

10 July 2016

Rainbow Serpent captures the spirit of NAIDOC Week

Over 100 children at the Women's and Children's Hospital have helped create a 10 metre mural of a Rainbow Serpent as part of the hospital's NAIDOC Week celebrations this year.

The Rainbow Serpent is made up of handprints that have been decorated by the children themselves, both inpatients and outpatients of the hospital, and currently adorns the wall between the Aboriginal Liaison Unit and the Starlight Express Room on level one of the hospital.

The story of the Rainbow Serpent is an ancient part of the Dreaming in many mainland Aboriginal nations and represents creation, regeneration, fertility and abundance. The Rainbow Serpent is the protector of the land, its people, and the source of all life.

Creation of the mural was an initiative of the Aboriginal Liaison Unit, in collaboration with the Starlight Captains at the Starlight Express Room.

"We specifically wanted the children to create their Rainbow Serpent out of hands, as hands represent belonging and respect for the land. The painting of hands is an ancient tradition in Aboriginal culture," said Mylee Wanganeen, Aboriginal Liaison Officer at the hospital.

"The children who contributed to the creation of the serpent were from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal backgrounds. They remind us that NAIDOC Week is an event to be celebrated by all Australians from all walks of life."

NAIDOC Week (3rd – 10th July) was officially opened at the hospital by Jamie Goldsmith, a local Kurna man, who held a children's workshop on Aboriginal culture at the Starlight Express Room. Jamie played his didgeridoo and talked to the children about the traditions surrounding the didgeridoo.

"NAIDOC Week is an opportunity to recognise the contributions that Indigenous Australians make to our country and our society," said Mylee.

This important week has been commemorated in all parts of the Women's and Children's Health Network.

The Rainbow Serpent will remain in the hospital for a couple of additional weeks as a symbol of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history.

For more information on latest news

Visit  www.facebook.com/sahealth  www.twitter.com/sahealthnews

 www.youtube.com/sahealthaustralia