The KIDS RESEARCH INSTITUTE AUSTRALIA

WAACHS LINKED DATA STUDY

NEWSLETTER • Edition 2 • October 2025

This is the second newsletter from the WAACHS Linked Data Study, a study that has been funded by a National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Synergy Grant 2023-2028 (GNT2018970). After a lengthy development period and team establishment, we are now immersed in the research work program wanting to share our progress.

ANNUAL 3 DAY MEETING

Tuesday 26th August – Thursday 28th August were the dates for the 3rd Annual meeting of the WAACHS Synergy Grant held at Forrest Hall and St Catherine's College, Nedlands, Perth.

The first day was with the Aboriginal Steering Committee and the executive team. The next 2 days involved the executive team, steering committee, Investigators, data analysts and community members, with presentations and discussions focusing on the sub-study topics.





The purpose for the 3-day meeting is:

- To build relationships between Synergy Investigators, members of the Aboriginal Steering Committee, the research team, and members of the wider Aboriginal staff network.
- To share and invite discussion on key findings & their interpretation, work in progress and plans for the next 12 months within sub-study topic areas.
- To workshop the creation and use of composite measures around developmental circumstances, adverse childhood experiences and cultural engagement.
- To identify opportunities for longitudinal analysis across sub-study topic areas viewed with a developmental and wellbeing lens.
- To consider procedural aspects and reach agreement on priorities and actions addressing the overall Research Strategy for the next 12 months.



MEET THE TEAMS

In each newsletter we will feature members of the Investigator and Study teams, and the Aboriginal Steering Committee.



Steering Committee: Isaac Torres

Where are you from?

I am from Broome (Djugun & Yawuru country) in the Kimberley region of Western Australia, famous for its pearling industry history, Cable Beach and being a big melting pot of cultures and traditions.

Who's your mob?

From my mother's father, Djugun and Jabirr Jabirr from the Broome/Dampier Peninsula area, and from my mother's mother, Gooniyandi from the Fitzroy Valley.

Where are you working and what is your role?

I work for the Kimberley Aboriginal Health Research Alliance (KAHRA), currently auspiced by Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services (KAMS). I am the Data Project Coordinator working on a regional data integration project and help the team with other data related queries and general tech issues.

What inspired you to join the steering committee for the WAACHS Linked Data Study?

I first heard about the study in early 2024 and became interested due its history and now use of linked data at a scale I hadn't personally encountered. The technical data governance of the project and how Indigenous Data Sovereignty and Governance plays a role are also important aspects I am also very interested to see in practice.



Analyst: Nauman Malik

What is your role?

Postdoctoral Researcher

How long have you been with the WAACHS team?

I am about to complete my 2-year anniversary work on 5 February 2026.

How does your work impact the WAACHS team?

My work has contributed to the project by enhancing its analytical depth and fostering a collaborative culture.

I stayed actively involved with multiple investigator topic teams, focusing later on several papers within the infectious disease team to ensure continuity and thoroughness. I consistently delivered authentic, well-documented analyses that are transparent and easy to review, supporting the project's standards of rigor and traceability.

Beyond my analytical work, I assisted with onboarding and integrating a new data analyst and a postdoctoral researcher, promoting a positive and collaborative team environment in the project team. My openness to feedback and willingness to adopt new methods have strengthened my relationships with study investigators—especially within the Infectious Diseases team—where I have become a regular, constructive participant in meetings. This growing trust has enabled me to take on potential expanded responsibilities in the upcoming year, further supporting the project's research goals and the team's development.

Student: Kierley Richmond



Kierley is a full time UWA student studying a Bachelor of Biomedical Science (Public Health and Humanities in Health and Medicine), graduating at the end of 2025. Kierley has kinship ties to the Yuin nation and grew up in rural and remote communities across Western Australia. Her passion for rural, Aboriginal, and public health has driven her to contribute to a strong future for mob and to become a grounded, holistic health professional. She joined the WAACHS team in July to broaden her experience in community engagement and research and values the opportunity to work with WAACHS in an Aboriginal-focussed project, as well as with The Kids as a prominent Aboriginal employer and culturally safe workspace. Kierley was with the team until the end of October, and we were thrilled to have her on board.

"Thank you very much for taking me on as an intern and engaging me in so much of what the study is achieving. Thank you for trusting me to represent you as a student in public forums, and for ensuring my introduction to the research space was seamless. I have learnt so much, and the experience has been invaluable. Thank you to the study team for their never-ending support and patience, Kierley"

Community Engagement Updates

On Monday 13th October and Tuesday 21st October Jannine, Phoebe and Kierley went to Whadjuk Northside Community Centre in Balga and started the community information sessions. The presentations were with the northside Elders group and the Dardy Yorgas groups. Evaluation forms were given at the end of presentation. There was a lot of positive feedback and ways we can improve the presentation for other community groups.

Thank you to the staff at Whadjuk Northside Aboriginal Community Centre, the Elders and Dardy Yorgas.

WAACHS Linked Data Study areas of research (sub-studies)

- Infectious disease
- Mental health and substance use
- Child protection
- Education
- Justice
- Chronic diseases

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Are you interested in being on a sub study advisory group for the WAACHS Linked Data Study, helping researchers address concerns for Aboriginal children, families and communities?

Are you Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and have current or previous experience sitting on advisory groups or committees?

Do you have experience and/or expertise on any of our sub study topic areas? We would love to hear from you.

Where you a parent or child that was a part of the survey and would like to be involved?

For further information or to send an expression of interest by email contact:



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Latest Publications

Cohort profile: Understanding the influence of early life environments and health and social service system contacts over time and across generations through the Western Australian Aboriginal Child Health Survey (WAACHS) Linked Data Study | BMJ Open