Aboriginal Health Workers are tops

A Central Australian child health worker took out the top honour at this year’s Aboriginal Health Workers (AHW) Excellence Awards.

Marion Swift, from the Department of Health’s Child Health Development Program, was dubbed the ‘Legend’ of the 2011 AHW Excellence Awards after taking out the Remote Health Category.

Ms Swift is based at Ntaria (Hermannsburg) Health Centre. She was named the overall winner exemplifying excellence in the Aboriginal Health Worker field.

Ms Swift, an Aboriginal Health Worker for 28 years, has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to her community and to the wellbeing of children and young people.

National award for RDH pharmacist

Royal Darwin Hospital’s Director of Pharmacy, Bhavini Patel, has been awarded the Society of Hospital Pharmacists’ GlaxoSmithKline Medal of Merit.

Ms Patel received the Medal of Merit at the national conference in Hobart. It was awarded for initiatives that included the development of a sustainable clinical pharmacy service across the Territory’s five public hospitals, as well as her work in improving Indigenous health.

Royal Darwin Hospital Director of Pharmacy Bhavini Patel was awarded the GlaxoSmithKline Medal of Merit.

She was also recognised for her role in the establishment of a Bachelor of Pharmacy course at Charles Darwin University, which will ensure pharmacists in the NT are well equipped to service the Territory’s needs, and her contribution as the only hospital pharmacist on the inaugural Pharmacy Board of Australia.

In addition to the Medal, Ms Patel received $10,000 and will have her award oration published in an upcoming issue of the Journal of Pharmacy Practice and Research.

“Weary” Dunlop Award for

A total of 66 nominations were received for this year’s AHW Excellence Awards, held to recognise those who strive to promote and deliver quality primary healthcare.

Jennifer Thompson from Alice Springs Hospital won the Specialist Category Award and was recognised for her compassion and dedication to her work in rehabilitation.
Ms Thompson has worked in the Rehabilitation Unit at Alice Springs Hospital since 1997. She retired in 2006 for eight months but as a testament to her commitment to the profession, she came back to work. She has since gone on to deliver papers on the cultural perspective to rehabilitation at both national and international conferences.

The winner of the Urban Category award was Louise Dennis, a member of the AHW Remote Health Management Team in Central Australia. Alison Andrews of Manyallaluk Community Health Centre won the New Practitioner award.

$24.5 M emergency dept. takes shape

The $24.5 million upgrade of Alice Springs Hospital’s emergency department and 24-hour Medical Imaging Service has taken another major step forward with concrete slabs laid for the extension’s first floor.

Flooring, columns and roofing are all expected to be completed by the end of 2012. More than 1800 cubic meters of concrete will be used in the project, with 230 cubic meters used in the first floor alone.

The ED expansion, which includes 31 treatment spaces, is on track to be completed at the end of 2012. The new facility includes a paediatric room, two secure assessment rooms and three resuscitation areas.

The first floor of Alice Springs Hospital ED taking shape.

The winner of the Urban Category award was Louise Dennis, a member of the AHW Remote Health Management Team in Central Australia. Alison Andrews of Manyallaluk Community Health Centre won the New Practitioner award.

Katherine, Tennant Creek staff thanked for service

Health workers in Katherine and Tennant Creek have been recognised for their service to the community.

A senior nurse from Darwin’s National Critical Care and Trauma Response Centre has won the prestigious “Weary” Dunlop Award, named in honour of the famous Australian surgeon and war hero, Sir Edward “Weary” Dunlop.

Ms Douglas was awarded the Sir Edward “Weary” Dunlop Award. Ms Douglas’s paper, “The Intelligent Tasking Program 2010 - Aeromedical evacuation coordination in Southern Afghanistan,” was based on her experience coordinating the retrieval of injured frontline soldiers.

Ms Douglas was praised for her achievements, dedication, professionalism and courage for taking on the assignment in Afghanistan.

Ms Douglas was presented with the award at the Australian Military Medicine Association Annual Scientific Conference in October 2011. The Award is awarded to the author of the best original paper presented at the conference.
Royal Darwin Hospital’s Professor Bart Currie and Alice Springs Hospital’s Dr Sally Banfield have been honoured with awards judged by the Northern Territory’s Postgraduate Medical Education Council.

Prof Currie was named the NT’s Clinical Educator of the Year, and Dr Banfield the Junior Doctor of the Year.

Prof Currie was recognised for his ongoing dedication to the education and training of doctors; for his passion in attracting young physicians to our region; and in fostering his vision for high quality medical services across the Territory.

Dr Banfield, who began her internship at ASH last year, has been active in representing her peers on the Medical Training Committee, and advocating for and determining the needs of Alice Springs’s junior doctors.

Both doctors travelled to Auckland in October 2011 to represent the NT at the Confederation of Postgraduate Medical Education Councils Prevocational Medical Education and Training Forum.

**Good tidings at RDH**

Festive cheer was spread through Royal Darwin Hospital throughout December with celebrations taking place in the lead up to Christmas.

On the Children’s Ward, a special Christmas party was held complete with a visit from Santa and his elves as well as some ukulele-inspired carolling.

Staff were treated to an end of year morning tea to thank them for their hard work over the past twelve months.

Health Minister Kon Vatskalis came bearing gifts of toys for the sick children as well as presenting Lions Christmas cakes to staff to thank them for their continued efforts to ensure Royal Darwin Hospital provides the best possible care to its patients.

Service awards were presented to employees who have worked for the Department of Health (DoH) for five, 10, 20 and 30 years.

More than 100 staff totalling 551 years of service to the Katherine community were presented with service awards by Minister for Health Kon Vatskalis and Executive Director for the Top End Hospital Network, Jenny Cleary.

Maria Chandler, Sue Moran, Fran Angus and Alan McComish were all recognised for reaching 30 years of service.

Staff at Tennant Creek were presented with their awards by DoH Chief Executive Jeff Moffet and Central Australian Hospital Network Acting Executive Director Mike Melino.

More than 30 staff were thanked for their dedicated service, including Di Bremner, Ray O’Halloran and Ursula Sullivan who have each given more than 30 years’ service to the Department.