



Staff with Disability and Allies Network (SDAN) Conference 2025

Tuesday 17 June 2025, 9.15am – 4.00pm

Bendat Parent and Community Centre, 36 Dodd Street Wembley

Design to thrive: Attracting and retaining WA Health staff with disability

This conference brings together health staff with disability and allies to work together to make the WA health system a more inclusive workplace. In support of this, a sensory regulation room will be available on the day for anyone who needs to use it.

Time	Topic	Presenter / facilitator
9.00 am	Registration and doors open	
9:15 am	Welcome to Country	Ingrid Cumming
9:30 am	Conference welcome	Sarah Savill
9:45 am	Keynote address: Navigating disability in an emergency department	Dr Dinesh Palipana OAM
10:15 am	A conversation with Dr Dinesh Palipana OAM	Lisa Burnette
11:00 am	Break	
11:20 am	Panel discussion: Hidden disability in the workplace A conversation with Kathryn Boon, Dr Ettore Guaia, Erin Mansell, and Holly Bootsma	Sarah Savill
12:50 pm	Lunch break	
1:50 pm	Disability inclusive workplace innovation lab This lab has been designed as a low-cognitive and sensory demand session	Chloe Binder
3:50 pm	Closing remarks	Sarah Savill
4:00 pm	Close event	Sarah Savill



Scan the QR code to join the event conversation online, discuss with colleague, ask questions, and connect with people or [join here](#)



Presenter overview



Ingrid Ngoorlak Cumming (she/her)

Welcome to Country

Ingrid is a proud Whadjuk Balardong Noongar woman from Fremantle, Western Australia. Ingrid was given the name “Ngoorlak” by her Elders which is the name for the Carnarby Cockatoo, the bringer of rains, healing, and change. She is a recognised young leader in the First Nations community and across many sectors.



Sarah Savill (she/her)

Host

Sarah has worked in healthcare for 12 years, currently at Department of Health, and is studying a Bachelor of Health Services Management. She’s currently on an ongoing journey of self-discovery and acceptance after joining the ranks of late-diagnosed neurodivergent women.



Dr Dinesh Palipana OAM (he/him)

Emergency Department Doctor, Gold Coast University Hospital

Dr Dinesh Palipana OAM is a registrar at the Gold Coast University Hospital. Despite facing numerous barriers, he became the first quadriplegic medical graduate and medical intern in Queensland. He was recently admitted as a lawyer. As co-founder of Doctors with Disabilities Australia, Dinesh has worked with the Australian Medical Association to create first-of-a-kind national policies for inclusivity in medical education and employment. Dinesh has also contributed significantly to scientific advances in treating spinal cord injury and restoring function to people with paralysis. His national and global impact has been recognised with numerous awards, including Junior Doctor of the Year and the Order of Australia Medal.



Lisa Burnette (she/her)

Clinical Information Nurse, SJOG Midland

Lisa Burnette (RN, MPH, CHIA) has worked in and around hospitals for thirty years. After acquiring a physical disability five years into her nursing career, Lisa moved to non-clinical nursing roles including research and information technology. Lisa is a former president of People with Disabilities WA and currently works at Midland Hospital as a Clinical Informatics Nurse.



Kathryn Boon (she/her)

Clinical Nurse, Alcohol and Drug Service, NMHS

Kathryn Boon is a Clinical Nurse in Alcohol and Other Drug services and a founding member of Neurokin. A neurodivergent leader with ADHD, dysgraphia, and hypermobile Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome, she advocates for inclusive, trauma-informed care and staff support, using lived experience to influence healthcare systems and culture.



Dr Ettore Guaia (he/him)

Consultant Child and Youth Psychiatrist and Medical Co-Director for Youth Mental Health and Eating Disorders Services, NMHS

Dr Ettore Guaia is a FRANZCP Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist Medical Co Director at NMHS Mental Health, Public Health, and Dental Services. He is a person with albinism who has worked in health care since 1981. Dr Guaia is a member of Stanford Medicine Alliance for Disability Inclusion and Equity (SMADIE).



Erin Mansell (she/her)

Clinical Nurse Specialist (Clinical Research), Fiona Stanley

Erin is a Clinical Nurse Specialist in Cardiology Research at FSH. She has a master's degree in occupational health and lived experience of disability. She is passionate about using her personal experiences and formal training to support people to thrive in the workplace while living with disability, and advocates for equitable employment processes.



Holly Bootsma (she/her)

Nurse Unit Manager Acute Medical Unit (AMU)

South Metropolitan Health Service Fiona Stanley Hospital

Nurse Unit Manager at Fiona Stanley Hospital since 2022, with over a decade in WA Health. A passionate advocate for neurodivergent staff, informed by lived experience as a parent. Committed to inclusive leadership, empowering strengths, and creating workplaces where all individuals feel respected, supported, and seen.

Thank you to our conference organising committee

The SDAN Conference was made possible through the dedication and support of our incredible volunteer organising committee:

Evie Anderson	Program Officer, Strategy and Governance, Department of Health
Chloe Binder	Project Manager, Procurement and Contracting, Department of Health
Darcie Boelen	Senior Project Officer, Data and Information Systems, Department of Health
Lisa Burnette	Clinical Information Nurse, Clinical Governance, Midland Public Private Health
Kathryn Carver	Registered Nurse, East Metropolitan Health Service
Stephanie Coates	Co-Lead, Disability Health Network and Head of Occupational Therapy, Fiona Stanley and Fremantle Hospitals Group
Dr Ettore Guaia	Medical Co-Director, Youth Mental Health and Eating Disorders Service, Graylands Hospital
Jocelyn Franciscus	Co-Lead, Disability Health Network
Erica Rojas Wood	Data Project Officer, The Kids Research Institute, Perth Children's Hospital
Sarah Savill	Senior Policy Officer, Office of Medical Research and Innovation, Department of Health

Join SDAN

SDAN is a space for people with disability and allies. Connect with us on [MS Teams](#) by scanning the QR code or contact us on SDAN@health.wa.gov.au



Join NeuroKin

NeuroKin is a peer support group for WA Health staff who self-identify or are diagnosed as Neurodivergent. This means anyone with a brain difference, including but not limited to: ADHD, autism, dyslexia, mental health conditions, dementia, cognitive or intellectual disability, epilepsy, and more!

Contact

Neurokin@health.wa.gov.au