



Notre Dame  
Nulungu  
**Talking Heads**  
Seminar Series

*A New Partnership, William Roe, 1994*

## **Environmental and Public Health in the Kimberley: Developments, Directions and Data.**

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2019

Venue: UNDA NDB11-101

12:30pm – 1:30pm

Presenters: Prof. Jeanette Ward, Mr. Chicky Clements, Mr. Ray Christophers & Ms. Sarah Morris

### **Abstract**

This team presentation will describe how the links between environmental health and public health have been strengthened in the Kimberley region. Environmental health looks at disease risk reduction in the environment. Public health has a 'system-wide' focus and, here in the Kimberley, has supported an unobstructed bridge between clinical service providers and environmental health expertise. Nirrumbuk has worked with many partners to initiate environmental health referrals as a way to build this bridge. This has also created closer ties with the Department of Housing. This presentation will also tell the 'data story' that has underpinned these initiatives. This includes the determination of Kimberley Environmental Attributable Fractions (KEAFs) originally sourced from values published by the World Health Organisation (WHO). Inspired by local priorities, this academic work has been extended further to cost hospitalisations of Aboriginal people due to the environment. The recently released WA Sustainable Health Review acknowledged this important applied research.

## Biographies

### Ray Christophers

Mr. Ray Christophers is CEO of NEHS. Ray is an Aboriginal man from the Bardi region on the Dampier Peninsula in the Kimberley region. He has dedicated many years to Nirrumbuk Aboriginal Corporation. Ray has worked hard for most of his life empowering Aboriginal people and trying to implement better changes for the future generations. As the CEO of an Aboriginal environmental health service, Ray brings with him nearly 20 years of experience and a wealth of knowledge to the various Boards and committees that he currently sits in: he is Deputy Chair of AHCWA, Deputy Chair of KAMS and Board Committee member representing Broome with KRICI. Under his leadership, NEHS became a full member of the Kimberley Aboriginal Health Planning Forum (KAHPF) and the Aboriginal Health Council of WA (AHCWA). NEHS is also a member of NACCHO.

### Chicky Clements

Mr. Chicky Clements is Environmental Supervisor at NEHS. Chicky is of Aboriginal descent through his maternal side, a Bardi person from One Arm Point on the Dampier Peninsula. Chicky was born, raised and educated in Darwin where he also completed a trade in Carpentry. He moved to One Arm Point in 1980 where his parents and most of his family had moved to previously and started his own family there. Chicky has been working in and with remote communities across the Kimberley's for the past 40 years. He has been a Community Council member, Builder, Mentor, Trainer and for the past twenty years been anchored in his passion, Environmental Health. He worked for Kimberley Population Health Unit as an Environmental Health Field Support Officer for five years in the Broome Kullari region. Three years in TAFE as an Environmental Health lecturer before joining NEHS. Chicky is a member of ERPATSIEH.

### Sarah Morris

Ms. Sarah Morris is a non-Aboriginal General Manager at NEHS. Qualified in Applied Science and Environmental Health, Sarah has lived and worked in remote communities, bringing experience in both Aboriginal environmental health and housing over the previous 16 years including a secondment as CEO at Djarindjin Aboriginal Corporation. She also has an extensive working network across sectors that spans from South Australia, Northern Territory, Queensland, and Western Australia. Sarah has delivered EH vocational and education training as Course Coordinator, Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Education and Training (Alice Springs, Tenant Creek); worked in close partnership with Marwarra Health Service of Roebourne in the early 2000's to provide EH services to Pilbara communities and Strategy & Contracts Manager for Tenancy Support and other programs with NEHS. Sarah then relocated to Adelaide for a position as Senior Manager, Aboriginal Programs and Housing Services with SA Housing Authority. In January 2019, Sarah returned to NEHS as General Manager, bringing this high-level experience of government housing policy development.

### Jeanette Ward

Prof. Jeanette Ward is a non-Aboriginal public health physician with NEHS who lives and works in Broome. She has a lifelong interest in applied quantitative research designed to inform immediate policy and practice deliberations. In addition to many collaborative projects in the Kimberley with NEHS and other leading Aboriginal organisations when employed as Consultant, Public Health Medicine by WA Country Health Services from 2013 to 2018, Jeanette has contributed to research and evaluation in communicable disease prevention, impact of continuous quality improvement on clinical outcomes, population health inequities and preventable hospitalisations. Jeanette has published over 200 peer-reviewed articles in diverse topics for academic audiences. Jeanette has an Adjunct Professorial appointment at Nulungu Research Institute, bringing academic links to the NEHS team.