

# Kimberley Interpreting Service

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NAATI Interpreters for Aboriginal Languages

Tel: 08 9169 3161

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## Interpreting Health Posters under way for WA Hospitals & Clinics

*Major sponsor Argyle Diamond Mine supports KIS efforts to raise awareness of Aboriginal Interpreters in Hospitals*

Kimberley Development Commission, Office of Aboriginal Health, OVAHS (Ord Valley Aboriginal Health Service), Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring Language and Culture Centre and Tuckerbox Supermarket in Kununurra together with our major sponsor Argyle Diamond Mine have helped to produce the long awaited interpreting posters for the medical sector.

The posters will encourage medical staff to use interpreters when they have communication problems with Aboriginal patients. They also spread the message that Aboriginal people have the right to ask for an interpreter if they don't understand what the doctor or nurse is saying. The posters are expected to come out by the end of May and a poster launch will held in Kununurra and Broome.



Artist Mark Nodea painting at the Warmun Art Centre. Mark painted the artwork on the Health Interpreting Posters.

### HIGHLIGHTS INSIDE THIS ISSUE

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## KIS Funding still insecure

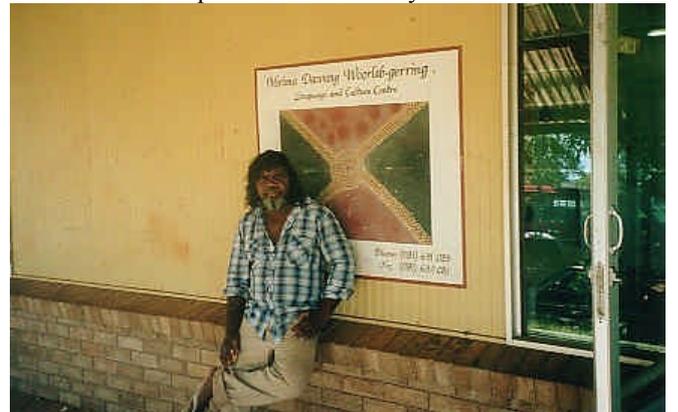
*KIS fights for funding and recognition of Aboriginal Interpreter Services*

The Kimberley Interpreting Service is currently funded by the Western Australian Department of Employment and Training. The funding is part of the Enterprising Options Program and has enabled KIS to establish itself as an important service for indigenous language speakers in the Kimberley. KIS is now trying to secure funding to ensure the service continues into the future.

In December 2001, KIS handed a joint submission for funding to the Federal Attorney General's Department in Canberra and the Attorney General's Office in Perth. The submission is being handled by the WA Ministry of Justice, Aboriginal Policies & Services. Whilst the idea of Aboriginal Interpreter Services seems vital to the WA Government, not enough Government Agencies have come on board to support the funding. A subsequent submission to the WA Health Department was rejected.

KIS has been lobbying State and Federal Government Departments and Politicians for a long time on this issue, but the future of KIS is still uncertain as of July 1, as no definite funding has been confirmed.

KIS would like to thank Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring Language and Culture Centre for their continued support and initiative. Special thanks go to Co-ordinator Keeley Palmer and Chairperson David Newry.



Mirima Council Chairperson David Newry at the Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring Language and Culture Centre in Kununurra

**Kimberley Interpreting Service**

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## Diploma of Interpreting for Broome Students

Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education began on 17 April the first Aboriginal Interpreter Training Course in Broome.

Broome finally will get its formally trained Aboriginal interpreters! Batchelor Lecturer Mary Coley is also the Coordinator of the interpreting program and has worked hard to enroll the students.

The four Broome Interpreter Students now successfully enrolled in the Course will undergo their next training workshops in Alice Springs and Batchelor.

Among the Broome interpreter students are Aboriginal Health Worker Frances Brockliss, Therese Baker, Frankie Bellou and Doris Edgar.

The students should attend all workshops unless there are special reasons why they cannot attend. All students can apply to Centrelink for the Abstudy Incidentals Allowance.

All Broome students are being travelled to Alice Springs or Batchelor by Batchelor's Student Travel Department. Those students are staying at an appointed accommodation and also get a meal allowance. All students will be travelled to Batchelor and Darwin for the 2 – week workshop 26 August – 6 September.

**If you want to become an Interpreter- Just call us and we can put your name down for the next training course.**

The Course started with an assessment workshop on 17, 18 & 19 April in Broome. During this assessment workshop the students were assessed for fluency in both English and their nominated Australian Indigenous Language.

By the 8<sup>th</sup> November students will have completed (if attended all workshops) at least the Interpret Dialogue competency (190 hours, 2/3rds of the whole Diploma of Interpreting (Indigenous Languages) where they will have acquired the following skills and knowledge:

### Skills:

- **Practical interpreting in a face-to-face situation and in at least one situation where technology is used.**
- **Giving instructions on how to work with an interpreter.**
- **Managing situational problem during an interpreting session.**
- **Sight translation of a short text (maximum 100 words).**

### Knowledge:

- **Preparation of an interpreting assignment.**
- **Solving ethical dilemmas.**
- **Solving problems arising from cultural and societal differences.**

On successful completion of this competency students will have NAATI accreditation and receive a Statement of Attainment for Interpret Dialogue. Students then have the option of continuing study in the Diploma of Interpreting (Indigenous Languages) and will complete the whole Diploma early next year.

For any questions or further information, call Mary Coley on toll free number 1800 680 335.

## Testing for Fitzroy Crossing Ladies

For Patsy Beford, Doreen Street, Topsy Chestnut and Gracie Mulligan it is crunch time....

They are currently undergoing their Examinations for the Diploma of Interpreting as well as additional NAATI tests for their other languages. All four are completing the exams in Kriol and in Bunuba/Goonyiandi and Walmajarri respectively.

We are keeping our fingers crossed and KIS extends a warm welcome to these new talented interpreters.

KIS also thanks the invaluable contribution of the Kimberley Language Resource Centre (KLRC). Fitzroy Crossing based Linguist with KLRC Ms Emily Knight has worked hard to co-ordinate translators and examiners for the additional NAATI tests and has been very supportive with overall co-ordination of the Testing in Fitzroy. And again it was Mary Coley who carried out the Exam.

**Thank you!!!**

## Interpreting hot topic at Language Centre Meeting

### WA Language Centre Meeting in Broome....

Interpreting and translation services for Aboriginal people was one of the topics discussed at a meeting held in Broome in March. Matt Burrows of ATSIC addressed a gathering of representatives from five Language Centres (Yamaji Language Centre, Wangka Maya Pilbara Aboriginal Language Centre, Kimberley Language Resource Centre (KLRC), Mirima Dawang Woollabgerring, Language and Culture Centre (MDWg), and Diwurruwurru-Jaru, Katherine Regional Language Centre) and talked about his proposal to get the ATSIC Board of Commissioners lobbying Government to match the translation and interpreting services provided for migrant languages.

Diploma of Interpreting candidate Patsy Bedford also pointed out that it was important to recognise that an Aboriginal interpreter service needs to operate differently to migrant language interpreter services. Whilst an Indonesian speaker could use any Indonesian interpreter, Aboriginal people would need an interpreter who not only speaks their language, but is not in an avoidance relationship with them and is comfortable discussing the particular topic with them. The group reinforced the need for Language Centres to retain control of any Aboriginal language interpreter service to ensure these specific cultural needs are met.

The meeting was a good opportunity for linguists, language workers, administrators and committee members to get together to talk about some of the major issues facing language centres operating in remote areas of Australia. As well as interpreting and translating, the group also addressed issues such as language teaching in schools, finances and budgeting, publications and copyright, multi media language resources, and training.

Everybody who attended the three-day meeting agreed it had been very worthwhile and enjoyable. The major resolution to come from the meeting was an agreement to continue to work together in the future. In an effort to formalise this relationship, Yamaji Language Centre, Wangka Maya Pilbara Aboriginal Language Centre, KLRC and MDWg have resolved to establish a group with the working title *Network of Aboriginal Language Centres*. The aims of the group are to:

- ◆ make representation to all levels of Government on language issues
- ◆ support Research and Development projects that would assist all language centres
- ◆ share information, resources, support and knowledge
- ◆ facilitate meetings between Language Centres
- ◆ promote professional training & development and career paths within the Aboriginal Language Industry

- ◆ raise awareness in the wider community of the diversity of languages in Australia
- ◆ provide a central point of contact for government and other bodies
- ◆ develop policy on Language issues.

One of the first tasks of the Network will be to lobby government to ensure ongoing funding for Kimberley Interpreting Service. By speaking with one voice we hope to achieve better outcomes for all indigenous language speakers.

For more information on the Network of Aboriginal Language Centres please contact Edgar Price at Kimberley Language Resource Centre on 08 9168 6005 or email [klrhc@bigpond.com](mailto:klrhc@bigpond.com)



Mirima ladies take a break from the Broome workshop: from left Phyllis Ningarmara, Nancy Dilyayi, Glennis Newry and Annette Chunama (Courtesy of Yamaji Language Centre)

## Interpreters to be used for Visiting Specialist Program

It was decided at the Kimberley Aboriginal Health Plan Committee Meeting in Broome on 26 March that the use of Aboriginal interpreters was important and they agreed to allocate part of funds from the MSOAP (More Specialists Outreach Program) to a trial program of using interpreters, most likely in a block booking to accompany the specialist. The program is being managed by the Aboriginal Medical Service and Kimberley Health Service. Once the MSOAP funds come through, a teleconference will be held on 20 May between Manager of Kimberley Health Service Ian Smith and Dr D (Russ) Russell-Weisz, Director of Medical Services, North West Health Services and KIS Project Officer Tea Dietterich to discuss the program in detail.

### KIS Brochures & Website

Please let us know if you or your organisation need brochures and we will send you some straight away. Simply call us on 91693161 or send an email to:

[kis@wn.com.au](mailto:kis@wn.com.au)

Our website has been updated with the latest press releases and the newsletters can be downloaded, go to

[www.wn.com.au/mirima](http://www.wn.com.au/mirima)

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## Health study supports development of indigenous interpreter services

A study published recently in the Medical Journal of Australia has confirmed the need for the further development of indigenous language interpreter services. The study, conducted by Dr Joan Cunningham of the Menzies School of Health Research, compared rates of therapeutic and diagnostic procedures among indigenous and non-indigenous hospital patients, and found that despite the relatively high mortality rate of indigenous Australians, they were less likely than non-indigenous patients to have any procedure carried out (45% against 69%).

‘The disparity between patients identified as Indigenous and other patients is real’, claims Dr Cunningham. ‘Informed decision-making by patients requires adequate understanding of available options, and for some Indigenous patients this may be limited by communication difficulties’. Further cause for concern is the evidence that patients identified as Indigenous are much more likely than other patients to leave hospital against medical advice. ‘Inadequate communication can lead to potentially useful procedures not being performed, as well as to procedures being performed on patients who did not fully consent’ said Dr Cunningham.

Kimberley Interpreting Service (KIS) has been providing accredited Indigenous language interpreters in the region since November 2000. Despite receiving regular bookings from the courts and legal services, there has been little interest from the health sector. KIS Project Officer, Tea Dietterich, says the Menzies report will hopefully help to show medical professionals that they can improve the service they deliver to Indigenous people if they use interpreters. ‘KIS is making a big push this year to ensure indigenous language interpreters are used fully in the health sector. It is not acceptable that people’s health is suffering because of a lack of understanding of medical terminology, when the solution is right there: use an interpreter’.

KIS is will produce posters showing the importance of using interpreters and display them in all Kimberley hospitals and clinics. KIS is also lobbying at the state and federal level for funding to ensure the service continues into the future.

Using interpreters is one way we can reduce unfair treatment, ensure equitable care and improve outcomes for the most disadvantaged Australians.

Please call us for further information on this topic.



Mirima Dawang Wooralab-gerring Language and Culture Centre Co-ordinator Keeley Palmer and KIS Project Officer Tea Dietterich at the Language Centre.

## Industry Update: AUSIT AGM

The WA Branch of AUSIT (Australian Institute for Translators and Interpreters Inc.) will host the XV AUSIT National AGM and Conference in Perth over the weekend of 25-27 October 2002.

Part of the conference will be devoted to Aboriginal and Deaf interpreting issues. KIS hopes that both Gail Smiler and Olive Knight will be able to attend the AGM to speak at the conference about cross cultural issues when interpreting into Aboriginal Languages and to share their interpreting experience in the Kimberley Region. This will be videoconferenced to out of state viewers. Project Officer Tea Dietterich also plans to attend the AGM to give a presentation about KIS.

KIS also thanks the numerous AUSIT members who have donated towards the membership fees of Gail Smiler and Olive Knight. New member Olive Knight is based in Fitzroy Crossing and is a NAATI paraprofessional interpreter for Kriol and Walmajarri. She also works as Cross-Cultural Consultant & Translator.

## Professional Uniforms for KIS Interpreters

Argyle Diamond Mine (ADM) has generously offered to sponsor the production of KIS/ADM Polo shirts. The attractive polo shirts will feature the ADM logo on the sleeve and the KIS logo on the chest. A range of interpreters were consulted, if they liked the idea of “professional uniforms” and the decision was, that that would be great. So, once we receive the shirts, and together with the planned KIS badges, the KIS interpreters will look “flash” while on the job.

**Thanks Argyle Diamond Mine!!**