Tarja Martin

Whilst Tarja Martin initially trained and practiced as a registered nurse, she has been working in preventative health for the last twenty years. Tarja started in preventative health as a project officer for skin cancer prevention for the Health Advancement Branch, Queensland Health, that then became a health promotion role with fledgling Health Promotion Unit that later became the Tropical Population Health Unit in Townsville. This role supported major state-driven initiatives in skin cancer prevention and cemented her love of health promotion.

Most of Tarja’s work has been in regional and rural positions. Tarja has worked on projects such as Health Promoting Schools, injury prevention, immunisation and in and the last seven years she has been concentrating on chronic disease prevention attached to a primary health care team based in a small rural community of Ayr. This role also has required working closely with other small communities in the health service such as Bowen, Collinsville and Charters Towers. Tarja is one of the few health promotion officers working in this capacity in Queensland.

Being in this unique position has meant a great deal of coal face work as well as influencing strategic directions. This role has involved working across the health promotion continuum and working in strong partnerships with other agencies and service providers, government and non-government organisations and their communities. It has also allowed her to utilise some of her other skills, such as acting, to be embedded into her health promotion strategies.

Tarja has presented at a number of conferences over the years about the benefits of incorporating health promotion into a primary health team setting and on projects developed and undertaken in this rural area.