



## Bullinah Aboriginal Health Service – Solid Mob

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This story was submitted to the National Best Practice Unit Tackling Indigenous Smoking (NBPU TIS) by Leanne Miles, Regional Tobacco Coordinator at Bullinah Aboriginal Health Service. Many thanks to the Solid Mob TIS team for sharing their story.

### **What area do you service?**

Solid Mob are based in Ballina, Northern New South Wales. We cover to Tweed LGA in the north, along the eastern coastline to Grafton LGA in the south and out towards Baryulgil, Malabulgimah, Tabulam and Muli Muli in the west.

### **Tell us about your success story**

During the last six months of the reporting period the TIS team delivered a mass media advertising campaign on bus shelters from Tweed Heads to Grafton. The TIS team engaged with 20 local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members to share their quit stories and promote smoke- and vape-free communities. The TIS team worked with Claude Group to develop the artwork and deliver the advertising campaign Take the Pledge: Smoke and Vape Free, which was displayed on 20 bus shelters and one billboard across the Northern Rivers region for 12 weeks.



**Who was the activity designed to reach?**

The aim of the mass advertising campaign activity was to increase geographical reach and promote smoke-free environments to reduce exposure to secondhand smoke and encourage people to 'Take the Pledge' to become smoke- and vape-free. The advertising campaign was displayed in high traffic areas around hospitals, schools and shopping centres, as well as in regional and remote areas where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people reside or pass through. Involving community members and providing a platform to share their stories resonates with people, has the power to connect emotionally and increases engagement.





### **How did you evaluate your activity?**

The TIS team posted the bus shelters advertisement on Solid Mob social media platforms to promote the campaign, and asked community members to make a comment if they had seen a bus shelter in their communities. The aim of the activity was to engage with our social media followers and identify how many people had seen the bus shelters, and where. Many of our Indigenous communities are spread across a wide geographical area, and therefore the purpose of the campaigns was to reach as many people as possible to promote smoke-free environments, and 'Take the Pledge' to be smoke- and vape-free. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2021) census data identified 15,517 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were residing in the Northern Rivers region during the time of the census, and therefore the TIS team forecast the advertising campaign to reach a significant number of community members during the 16-week promotional advertising period.

### **Summary and conclusion**

The mass media advertising campaigns on the bus shelters were very successful in increasing geographical reach to support the TIS team deliver and promote key tobacco and vaping health messages. The TIS team interviewed 20 community members from Lismore, Grafton, Maclean, Yamba, Ballina, Casino and Tweed Heads, and each community member was asked to provide a quote to share within their communities on





their understanding of the health impacts of smoking and/or vaping and how smoking has impacted on them personally. Whilst the advertising campaign was successful, with great reach via our social media platforms, the team received little feedback from people as to where the bus shelters were seen out in the community. However, whilst delivering TIS activities, and during interagency and stakeholder meetings many community members commented on the bus shelters, and stated it was great to see community members involved in the campaign. The location of the bus shelters was in high traffic areas where many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people reside.

The aim of the campaign was to encourage people to 'Take the Pledge' to quit, promote smoke- and vape-free environments, and smoking cessation services to increase geographical reach to meet KPI 6.

The TIS team will continue to deliver mass advertising campaigns to promote smoking cessation, the harmful effects of smoking and vaping, and the health impacts of exposure to secondhand smoke. Engaging with community members and sharing their stories or experiences provides an avenue to connect with people and has the ability to grip someone emotionally, which can force people to reaffirm or rethink their attitudes and beliefs.

