoples members.
- Promote and leverage CRANApus's competitive edge in remote health training and provide advice on CRANApus promotional and educational material relating to First Peoples.
- Build cultural safety capabilities and practices through learning programs to cultivate understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

We respect the diversity and vibrancy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and listen to worldviews from across the country. We recognise that First Peoples' traditions and knowledge systems are sources of strength, wisdom and guidance. We reflect First Peoples' cultures in our workplace and in our work practices. This plan is a strategic roadmap that defines our future vision and how we will get there. It guides us in an organised, flexible and aligned manner for the delivery of our mandate. The vision and values will hold our organisation accountable in ensuring it efficiently and effectively supports First Peoples on their path to self-determination. We look forward to continuing our journey together.

Our Mission

To represent, support and educate the remote and isolated health workforce to promote the development and delivery of safe, high-quality healthcare.

Our Values • Integrity • Social Justice • Excellence
• Respect • Inclusiveness • Accountability • Safety

ABOUT US

Representation on External Committees

Chief Executive Officer

- Commonwealth Department of Health – Primary Health Reform Consultation Group
- Commonwealth Department of Health – Primary Health Care COVID-19 Response Teleconference
- Commonwealth Department of Health – Rural & Remote Health Stakeholder COVID-19 Roundtable
- Commonwealth Department of Health – NMSRG COVID-19 Roundtable (Nursing & Midwifery Strategic Reference Group)
- Commonwealth Department of Health – National Rural Health Commissioner Advisory Committee
- Commonwealth Department of Health – National Rural & Remote Nursing Generalist Framework
- Commonwealth Department of Health – National COVID Vaccine Taskforce: Rural Health System Preparedness Stakeholder Roundtable
- Commonwealth Department of Health – Health Workforce Division – Stronger Rural Health Strategy Evaluation Stakeholder Reference Group
- Commonwealth Department of Health – Nurse Practitioner 10 Year Plan Steering Committee
- Commonwealth Department of Health – Nursing Workforce Priority Work – Rural & Remote
- Health Workforce Queensland(HWQ) – Health Workforce Stakeholder Group (HWSG)
- National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce – Expert Clinical Panel (Leadership Group)
- National Rural Health Alliance (NRHA) – CRANaplus Representative
- National Rural Health Commissioner Rural Generalists & Multi-Disciplinary Teams Summit Steering Committee
- NT PHN – NT Nursing & Midwifery Collaborative Working Group
- Nursing and Midwifery Office QLD (NMOQ) – Peak Nursing & Midwifery Bodies Meeting (QLD)
- Rural Locum Assistance Programme (Rural LAP) – Rural LAP Steering Committee
- Coalition of National Nursing and Midwifery Organisations – CRANaplus Representative
- Australian College of Nurse Practitioners – Nursing Peaks Nurse Practitioner Strategy Forum

- Australian College of Nursing-ACT – Rural and Remote Nursing & Midwifery Community of Interest
- Department of Health Canberra – Ministerial Rural Health Roundtable

Deputy CEO & Executive Director of Education

- Australian Health Protection Principle Committee – Syphilis Enhancement Response Working Group
- Australian Nursing and Midwifery Accreditation Council – Midwifery Advisory Committee
- Climate and Health Alliance Coalition – CRANaplus Representative
- NT PHN – Administrator’s Medals in Primary Health Care Panel Awards
- Northern Territory PHN – NT Health Workforce Stakeholder Group
- Coalition of National Nursing and Midwifery Organisations – CRANaplus Representative
- Commonwealth Department of Health – Nurse Practitioner 10 Year Plan Steering Committee
- Stillbirth Centre of Research Excellence – Education Working Group and Clinical Practice Guideline for Respectful and Supportive Perinatal Bereavement Care

Chief Finance Officer

- Centre for Remote Health – Remote Primary Health Care Manuals Governance Committee

Executive Director First Peoples’ Strategies

- Arney Chong Consulting – South Australian Department for Correctional Services
- Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet – Cultural Consultation Project
- Close The Gap Campaign – Steering committee
- Queensland Health, Preventative Division – Voluntary Assisted Dying, regional, rural and remote workstream
- Queensland Health, Preventative Division – Voluntary Assisted Dying, First Nations subcommittee
- Central Australia Academic Health Science Centre – Remote Research Collaboration

Professional Officers

- ACRRM (Australian College of Rural & Remote Medicine) – Rural & Remote Digital Innovation Group
- Aged and Community Services Australia – ACSA Graduate Nurse Transition to Practice Program – National Advisory Group
- Department of Health Canberra – Aged Care Diversity Consultative Committee
- Heart Foundation – Acute Coronary Syndrome Guidelines Update Reference Group
- Flinders University College of Nursing and Health Sciences – End-of-Life Essentials National Advisory Group
- National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce – Expert Clinical Panel (Primary and Chronic Care)
- NSW Rural Doctors Network – Natural Disaster and Emergency Response Group
- Central Australia Academic Health Science Centre – Remote Research Collaboration

Remote Clinical Educators

- Australian Stroke Alliance – National Education Working Group
- Rheumatic Heart Disease (RHD), Menzies School of Research – Midwifery Education Advisory Group
- Stillbirth Centre of Research Excellence – Education Working Group and Clinical Practice Guideline for Respectful and Supportive Perinatal Bereavement Care
- Australian Commission of Safety, Quality in Health Care – Emergency Triage Education Kit (ETEK) Project Advisory Group

CRANaplus Fellow

- Independent Hospital Pricing Authority – Small Rural Hospitals Working Group
- National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce

CRANaplus Board Chair

- Northern Territory PHN – NT Health Workforce Stakeholder Group

CRANaplus Members

- Australian Commission of Safety, Quality in Health Care – Australian Commission on Safety & Quality in Health – Primary Care Committee
- ACM (Australian College of Midwives) – Birthing on Country, National Steering Committee

Photo: Rural Victoria – fieldofvision – stock.adobe.com

MEMBERSHIP

During the 2021/2022 financial year, CRANApplus achieved its long-term goal of 2,000 members. This is a proud moment for our organisation and one we could have only dreamed of during our foundational years in the 1980s.

It’s an occasion to reflect on how far we have come in our capacity to support the remote health workforce and our aim of amplifying the voice of the remote health professionals who work throughout the country.

The 2000 figure represents an approximate 65% increase in our membership base over the last 10 years since 2011/2012. This steady growth underlines the remote workforce’s growing requirement for education, support and advocacy, and our reputation as a remote health focused not-for-profit organisation capable of delivering these services.

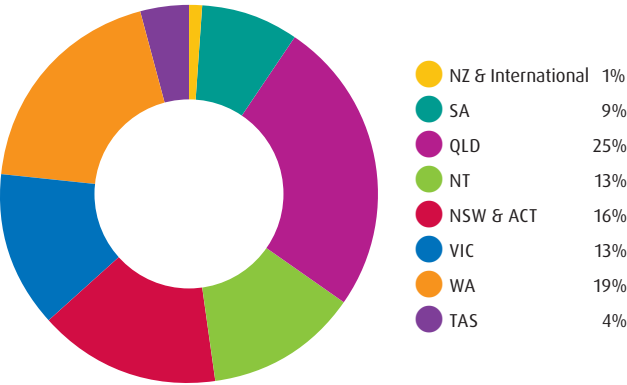
Member representation remains national, with a spread of membership across all states and territories. Queensland and Western Australia account for one fourth and one fifth of our membership respectively. RNs and RN/RMs remain our core member demographic, accounting for 88.6% of our membership.

In our 2021 Membership Survey, members identified free online training/resources, discounts on courses/conferences, dedicated member alerts for time-critical events, the CRANApplus Magazine, and eligibility for scholarships and grants as the most highly valued CRANApplus membership benefits.

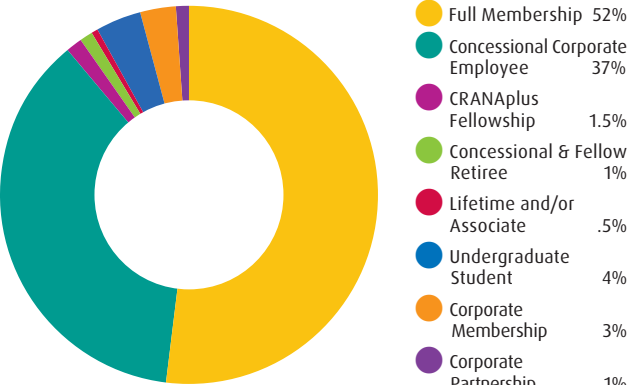
Our Corporate Members recognise the value of making support accessible to their staff. 38.5% of all Individual Members work for Corporate Members and are therefore eligible for Concessional Corporate Employee rates. The ability to list job advertisements on the CRANApplus website remains one of the most widely utilised Corporate Membership benefits, with over 900 job advertisements listed during this financial year.

We thank all members for their ongoing support.

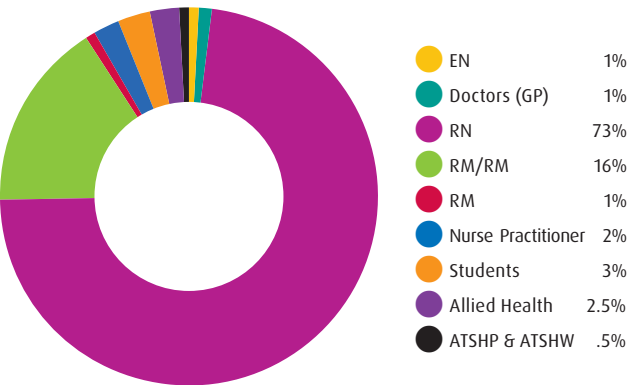
Membership by Location



Membership by Type



Membership by Profession



Corporate Members and Partners



MEDIA & PUBLICATIONS

CRANApplus has a presence across a range of in-house and external digital and print media. By this means, we seek to raise awareness of our services, and the needs of remote area nurses and midwives, while supporting, informing and connecting the remote health workforce.

Media and communications activities within the 2021/2022 financial year included but were not limited to:

- **Our website.** In July 2021, CRANApplus launched its updated website, designed to improve user experience with superior navigation, functionality, site speed, design, and other factors. Through the reporting period, our site received over one million page views (1,077,526) from over 100,000 distinct users, with the most popular pages being our home page, our employment page, and our face-to-face and online course pages.
- **The CRANApulse eNewsletter.** We delivered our weekly eNewsletter 51 times to over 9,000 subscribers. As we have further streamlined the design and focused on listing original content each week, we have seen a rise in engagement of almost 50%.
- **Mindful Monday.** On 52 occasions, our Mental Health and Wellbeing Team delivered wellbeing insights and heartfelt advice through the Mindful Monday e-newsletter. The newsletter's following grew 22%, building on a 27% rise in the previous financial year.
- **CRANApplus Magazine.** In 2021/2022, CRANApplus published three editions of CRANApplus Magazine, which has a print run of over 7,500 and is distributed to members and stakeholders across the country. This year saw us shift from quarterly to tri-annual publication. At the same time, we expanded our digital storytelling and observed increased engagement with online stories.
- **Social media.** CRANApplus retains a loyal following on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter, capping off the year with a combined following of over 6,500.
- **Mainstream media.** CRANApplus released five press releases in the last financial year, responded to media requests, and has plans to expand mainstream media involvement into the future to ensure the workforce's voice is heard.



Photo: Outback Emus – robynmac – stock.adobe.com



EDUCATION SERVICES

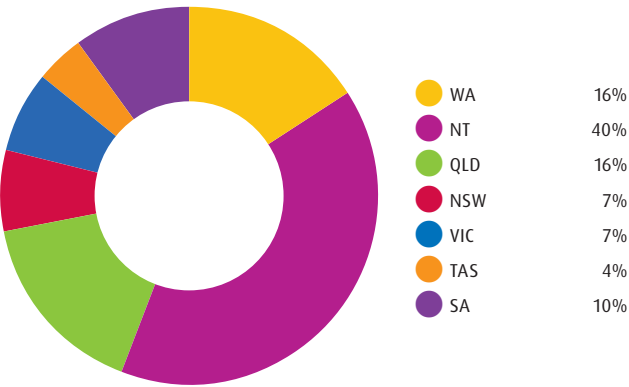


Throughout the year CRANApplus Education continued to provide vital clinical education and upskilling to some of Australia’s most remote health professionals. Our programs, including face-to-face workshops, online learning packages and interactive web-based courses, delivered uniquely contextualised education across the length and breadth of the country. This vital part of CRANApplus continues to build on the vision and excellence of many who have shaped the service over the years.

Face-to-face Workshops

In yet another year impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Education Division overcame operational disruptions to successfully deliver 85 face-to-face workshops. All states and the Northern Territory were included in the schedule, with locations that experienced high volumes of course cancellations in previous years preferred. Of particular note were the 13 courses delivered in Western Australia, the state most disrupted by border closures.

Percentage of total courses delivered



A total of 1,359 rural and remote health professionals attended a face-to-face course during the year.

CRANApplus continued to invest in industry-leading resources to improve simulation on course. Our suite of iSimulate consoles was expanded across Remote Emergency Care, Advanced Life Support, and other courses. Three new interactive mannequins were added to the Paediatric Emergency Care (PEC) course kits. In response to sector feedback, the PEC course itself was reimagined and expanded to include Paediatric Advanced Life Support within the program.

Course participant evaluations transitioned from paper based to Survey Monkey, offering responsive reporting and monitoring of trends over time.



Over 95% of participants rate face-to-face courses as

Good – Very Good

(Scale is Very Poor, Poor, Okay, Good, Very Good)

Online and eRemote Courses

eRemote continued to provide a suite of over 30 courses and modules. A total of 5,596 rural and remote health professionals completed an online course or module during the year.

Triage Emergency Care and Mental Health Emergencies courses were refreshed and adapted for blended delivery online. The new modality included online learning modules in eLearning authoring tool Articulate Rise, a series of facilitated webinars and interactive discussion boards for participants. This personalised approach was welcomed by participants from around the country.

eRemote activities extended to other areas of CRANApplus with the production of two modules for the LINKS Mentor Program within Professional Services and a Critical Conversations module for the Mental Health and Wellbeing division.



Over 95% of participants rate online courses as

Good – Very Good

(Scale is Very Poor, Poor, Okay, Good, Very Good)

EDUCATION SERVICES



First Peoples' Courses

In keeping with the CRANaplus First Peoples' Strategy, engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders was maintained throughout the year. A total of 60 course participants (4.4% of total participants) identified as First Peoples. Many Indigenous health services demonstrated a preference for all clinical staff, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners/Workers, to attend course together.

Clinical Governance

Maintaining records on the skills and currency of our teaching teams was enhanced through further development of the Facilitator Dashboard. Facilitators now upload essential qualifications and currency documents via Dashboard, with in-built reminders flagging renewal dates and required credentials.

Further enhancements to clinical governance included detailed protocols and procedure for external assessors and mandatory training in advanced skills for clinical educators.

The Team

CRANaplus Education staff and volunteers rallied to overcome operational challenges brought on by the pandemic. Flexibility, ingenuity, and a willingness to go above and beyond were inherent qualities across both teams and guaranteed our success in another year impacted by COVID-19.

Further investment in the Remote Clinical Educator FTE brought new talent and experience into the team and an increased capacity for continuous quality improvement of our products and services.

Few of our achievements would have been realised if not for the passion and commitment of our volunteer Facilitators. Our current pool of 140 volunteers includes 34 new Facilitators who were onboarded during the year. Orientation of new Facilitators was improved and now includes the provision of an initial observation course prior to joining a teaching team for the first time. The CRANaplus Board, Executive and Staff remain deeply grateful for the contribution of all our volunteer Facilitators. Their generosity and continued engagement with CRANaplus are appreciated by all of us, and the sector more broadly.

From Learning Design to Equipment and Logistics and Administration teams, our capacity to meet the evolving learning needs of the sector was responsive and adaptive throughout 2021/2022. CRANaplus Education concludes the year in a position of strength and validation as the leading experts in the delivery of safe, quality clinical education to the rural and remote health sector.

Amelia Druhan

Deputy CEO & Executive Director of Education
CRANaplus

Testimonials

"I learned so much and feel very well informed and excited and have confidence now."

"Am looking forward to applying my knowledge and practice into RAN."

"Great mixture of practical and theory. Time keeping excellent. Knowledge of presenters excellent."

"The on-line theory and quality of the course work is exceptional. I really enjoyed the format of the two-day course."

"This new style REC course was much better. I didn't feel bored by 'death-by-PowerPoint'. Good balance of lectures and skill stations. Better pre-course work. Able to pick and choose what you wanted to read - more in-depth etc. Good to have written assessment before attending the course."

"PowerPoint presentation was re-organised (compared to 2018) and all sessions are well prepared by experienced facilitators (they're all professional with rich remote experience and great characters ☺) Felt very safe & positive learning environment."

"Being an Indigenous Nurse I found the curriculum culturally appropriate. I've not seen such depth cultural awareness delivered in the other courses, so I was very appreciative of the MEC for this inclusion as I know my non-Indigenous colleagues need the info in their practice."

"The course helped me contextualise previous experiences I have had in rural settings... Being able to understand and reconcile that the midwives in that situation worked effectively and efficiently to deliver the baby and that my actions in the neonate resus were appropriate. This will help prepare me for future placements where there is no or minimal midwifery access."

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING SERVICES



Pam Edwards
Executive Director
Mental Health &
Wellbeing Services

The Mental Health & Wellbeing Division's focus in 2021/2022 was change, evolution and renewal. Extending the 24/7 support provided by the Bush Support Line by incorporating mental health and wellbeing workshops and resources designed for the rural and remote workforce was the focus of the reporting period.

Australia's rural and remote health workers have been challenged more than any other time in recent history. Our challenge has been to adapt to these changes whilst establishing renewed service strategies, incorporating the voice and needs of the workforce in the delivery of services, and continuing to deliver the Bush Support Line and wellbeing workshops.

Wellbeing Workshops

The Mental Health & Wellbeing Division rose to this challenge by delivering flexible, tailored, local workshops to health workers in these communities to support the management of prolonged stress, avoid burnout, manage vicarious trauma and prioritise their wellbeing. Over the last 12 months, we have delivered 60 wellbeing workshops to over 1,500 rural and remote health workers across Australia.

To engage the health workforce in education, our methods of delivering a service have changed to meet their changing needs. It can be difficult for remote staff to travel or be away from the clinic or service to attend face-to-face. Therefore, wellbeing workshops have been delivered online as part of other professional development sessions, online during a shift changeover in tea rooms, and through pre-recorded workshops for remote staff. The rural and remote health workforce must nurture their mental health and wellbeing, and this message was best delivered in short, simple and practical workshops online. Our feedback indicates that short, simple sessions with clear and practical suggestions can make a difference.

Professional Training

In June 2022, we had the valuable opportunity to join the SafeSide Suicide Prevention Community and to meet face-to-face in Brisbane to conduct this training. The Bush Support Line is not a crisis intervention service. Nonetheless, it is essential for our service providers to be upskilled in suicide prevention to deliver the best quality and responsive service to our consumers.

As the Mental Health and Wellbeing Team operates as remote staff located across Australia, this was the first time many of the team met in person. This provided an excellent opportunity for our psychologists and educators to build team relationships and grow knowledge around contemporary suicide prevention practices to better support our rural and remote health workforce. The two-day event was a resounding success.

A highlight of the two-day event in Brisbane was experiencing the Welcome to Country by Songwoman Maroochy. The Welcome to Country included a:

- traditional song;
- short cultural awareness of the Turrbal people's history;
- snippet of the Australian National Anthem in Turrbal language; and
- blessing song in Turrbal language.

Mindful Mondays

This year, we have delivered the weekly Mindful Monday eNewsletters to a growing body of subscribers, as many as 2900 towards the end of the financial year. Many of the topics provided in Mindful Monday have resonated with our audience, and we regularly receive feedback that these topics are contemporary, thought-inducing, and helpful.

The Bush Support Line

The 24/7 Bush Support Line continues to be a valuable support for the rural and remote health workforce. This service has undergone evolution and change over the last 12 months, whilst still maintaining the availability of the service 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Recently we completed a project to implement a bespoke record information and management system that not only enhances the privacy, security and confidentiality of records but enhances the information and understanding of emerging and contemporary issues affecting the sector.

Early in this financial year, we undertook strategies to increase engagement of the First Peoples' health workforce with our support services. In initiating these strategies, there was an immediate increase in First Peoples using the Bush Support Line, with between 9 and 10 per cent of those using the Bush Support Line identifying as First Peoples. We will continue to incorporate strategies to engage the First Peoples' workforce by ensuring messaging in resources and materials is inclusive and seeking to understand and adapt to their needs.

Above, left to right: Kristy, Pam, Steph, Nicole and Tracy from the Mental Health & Wellbeing Team; pressmaster – stock.adobe.com; Members of the Mental Health & Wellbeing Team attending the SafeSide suicide prevention training in Brisbane.

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING SERVICES



New Resources

Mental Health and Wellbeing have 34 resources available on the CRANaplus website. Resources include on-demand webinars, podcasts, two-page printable information sheets and a booklet incorporating the Wellbeing for the Bush series. The resources include advice on topics such as sleep, workplace conflict, managing prolonged stress, listening and communicating, and self care strategies, which are regularly updated and refreshed.

This year a new, free, interactive online course called ‘Critical Conversations’ has been made available on the CRANaplus website. It prepares the workforce to navigate conversations with people who need support, recognise when extra help is needed, and familiarise themselves with key points when discussing self-harm or suicide.

We recognise that maintaining a community presence within our rural and remote sectors is and has been of the utmost importance. In the absence of delivering face-to-face workshops this year, our transition to using virtual methods, including the use of electronic feedback via a QR code, has facilitated this.

Below are some examples of feedback we have received. Utilising feedback, we have continued to adapt our service delivery to meet the needs of the rural and remote health workforce. We look forward to providing services, resources, and support throughout the year ahead.

“It was exactly what we needed to hear.”

“As nurses, we need to be reminded to look after ourselves.”

“Bringing wellbeing into the course is such a great priority. All group members/facilitators discussed stressful elements of their roles and the strategies to cope were great.”

“Mindful Mondays is a gentle but factual and supportive guide. For once, I didn’t feel told.”

Pamela Edwards
Executive Director
Mental Health & Wellbeing Services

Photo: Cape Range National Park – Mathias –stock.adobe.com

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES



CRANApplus is committed to providing information and resources to members and the broader remote health sector on issues that impact our workforce. Through this work we advance a better understanding of the unique context of remote and isolated health care and the impact on consumers and nurses, midwives, and other health professionals. In this financial year our efforts continued to focus on the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 Pandemic

This financial year has been marked by the continued collaboration across disciplines to address the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout the year CRANApplus had ongoing opportunities to inform the Commonwealth Department of Health of emerging issues and concerns from those 'on the ground' and provide recommendations and advice.

CRANApplus was able to highlight the unique challenges of remote health and barriers that can work against access to timely, quality care. The pandemic amplified the burden of poor health outcomes and access to care for people who live in remote and isolated Australia, many of whom are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. We took every opportunity to educate and bring attention to these problems.

Safety and Security

A comprehensive review and redesign of the CRANApplus suite of resources to support the safety and security of remote area health professionals was undertaken in early 2022. Mapping and reviewing resources with the goal of maximising value for users, health professionals and organisations has led to the development of the CRANApplus Safety and Security Strategy which is the foundation of redeveloped resources.

Completed resources include the *Safety and Security for Rural and Remote Health Professionals – Factsheet for Employers* and the *Safety and Security for Rural and Remote Health Professionals – Factsheet for Individuals*. Further resources for communities, a redesigned webpage and an eModule are in development.

Stakeholder Engagement

For the 2021/2022 financial year CRANApplus provided the remote and isolated health perspective at 46 events, including workshops, symposia, consultations and working groups. We maintained representation at 47 ongoing committees and forums related to rural and remote health.

All ongoing and one-off representations are logged, approved, and reported in a central register.

2021/2022 Highlights

CRANApplus Professional Services is committed to the delivery of practical and relevant programs and services. We aim to build the capacity and capabilities of the remote health workforce for the ongoing provision of culturally safe, skilled, and quality health care to remote and isolated communities. Our efforts are directed at the entire life cycle of the workforce pipeline, starting with supporting students right through to recognising the exemplary achievements of those at the pinnacle of their professions.

CRANApplus Member Nursing and Midwifery Roundtable

Meetings have been held quarterly with the generous and insightful contribution from the CRANApplus members forming the CRANApplus Member Nursing and Midwifery Roundtable. Roundtable meetings are now an established forum where members have offered feedback on CRANApplus activities and informed our priorities and advocacy, particularly around safety and security and workforce sustainability.

CRANApplus Remote Area Nursing Pathway Program

CRANApplus launched its inaugural Remote Area Nursing Pathway Program in the 2021/2022 financial year. The nine-month program is supporting four CRANApplus members to build clinical skills, resilience, and Cultural Safety in preparation for their transition to remote practice.

The program covers a range of learning and development opportunities facilitated by professional officers and includes:

- The CRANApplus Remote Emergency Care course
- The CRANApplus Maternity Emergency Care course
- The CRANApplus Online Clinical Assessment Suite
- Cultural Safety professional development
- A range of webinars featuring guest speakers, designed to support professional development and preparedness for expanding your scope of practice
- Resilience workshops and professional reflection activities.

Participation in CRANApplus courses is supported by the Nurses Memorial Foundation of South Australia Grant.

Pathway Program Testimonials

"It's helped me recognise the gaps in my knowledge... but I realise that I don't have to fill all those gaps before I transition (to remote)."

"I wouldn't have been able to do this without the financial support of this program... it would have been a bit out of reach."

"The session... totally reinforced my goal of training to be a RAN. It really cemented why I want to work in remote health care, because I feel there's so much for me to learn from First Nations people and it's a real privilege that I can do so through nursing."

"After being a COVID nurse, getting to where I wanted to be was really complicated for me... through this program I am going to get there a lot quicker. It's being an amazing journey for me."

"I love these Zoom chats... I'm learning from everyone's experiences."

"I'm really enjoying the monthly meetings as I don't know any other nurses who are doing what I'm doing."

"I found that getting to know [the presenter] made me feel supported as an Aboriginal Nurse and enforced how important our contribution is to the nursing workforce on improving health outcomes for our people."

Above, left to right: Lynn Yeatman jabbing Karlana Hobson (credit Wuchopperen Health Service); Molly Gladman (left, scholarship recipient) and Jessie Modra; Gayle Woodford Memorial Scholarship recipient, Katie Yeomans.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Free CPD Webinar Series

Our free CPD webinars have continued with the delivery of topics and guest presenters relevant to rural and remote health professionals.

Webinars continue to be delivered live with interactive Q&A, or 'on-demand' later via the CRANApplus website.

2021/2022 CRANApplus webinar topics included:

- The Ever-Changing Life of a Rural Diabetes Nurse
- Crusted Scabies in the Northern Territory
- Matters of the Heart – Rheumatic Heart Disease in Australia
- An Introduction to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
- Mental Health Week with Jen Cullen
- End of Life Care Opportunities
- National Rural and Remote Nursing Generalist Framework
- Journey into Remote Nurse Education and Business

CRANAcast

December 2021 saw the launch of CRANAcast, a podcast telling the stories of the remote area nurses and midwives. Every episode, a nurse, midwife, or student shares their experiences of working in rural and remote Australia. CRANAcast is designed to keep the workforce entertained, inspired, and informed, and to be listened to when on the plane, in the car between clinics, or during downtime between internet access. Seven CRANAcast episodes were released, with more to follow.

RAN Certification

Eight RAN certifications have been completed in the 2021/2022 financial year.

CRANApplus is in transition towards developing a new suite of resources to replace the RAN certification to align with the new National Rural and Remote Nursing Generalist Framework that is due to be launched soon.

Student Engagement

Professional Services continues to engage and support undergraduate health students in both rural and metropolitan settings. Initiatives include collaboration with the National Rural Health Student Network (NRHSN), student podcasts, clinical placement scholarships and the LINKS Mentor Program.

To assist health professional students to prepare for remote area and isolated clinical placements, the team developed and released the eRemote module *Adapting Self-Care practices During Clinical Placement*. The module focuses on increasing the awareness of potential challenges to wellbeing whilst on remote area clinical placements, and on building targeted self-care and resilience strategies for students.

Interested universities and health care organisations that support student placements are increasingly integrating CRANApplus resources in preparation for remote and isolated clinical placements.

LINKS Mentor Program

21 potential mentors and nine mentees have completed the LINKS Mentor Program online modules in the 2021/2022 financial year. Feedback from mentors indicated workforce pressure was limiting their capacity to undertake formal mentoring agreements over this period. It is anticipated as workforce pressures ease there will be an increase in formal mentoring relationships.

Gayle Woodford Memorial Scholarship

This annual scholarship is jointly sponsored by CRANApplus and Flinders University College of Medicine and Public Health and covers all course fees for the Graduate Certificate in Remote Health Practice. The scholarship attracted a high calibre of applicants in 2021, with the successful recipient being Ms Katie Yeomans.



Undergraduate Remote Placement Scholarship

The Undergraduate Remote Placement Scholarship remains popular. The available funds supported 11 scholarship recipients from various health disciplines including nursing, midwifery, and allied health. CRANApplus continues to seek additional external sponsorships for these valuable scholarships to support undergraduate students with the opportunity to undertake a remote or rural clinical placement.

Nurses Memorial Foundation of South Australia Grant

The Nurses Memorial Foundation of South Australia Grant assisted eight members to undertake CRANApplus clinical courses and upskilling. Support is provided by way of registration fee subsidy. Additionally, the grant supported four members to each attend three CRANApplus courses as part of the Remote Area Nursing Pathway Program (RANPP).

CWA Nursing and Midwifery Professional Development Grant

CRANApplus has continued its collaborative relationship with the Country Women's Association (NSW) to support the ongoing professional development of nurses (registered and enrolled) and midwives living and working in rural and remote Australia. CRANApplus has been able to additionally support the grant through the establishment of an online application process.

2021 CRANApplus Awards

The prestigious CRANApplus Aurora Award was initiated by CRANApplus to recognise individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to remote health. 2021's recipient was Terrie 'Tess' Ivanhoe, a Nurse Practitioner on the Chronic Disease Program at Nganampa Health Council in the APY Lands in north-west South Australia.

CRANApplus Excellence in Remote Health Practice was awarded to Helen Parker. This award was sponsored by James Cook University/Murtupini Centre for Rural and Remote Health.

CRANApplus Excellence in Education and/or Research Award was awarded to Kylie McCullough. This award was sponsored by Flinders University – Rural and Remote Health (CRH).

CRANApplus Collaborative Team Award was awarded to Midwifery Unit of the Coomealla Health Aboriginal Corporation. Team members included Dr Mainul Khan, Dr Nalin Fonseka, Zoe Andrews (Health Promotions Officer), Wendy Arney (Dietitian), Kiah Howard (Receptionist), Debbie Towns (Midwife), Robert Ritchie (Clinic Team Leader), Timmy Gordon (Aboriginal Mental Health Peer Support Worker), Guy Mitchell (Transport Officer), Justine Williams (Health Services Manager), and Michelle Terrick (Practice Nurse). This award was sponsored by Remote Area Health Corps (RAHC).

FINANCIAL REPORT 2021/2022



Steven Dangaard
Chief Finance Officer

This year the 2022 financial statements were prepared and audited by BDO. A full set of the Financial Statements is now available to all members. Copies can be provided on request by emailing cfo@crana.org.au

It is with great pleasure that I announce this year’s audit report was again completed with no qualifications. The financial position of the Organisation remains stable, with net assets growing to \$4.49 million, while achieving a net annual comprehensive profit of \$447,830.

During the financial year CRANApplus was confronted with ongoing COVID-19 restrictions and high inflation costs on our operational activities. With these challenges it is important that CRANApplus continues to innovate and provide flexible cost-effective solutions to meet the needs of the remote health workforce.

The core funding agreement with the Department of Health remains a critical component to the Organisation’s ongoing operations and strategic direction, and will continue to be the core pillar of our products and services supporting nurses, midwives, and other health professionals working in remote Australia.

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the year ended 30 June 2022

	2022 \$	2021 \$
Revenue and Other Income		
Grant Revenue	4,971,670	5,390,828
Other Income	1,513,995	1,269,995
	6,485,665	6,660,823
Expenditure		
Employee Costs	(3,726,891)	(3,196,537)
Depreciation	(245,294)	(166,362)
Amortisation	(140,708)	(136,562)
Conference Costs	(7,496)	(5,624)
Consultants and Subcontractors Fees	(283,295)	(513,148)
Course Costs, Catering and Facilitators	(229,363)	(191,274)
Donations	(34,703)	(64,300)
Interest Expense	(44,204)	(50,335)
IT Costs	(674,910)	(484,444)
Postage, Printing and Stationery	(315,047)	(213,838)
Rent and Utilities	(72,268)	(74,768)
Travel and Accommodation	(434,473)	(343,999)
Loss on Disposal of Assets	(12,510)	(21,663)
Other Expenses	(582,423)	(739,928)
	(6,803,585)	(6,202,783)
PROFIT BEFORE INCOME TAX EXPENSE		
	-317,920	458,040
Income Tax Expense	0	0
PROFIT AFTER INCOME TAX EXPENSE	-317,920	458,040
Other Comprehensive Income		
<i>Items that will not be reclassified to profit or loss</i>		
Increase in Asset Revaluation Reserve	765,750	115,750
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME	447,830	573,790

Above: Australian outback – totajla – stock.adobe.com

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