A woman with 20 years experience in health has been named the Rotary Club of Darwin Sunrise 2007 Northern Territory Aboriginal Health Worker of the Year.

Gwenda Lawton Gless from Wurli Wurlijang Health Service in Katherine edged out a field of 11 other finalists to take out the award at a ceremony in Parliament House tonight.

The Health Minister Chris Burns said Ms Lawton Gless was a worthy winner.

“Gwenda has shown real dedication and professionalism in her chosen career,” he said.

“She started work as a cleaner, undertook extra study and worked her way up to the position of Clinic Coordinator at Wurli Wurlijang where she is in charge of seven other Aboriginal Health Workers.”

Ms Lawton Gless has worked at Croker Island, Katherine West Health Board, Yarralin, Kalkaringi, Timber Creek and Katherine Hospital. She moved to Danila Dilba in 1992 and Wurli Wurlinjang in 1997.

“I congratulate Gwenda on her commitment to improving the health of Aboriginal Territorians. Her valuable contribution has been justly recognised tonight.”

The winners in the other categories are:

New Practitioner:
- **Winner:** Emma Baylis from Angurugu Health Centre
- **Highly commended:** Veronica King from Wurli Wurlijang Health Service

Remote:
- **Winner:** Alberta Puruntatameri from Pirlangimpi Health Centre
- **Highly commended:** Bruce Herbert from Robinson River Health Centre

Urban:
- **Winner:** Gwenda Lawton Gless from Wurli Wurlijang Health Service
- **Highly commended:** Doris Campbell – Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation

Specialised:
- **Winner:** Rosemary Hoffman from Nightcliff Renal Unit
- **Highly commended:** Sumaria Corpus – Diabetes Education and Hyperbaric Unit RDH
- **Highly commended:** Pat Bamal Gamanangga from Royal Darwin Hospital

Ms Lawton Gless received a $1500 study bursary for winning the urban category and an additional $3000 study bursary for being named the overall winner in 2007. The winner of the New Practitioner Award received a $1200 study bursary and a $300 voucher. The remaining two category winners each received a $1500 study bursary.