Josephine Gwynn

Josephine Gwynn has had a long involvement in Aboriginal health beginning with living for a few years in East Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory. Her original background was in occupational therapy with a strong focus on rural and community practice, however around 12 years ago she migrated into public health and established and directed the Many Rivers Diabetes Prevention Program (MRDPP) from 2001 onwards. The MRDPP is a program of research and health promotion and is a partnership between the University of Newcastle and two Aboriginal Medical Services (AMS) on the north coast of NSW—Biripi AMS in Taree and Durri AMS in Kempsey. She now co-manages the project with Nicole Turner who is based at Durri AMS, and is Manager for Research and Evaluation. In partnership with the participating communities, Jo establishes and implements the research activities of the MRDPP. Her PhD was on the food intake and physical activity of rural NSW Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and she has published in these fields. Jo has been involved in the establishment of the Aboriginal Community Controlled Governance structures for the Many Rivers Project and also for the Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health. Current activities include: the co-supervision of Aboriginal medical students undertaking a research year in rural NSW; the writing-up of results from a large NHMRC project (some of which are being presented here); the conduct of a range of health promotion initiatives on healthy foods and physical activity participation for rural Aboriginal children; and a photovoice project with rural Aboriginal children.