

ATTENTION: Lithgow Women's Advisory Committee.

Yindyamarra!

My name is Karla Priestley, and I am a proud Wiradjuri/Tuhoe woman who lives and works in The Lithgow Region. I have lived here now for well over 12 years and am currently working in Lithgow as an Aboriginal Alcohol and Drug Counsellor/Case Manager at Dianella Cottage Lives Lived Well. Dianella has been servicing the Lithgow community for well over 6 years now and have supported many of our local women in the process. .

I am a qualified AOD Counsellor/Case Manager with well over 3 years' experience. As part of my role here at Dianella Cottage is I work closely with consumers who are seeking support and counselling for their misuse with Alcohol and Other Drugs. We offer free 1;1 Counselling with a strong CBT, DBT and ACT evidence-based practice. Case Management which sees me working alongside other services in our region, Delivery of Psychoeducational Groups where we facilitate evidence backed lessons on connection Thoughts, emotions and behaviors and ways to make significant changes in their lives. I come from a client centered approach, and this offers a space to educate clients from a Harm Minimization lens. I also deliver SMART Recovery and am trained to identify and respond to Domestic Violence and Crisis management. I also facilitate Drug and Alcohol First Aid.

I wish to apply for a seat in this committee as I feel without community involvement within a council space, Alcohol and Drug complexities that impact our whole community is not receiving a mention, so it is important to be able to advocate for our community members who have lost their voice due to stigma and discrimination. I also feel the importance of having a platform where we can discuss the localized impacts of our female citizens who use Alcohol and Drugs as evidence has proven, women have many protective factors which are barriers that are present when it comes to reaching out for help.

I hope I am considered to be a part of this committee and am looking forward to hearing back from you.

Karla Priestley

Aboriginal AOD Counsellor

