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**CATSINaM announces new CEO**



The Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Nurses and Midwives (CATSINaM), the national peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives, today welcomes the appointment of Melanie Robinson as the new CEO.

Ms Robinson, a nurse who has been a director of CATSINaM for three years, has worked clinically, in nurse training and policy development, most recently holding a senior position with the Western Australian Department of Health (see bio below).

She will move from Perth to Canberra to take up her new position with CATSINaM on 4 February 2019.

CATSINaM acting president, Marni Tuala, said that Melanie Robinson is a fantastic addition to the CATSINaM team given her unswerving commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health as well as nurse and midwife employment issues, and her profile within the national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander healthcare community.

“Melanie brings valuable experience and a fresh perspective to the role of CEO,” Ms Tuala said.

“Melanie knows the benefits and rewards of working as a nurse and has a deep understanding of the issues that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses and midwives face on a daily basis.”

Ms Robinson said it is an honour to be a part of such a vibrant and important organisation that advocates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses and midwives.

Her priorities would include growing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses and midwives across Australia, and ensuring the workforce was strongly supported.

“It’s important that we look at what is working – within the universities, the vocational training sector and in terms of employment pathways – and translate these lessons more widely,” Ms Robinson said.

“I am looking forward to advocating for our members, engaging with national policy development, and building strong partnerships across the government and non-government sectors, and working with the other peak bodies.

“I am also keen to continue the work of raising CATSINaM’s profile, at local, national and international levels.”

As a passionate advocate for CATSINaM, Ms Robinson said the organisation had been critical for her own journey of professional development and she wanted to ensure that others had similar opportunities.

“When I discovered CATSINaM, it opened up this whole other world as I met others with a shared history and experiences,” she said. “I will be working hard to ensure that CATSINaM offers those same opportunities to others that it has brought me.”

Ms Robinson said she hoped that the wide-ranging experience she had gained over the last 30 years would be useful for CATSINaM and its members. She commended an Aboriginal Leadership and Excellence Development program that she undertook in WA for building her confidence to take on senior roles.

Acting CATSINaM president Marni Tuala said the CATSINaM Board was keen to acknowledge the legacy of the outgoing CEO, Janine Mohamed.

“CATSINaM recognises and commends the incredible achievements made by the outgoing CEO, Janine Mohamed. Her contributions during her six years in the role will not be forgotten, especially in the advocacy and implementation of cultural safety across healthcare. Janine will continue to be a valuable member of the CATSINaM community,” Ms Tuala said.

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Melanie is available for interviews and profile articles. Please contact Sarah Stewart for full information

**Bio – Melanie Robinson**

I was born in Derby in the Kimberley region of Western Australia and grew up on the Gibb River Road in Ngallagunda community. When I was 8 years old we moved into Derby for school and after that I went to boarding school at Stella Maris College. I finished year 12 in 1989 and then in 1990 I commenced a Bachelor of Science (Nursing) at Curtin University completing the course in December 1993.

As a graduate I move back to Derby and completed 18 months in Derby Hospital working in paediatrics, general medical and emergency department. During this time I worked in Fitzroy Crossing hospital and the aged care facility in Derby called Numbla Nunga.

In 1996 I travelled overseas and lived in London for 6 months and then I returned to Perth and began working at Royal Perth Hospital a tertiary service where I worked for the next 2.5 years in aged care, acute medical and the intensive care unit. In 1998 I travelled to Dublin and lived there for a year with a friend and her family, working in a local aged care unit.

In 1998 I returned to Perth and commenced work in Princess Margaret Hospital where I worked in oncology, hematology and Intensive Care for the next 9.5 years. I loved working with children and their families, which is a very specialised area and often extremely challenging.

In 2008 I decided to take a position as a nurse educator at Marr Mooditj Training and mentored and taught a number of Aboriginal students in enrolled nursing and Aboriginal Health Worker Programs. I loved this work and really enjoyed learning more about Noongar people and getting to know the local Aboriginal community.

In 2013 I took on a new position as a Senior Policy Officer in the Western Australian Department of Health. In 2015 I managed to gain a promotion into a Senior Development Officer role and I completed a Masters in Nursing Research at the University of Notre Dame Australia in June 2018. In 2018 for 6 months I acted as the Director Aboriginal Health in the Child and Adolescent Health Service in Western Australia. In the future I plan to return to nursing and enrol in the Masters in Midwifery Practice to gain the skills as a midwife.



