



Campaign poster bub Yonne Peeauakeau. Photo courtesy of Qld Health

Breast is best for mothers and bubs



THE message that breastfeeding helps infants get the best start in life has been around for generations, however clinical evidence on the health benefits of breastfeeding continues to accumulate.

As part of its '12+ months on the breast. Normal. Natural. Healthy' campaign, Queensland Health has developed a new guide to advise and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait

breastfeeding mums and their families.

The booklet outlines the benefits of breastfeeding, the basics on how to breastfeed, common problems and how to solve them. It will be given to all expectant mothers attending antenatal services and child health centres in Queensland and will be available online.

The campaign supports the national infant feeding guidelines to exclusively breastfeed for the first six months, introduce solids at around six months, and continue

breastfeeding to at least twelve months.

Queensland Health said that not only did breast milk contain the nutrients to support healthy growth and development, it enhanced a baby's immune system making them less likely to develop illnesses such as gastro-intestinal, chest, urine and ear infections.

Breastfeeding has also been linked with reduced risks of asthma and eczema in addition to chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and

obesity later in life.

"Mothers can also gain many health benefits from breastfeeding, as it helps protect against breast cancer, ovarian cancer and Type 2 diabetes," the department said in a statement.

"Breastfeeding improves the recovery from childbirth, delays the return of menstruation which increases fertility control and can help reduce stress and depression."

While technically 95 out of 100 women can breastfeed, it is a learned skill that may require

some practice and assistance. Common breastfeeding problems such as attachment, sore nipples, perceived low supply and engorgement can all be overcome or prevented with the right advice.

For more information on the campaign and guide visit <http://health.qld.gov.au/breastfeeding/>, see your local health service, or call the Australian Breastfeeding Association Breastfeeding Helpline 1800 mum 2 mum (1800 686 2 686), or 1800 686 2 68 to VoIP phones, for advice and support day and night.

In good hands with Dr Shibasaki



THE Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal Health (CRAH) says the awarding of a doctorate to Torres Strait Island woman Sanchia Shibasaki is further evidence of an emerging highly-educated and skilled Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce.

Torres Shire Mayor Pedro Stephen presented Ms Shibasaki with her Doctor of Philosophy in Epidemiology, Population Health and Health Services on Thursday Island on Saturday at a ceremony attended by her family and friends.

CRAH CEO Mick Gooda said Dr Shibasaki represented a new generation of Indigenous health professionals whose work was playing a critical role in closing the health gap between Indigenous and other Australians.

"There is a substantial body of research evidence indicating that the development of a skilled and professional Indigenous health workforce is an essential prerequisite for improvements in Indigenous health," Mr Gooda said.

"Sanchia is the latest young Indigenous person to join this group and I congratulate her on her outstanding achievements.

"She is living proof that our people are both ready and capable of developing and managing effective health programs."

Mr Gooda said that Dr Shibasaki, who received a CRAH scholarship, was one of a small group of Torres Strait Islander women to be awarded a doctorate.

Dr Shibasaki, who was born and raised



Dr Sanchia Shibasaki is part of a new generation of Indigenous health professionals, working to improve Indigenous health outcomes.

on Thursday Island, started her tertiary studies with a Bachelor of Applied Health Sciences (Physiotherapy), going on to work at the Ingham Hospital and then for five years as a resident physiotherapist at the Thursday Island Hospital before she successfully completed a Masters degree in Epidemiology and Population Health.

She then moved to the Northern

Territory, working in Darwin before commencing work as a CRAH Research Fellow at the Aboriginal-controlled Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Primary Health Care Service in Alice Springs.

She was granted a National Health and Medical Research Council scholarship to undertake her Doctorate of Philosophy in Epidemiology, Population Health and

Health Services at the Australian Primary Health Care Research Institute, Australian National University.

Dr Shibasaki said her PhD, the Information Atlas Project, identified information management practices needed by primary healthcare services to provide chronic disease management, with a particular emphasis on diabetes patient management.

Information and health data management is an increasing challenge for services delivering primary health care.

"A key component of effective primary health care of patients with chronic diseases is the management of data and of information and the appropriate use of information technology," said Dr Shibasaki.

"The challenge for the sector is its capacity and capability to strategically use these information resources to effectively care for patients with chronic diseases.

"I'm very proud that my studies are contributing to improved capacity and efficiency of health services to properly manage patients suffering from chronic diseases particularly diabetes which is in epidemic proportions here in the Torres Straits and throughout Indigenous Australia."

To complement her health expertise Dr Shibasaki is currently studying a Graduate Diploma in Professional Management at Australian Institute of Management (AIM) and in July was awarded an NHMRC Training Fellowship for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research.