

**Yoorrook Justice Commission  
Statement of Lisa Clancy**

My name is Lisa Clancy. I'm from Collingwood in Melbourne, but I have grown up in Albury Wodonga, which is a border town. Albury sides were Wiradjuri, Wodonga side's Dhudhuroa. I have connections with the Yorta Yorta people through my children. Their father was Yorta Yorta and Dhan-Gadi as well. So yeah, got a few connections to a few different places around.

I just want to talk about the discrimination that I've experienced with Albury Wodonga Health being the Albury Base Hospital. But that's Victorian because it's on the border. It's still under the Victorian health system.

I've had quite a few dealings with Aubrey Hospital as I'm a type one diabetic and was very naughty as a teenager. Uncontrolled, and ended up in hospital as a result of this. So, on my record, it's got a lot of sort of times being there from drinking too much, to injuries and yeah, I've got quite a long history. My files, you know, a very big one, which they can now click a button on the computer and see.

When I've gone up, I was actually very sick with a gallbladder having to be removed, and they didn't know what was wrong with me, I was up and back to the hospital for three months. And finally got put in, and they strapped me to the bed and accused me of taking ice and were going to put me in Nolan House, which is the acute ward, and thought I had psychological vomiting. I needed an admission and they got a psychiatrist to come in, only that my mum, advocated for me very strongly.

I was actually working in the mental health system at the time, and then I was lucky that a doctor walked past who knew me and was able to say, "she doesn't take ice, she doesn't drink, test her". And they tested me and saw that I was negative. Then they finally worked out that - after ten days that my gallbladder was actually needed to be removed, and that's why I was vomiting.

Then just this year in May, I had a fall because I'm a diabetic - my eyesight's really bad at night, and I fell over a retaining wall in a driveway and broke both my wrists. And they then breathalyse me, put me in after giving me morphine and the green whistle for pain. They had me in an ambulance bed, the ambulance people were looking after me, and then they had to go. And because I'd been given pain relief, they'd done all they could do.

So, I'm sitting there with my wrist still sticking out sideways, and I've come to and I'm in the waiting room because there's no beds for me, because no nurses can care for me, because they're staff shortages. And I've got a head injury as well because I broke my cheekbone, face - fractured from my nose to my cheekbone. And I had a previous head injury as well. So, they didn't even check if, like, scan my head or anything to see, but they just sat me out in the waiting room.

I come to after my partner spoke to them and said, "it'll be on you if anything happens to her, she's got a head injury. Like, you need to care for her and get her a bed". And

they put me in a room, I come to, and I'm in a lounge room lying on the couch, and they breathalyse me. And obviously because of my history, that's why they breathalyse me. Because not everyone who has a fall gets breathalysed - it was very strange.

I got taken by ambulance, and a trauma response or emergency response ambulance come to get me, and have me on the side of the road working on me for half an hour. And then took me to hospital where, you know, they gave me morphine and whatever just to dull the pain because I was screaming. Then it just went from bad to worse and then ended up me being seen by the social worker to see that if I was pushed over the wall, that I didn't actually fall. So, the social worker were sort of saying that I was protecting someone from family violence. And I'm like, "no, no, no. I did have previous history of family violence, but I'm like, no, not anymore. Like, this isn't happening now. That was previous". You know, because you get asked general questions and then they - like, have you ever experienced family violence?

So anyway, it was just one thing to the next. And that's every time I've ever been like, I've heard a lot of Blackfellas in the community say that they'd rather die than go to Albury Base Hospital because you won't come out of there alive. Or, you know, the way you get treated in there.

There needs to be more Aboriginal staff because there's no Aboriginal nurses. You know, when I was in there for pneumonia once as well, and my mum was asked, "could you tell that she's Aboriginal?". One of her friends was a nurse, and the nurse told her that at the Aubrey base Hospital, they are very racist. The staff there - this was back 20 years ago, but it's still the same today. Nothing's changed. Like they had a NAIDOC poster that was three years old to make people feel welcome in the foyer. You know what I mean? No respect.

I think they need to have like a cultural room area for families to go, because if you've got someone in the hospital, you know, the mob comes in and visits. Well, there's no room for this - usually the person's in a four bed room with four beds in it, and you can pull the curtain around like all stand around the bed and be squished in. They need a cultural room like what I've seen at Shepperton, they've got the cultural room where the family can go and the kids can play. There's toys and couches and, you know, a little kitchen, just for everyone to sit around and be around the person when they're not well, because it will lift their spirits - this is culturally appropriate. There're liaison officers and, you know, Aboriginal health workers need to be in the hospital. Not all at AWHS, the medical centre.

Albury's always been a very conservative area. Hard to get changes to happen. Like - all the council, or the parliament, whatever you say. I'm not really up with that side of things, but they're all whitefellas. There's no blackfellas on the council, or anything to do - you know what I mean? It was a settlement area in the 1970s. People were brought here from different mobs and placed all in the one spot, with all different languages, and no cultural awareness was here of different mobs that are here and, you know, putting them all together in this one street, and it just didn't work. And it's still the same today.

You know, there's quite a few different mobs here. And Big, big ice use in this area. I'm working in alcohol and other drugs, and my job is going to finish in March, and I'm a youth alcohol and other drug worker. There's a huge ice problem in the area with our youth, GBH and drugs, you name it. But the youth got nothing like they are disconnected from school because they don't fit in at school - disconnected. They're all in the justice system. A lot of mucking up because they haven't got connection to culture.

I think to change things, I think a good start for that, would be healing centres instead of sending them off to juvie where they learn worse behaviour. And then get to 18 and then go to, you know, the big boys prison or the big girls prison. Get them out onto healing centres, onto land, learn culture. Learn to go bush tucker and eat bush tucker and be healthy in the mind, body and spirit, and connecting to the land and their culture.

I think that would stop the cycle, if we could do that, instead of detox and rehab where you got to fill out paperwork, tell your life story 20 times to get in. We need to have more Aboriginal cultural healing centres. Don't call them rehabs, because people don't want to go there because it's shame. Call them healing centres and have the culture and connection there to the land.

The government, they've got the money to make this happen. Like they're chucking money at different things, but it's not being used for the people.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to tell my story because I think I feel like I've been heard, and it's been really good to have Yoorrook here in the community.

**END OF STATEMENT**