THE LEAD ALLIANCE

Annual Report 2017—2018
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PART A

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Mount Isa Lead Health Management Committee
Committee Members
Message from the Chairperson

The Lead Alliance
Funding Partners
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Programs Team
Goals and Objectives of the Alliance
Pillars for Behaviour Change
Action Plan 2017-2020
Summary of Achievements
Message from the Alliance Chairperson
Messages from the Funding Partners
In 2012, the State Government formed the Mount Isa Lead Health Management Committee (MILHMC). The MILHMC is responsible for providing strategic management of environmental health risks from lead and other mining pollutants (arsenic, cadmium and SO2) in the environment to protect the residents of Mount Isa. This committee also supports the MILHMC Sub-Committee (also known as the ‘Lead Alliance Executive Committee’) to ensure strategies are in place to support residents adopt ‘lead safe’ practises. The committee comprises representatives from Queensland Government agencies, Glencore Mount Isa Mines, State and Commonwealth Members of Parliament and Mount Isa City Council, with the Chief Health Officer Queensland Health as the Chair. The MILHMC Biennial reports are available on the Lead Alliance website.

**The Mount Isa Lead Health Management Committee consists of the following members:**

**Queensland Health**

Chairperson: Jeannette Young, Chief Health Officer
Secretary: Uma Rajappa, Director, Environmental Hazards Program, Health Protection Unit
Sophie Dwyer, Executive Director, Health Protection Unit
Lisa Davies Jones, Chief Executive Officer, North West Hospital and Health Services
Paul Woodhouse, Chair of North West Hospital and Health Services Board

**Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy**

Katherine du Preez, Commissioner for Mine Safety and Health

**Queensland Family and Child Commission**

Phillip Brooks, Commissioner

**Department of Environment and Science**

Dean Ellwood, Deputy Director General

**Members of Parliament**

Bob Katter, Federal Representative, Member for Kennedy
Rob Katter, State Representative, Member for Traeger

**Mount Isa City Council**

Joyce McCulloch, Mayor of Mount Isa

**Glencore Plc - Mount Isa Mines**

Maryann Wipaki
General Manager Health, Safety, Environment and Community, North Queensland
As the Chair of the Mount Isa Lead Health Management Committee, I am pleased to report that the Committee has had a successful year to 30 June 2018. I have been strongly supported by my fellow Committee members.

There have been many achievements this past year and a key one includes the capillary blood lead testing program managed by the North-West Hospital and Health Service. This program continues to be a success with approximately 503 children under five years of age, tested from 01 July 2017 to 30 June 2018, using the blood lead capillary (finger prick) testing method. The success of this program as an easy and effective way to identify ‘at risk’ children is demonstrated by the support it is receiving in the community. This program’s success is complementing the other established blood lead testing programs, including the Mount Isa Base Hospital program that routinely analyses blood samples taken from children aged 1-4 years in Mount Isa Hospital and the free blood lead testing program that is in place through the QML laboratory which is available to all Mount Isa residents.

I would also like to commend the work by the Lead Alliance and Ms Granville as the Project Officer in raising the awareness of lead health risks and protection strategies, particularly over the last 12 months with the successful introduction of a free smartphone App. The new App allows people to create a profile for themselves and each member of their family, record and track blood lead level test results over time, know the facts about “living smart” and limiting lead exposure. It also provides reminders for your next recommended blood lead test date, send appointment information to your personal smartphone calendar and receives notifications about Lead Alliance programs, events and news. The Committee and the Lead Alliance are united by our mission to encourage and support positive change within Mount Isa and contribute to the ongoing development of a safe and healthy ‘living with lead’ lifestyle within the community.

These past twelve months have also seen a notable change to our Committee, with the inclusion of Lisa Davies-Jones, Chief Executive Officer, North West Hospital and Health Service and the resignation of Ms Toni Granville. Ms Granville’s tireless efforts over the past years as the Lead Alliance Project Officer will be missed by the Committee and within the Mount Isa community. I wish Ms Granville the best in her future endeavours.

Dr Jeannette Young.

Queensland’s Chief Health Officer and

Chair of the Mount Isa Lead Health Management Committee
The Lead Alliance

The Lead Alliance (the ‘Alliance’) is a joint initiative between the Queensland Government, Mount Isa Mines Glencore and Mount Isa City Council. It is a non-Government organisation, established in 2007-2008 to develop and provide an ongoing public education campaign that works to inform the Mount Isa community about how to live safely in an environment where lead exists both from natural and industrial sources.

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<th>Lead Alliance Funding Partners</th>
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**The Lead Alliance Executive Committee (MLHMC Sub-Committee)**

The Lead Alliance Executive Committee provides oversight to the local operations of the Program Team and provides a forum for guiding and driving action on the issues of lead in the community of Mount Isa.

**The Lead Alliance Executive Committee consists of the following members:**

- **Chairperson:** State Member for Traeger, Rob Katter MP
- **Glencore, General Manager Health, Safety, Environment and Community, North Queensland,** Maryann Wipaki
- **Queensland Health, Chair of North West Hospital and Health Services Board,** Paul Woodhouse
- **Mount Isa City Council, Mayor of Mount Isa,** Councillor Joyce McCulloch

**The Programs Team**

The Project Officer is responsible for the local operations, developing and driving the community engagement and community education campaigns in Mount Isa, on behalf of the Lead Alliance Executive Committee.
The Lead Alliance

The Goal of the Alliance is:

To achieve a sustainable improvement in the health of the Mount Isa community, by effectively managing how residents live and work, with both naturally-occurring and non-natural sources of lead and other contaminants, throughout Mount Isa.

Achieving this goal requires focus on the following objectives:

1. To ensure, through ongoing monitoring, that blood lead levels in children aged between 0 and 4 years are maintained at below the World Health Organisation recommendation of 5 micrograms per decilitre (ug/dL).
2. To stimulate behavioural change within the community so that all residents follow safe and hygienic practices for living and working in the Mount Isa environment.
3. To work cooperatively to reduce the potential for exposure to lead in all forms.
4. To be accountable to the community for monitored results achieved through regular reporting.

Pillars for Behavioural Change:

To improve lead management in Mount Isa, the Alliance focuses its community education campaigns and initiatives on 5 key messages -

- Wet Wipe & Mop
- Get Tested
- Wash Hands
- Eat Well
- Cover Bare Soil Areas
Increase Blood Lead Testing for Mount Isa Children

The main objective over the next 3 years for the Alliance is to work closely with the Mount Isa community and Government organisations to increase the promotion of the three blood lead testing programs available to Mount Isa families. This initiative will increase the number of parents and children accessing the free blood lead testing programs available throughout the community. The Alliance is committed to continue working closely with Mount Isa Public Health Unit to assist families, delivering information and recommendations for reducing elevated blood lead levels in children.

Community Awareness Campaign

The Alliance is committed to delivering up to date and current information on living safely with lead to the Mount Isa community and will keep itself informed at all times on any advances with further research and reporting on lead.

The Alliance will raise awareness of the issues surrounding lead and elevated blood lead levels, to do this we commit to the following:

- Produce new TVC’s (television commercials)
- Increase promotion of our social media sites
- Update website to include more detailed information
- Continue to attend all community events
- Deliver talks and seminars to the community presented by Dr Mark Little leading toxicologist.

The Alliance realise that with the new age of technology, the best way to deliver our information on living safely with lead and to reach the community is through an IPhone and Android “APP”. The Alliance recognise this modern technology is the way forward in reaching our target audience and is committed to the development of an “APP”.

Squeaky Says “Be lead smart”

Since the inception of Squeaky, the Alliance mascot through the LEADSmart Education Program in 2009, it is apparent that children now associate Squeaky with being LEADSmart. To continue and increase this association the Alliance will further promote and produce Squeaky Says “be lead smart” products and activities for children to continue educating children in the importance of lead safe practices.

Healthy Eating Campaign

The Alliance will continue to produce and distribute recipe books to increase awareness in the essential foods that contain vitamins and minerals that play a role in reducing the risk of lead absorption to the bloodstream, ensuring residents of all cultures have access to healthy and tasty recipes for their family.

Backyard Improvement Program

The Alliance will further develop the current Backyard Improvement Program to the indigenous community by developing partnerships with community groups to encourage residents to commit to making relevant improvements to bare soil areas in gardens, and enlisting the assistance of government housing departments to encourage their tenants to join the program.
Summary of Achievements

What’s new for 2017-2018

1. The LEADSmart Mobile Phone App
2. Get Creative in the Playground Competition
3. MICRRH Community Survey

The Alliance’s Core Programs and Initiatives

- Blood Lead Testing Programs
- Publications & Promotional Resources
- Squeaky says “be lead smart” Campaign
- Healthy Eating Campaign
- Community Events
- The Backyard Improvement Program
- LEADSmart Education Program
- Dr Mark Little, Toxicologist Seminars
- LEADSmart Education Program
- Mass Media Campaign
- TV, Radio and Print Advertising
- Website, Facebook Page, E-Newsletter
- FRECALL1800
- Annual Reports

Annual Reports

As part of the Alliance’s commitment to providing up-to-date information on their activities, a report is published for each financial year. The annual reports are available on our website: [http://www.leadalliance.com.au/information/resources/](http://www.leadalliance.com.au/information/resources/)
A Message from the Lead Alliance Chairperson

Rob Katter MP, Chairperson:

This year we farewell our project officer of the last 8 years, Toni Glanville. This change in personnel is coupled with a new organisational change for the Lead Alliance in the New Year. This will see the general operations falling under the management of the North West Hospital and Health Service. This will allow the partners to focus on more strategic issues rather than operational while providing complimentary support from a larger and well aligned organisation.

I am personally satisfied that the alliance has continued to improve the way we communicate with the community around living with lead. We continue to get a better picture of where the focus in the community is needed in terms of health risks allowing a more efficient allocation of resources.

The POCT testing has deepened our understanding of the impact our efforts are having on the community and on that basis the news is all good. Reduced blood levels in the target groups over the years of the Lead Alliance existence must be attributed at least in part to the contribution of the Lead Alliance.

There will continue to be efforts by both aspiring academics and southern media to create hype around the issue of lead in the community and we will do our best to simply provide the best information possible that shows by following a few simple guidelines you can maintain a healthy lifestyle in Mount Isa.

The issue of water charges is one that we will keep a close eye on in the future given that one of our main initiatives is to reduce levels of dust around town. It will be very much an area for not only the alliance but personally for myself to address with the State Government.

I extend my thanks throughout the year to Paul Woodhouse on the committee who has done a lot of the heavy lifting with the alliance. I further thank Anita Plesko who has taken on the role of Project Officer since the departure of Toni and has performed admirably.

Rob Katter MP, State Member for Traeger
Chair of The Lead Alliance
The North West Hospital and Health Service (NWHHS) remains a committed partner in the Mount Isa Lead Alliance. The Alliance has developed and continued a wide range of initiatives to promote living safely in a lead environment such as Mount Isa. These include greening Mount Isa with backyard improvement initiatives, undertaking promotional activities at local primary and childcare centres and kindergartens and the development of simple public messages such as wet wiping surfaces in the home, washing hands before eating and after handling pets, keeping pets outside, limiting children’s exposure to dirt, and the use of healthy recipes to minimise the absorption of lead by children. We continue to support a strong public campaign because it is in the interests of all families to take a proactive role in their health and that of their children.

Point of Care Testing (POCT) certainly makes it easier for parents to have their children tested, with a simple finger prick blood lead test, and there has been a corresponding rise in the number of children tested since its introduction at the NWHHS Child Health Services. In total, the POCT program screened 1200 children under five between its introduction in September 2016 and the end of June 2018.

The Alliance continues its support of the objectives of the Lead Health Management Group, chaired by Queensland’s Chief Health Officer, Dr Jeanette Young. I acknowledge the effective work of the Alliance’s Project Officer over the past twelve months in using well targeted marketing and promotional tools to reach not only our most vulnerable target audience, our children, but their parents and carers. Showcasing League legend Matty Bowen to promote the new free phone app about lead, was effective. The app provides people with immediate access to information about living safely with lead.

I congratulate the Alliance on using every means possible to get a responsible message out to our community about managing our environment, and living safely in the Mount Isa community.

Paul Woodhouse
Board Chair
North West Hospital & Health Service

Mount Isa City Council

The Lead Alliance carries out invaluable work in our community, advising and educating the public about the small yet effective lifestyle and behavioural changes they can make to minimise lead exposure in our city.

The Alliance’s educational resources and community-awareness campaigns have seen people becoming more aware of what they can do differently to reduce their and their family members’ exposure to lead.

The behavioural changes these materials and campaigns have led to have been invaluable in safeguarding many residents’, especially children’s, health now and into the future.

We as a Council fully support and congratulate the Alliance for the work they have done, and continue to do, in our community.
Messages from the Funding Partners

Simply put, lead is a fact of life in Mount Isa – it occurs naturally in our soil, for example, so we must all be mindful of it. The Alliance is also effectively reaching out to wider segments of the community by posting on social media, keeping their website updated with relevant information, and by developing the new – and free – LEADSmart app for mobile devices.

The app allows users to create a profile for each member of their family, record and track blood lead level test results over time, and receive reminders for their next recommended blood lead test dates.

For people and families to have this app, with the convenience and accessibility it provides, will go a long way in improving the health of community members for many years to come.

It will encourage behavioural change that will have very real benefits and positive outcomes down the line.

The app also provides practical advice for people to reduce lead exposure in the home, such as mopping rather than sweeping, and using wet wipes or cloths instead of dusting while cleaning.

It’s also important to remind children to always wash their hands before eating, especially if they’ve been playing outside or with the family pet.

We at Council look forward to seeing other initiatives developed by the Lead Alliance and the positive impacts they will have on our community.

Mayor Joyce McCulloch
Mount Isa City Council

Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy

The Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (DNRME) remains a committed member of the Mount Isa Lead Alliance and supports its continued action to achieve a sustainable improvement in the health of the Mount Isa community.

DNRME, through the Queensland Mines Inspectorate, plays a significant role in protecting mine workers from the harmful impacts of lead exposure. It does this by setting limits for blood lead removal levels in workers and the maximum permissible airborne concentrations of lead in the workplace.

The Queensland Mines Inspectorate considers occupational exposure to lead to be well controlled and the management of lead in Mount Isa to be best practice. A recent workshop conducted by the Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee found that, over the past decade, a significant reduction in blood lead levels in workers has been achieved and the industry has taken active steps to reduce exposure.

DNRME will continue to work collaboratively with industry and other government agencies to support the Mount Isa Lead Alliance to continue to assist the community in working towards a safe and healthier lifestyle for Mount Isa children.

Kate du Preez
Commissioner for Mine Safety and Health
Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy
The Department of Environment and Science (DES) has been an active member of the Mount Isa Lead Health Management Committee since its introduction in 2012 and is also a partner to the Mount Isa based Lead Alliance.

DES has and continues to work collaboratively across Queensland Government agencies to ensure that Mount Isa Mines has an environmental authority that contains contemporary environmental standards. This includes having ambient air quality limits for lead and other contaminants in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act 1994 and subordinate legislation.

Mount Isa Mines is required through its environmental authority to operate an extensive network of air quality monitoring stations across Mount Isa. They operate 12 stations in total, seven of these stations are required to monitor heavy metals, including lead.

In addition, the Queensland Government, maintains two air quality monitoring stations in Mount Isa, one located at Menzies and another located at the Gap. The monitoring station at the Gap provides near real time air monitoring data for lead and other heavy metals. Continuous PM10, sulphur dioxide and heavy metals monitoring data is available to the public via the Queensland Government live air quality data webpage. The website data is updated hourly.

The Queensland Government is committed to ensuring the community of Mount Isa is informed about the risks of lead, and the emissions from Mount Isa Mines are managed to meet environmental authority requirements.

Dean Ellwood
Deputy Director General
Department of Environment Sciences

Glencore, Mount Isa Mines

Mount Isa Mines is proud to be a founding member of the Lead Alliance, and to support its important work to promote community health education and initiatives in Mount Isa.

Mount Isa Mines operates under a modern, Queensland Government-managed regulatory regime and has an industry-leading air quality management framework in place. We operate in full compliance with the regulatory standards set under our Queensland Government approved Environmental Authority.

2017-2018 has been a significant year for Mount Isa Mines’ in terms of progress against our environmental objectives.

Following the completion of our five-year intensive Transitional Environmental Program in late 2016, Mount Isa Mines remains committed to ongoing progress, and we have invested significantly in infrastructure and initiatives to continuously improve how we measure manage and reduce emissions from our operations.
One of these initiatives included the installation of a LIDAR unit in Mount Isa. Over the three month trial, the laser mapping unit, positioned on the Hillary Street hill, targeted microscopic particulates in our operation’s air shed, providing critical insight into emission source points on site. This valuable data set, when combined with information from our extensive meteorological systems and air quality monitoring network, will allow us to further review and refine our management practices to continue to improve our emissions performance.

The Lead Pathways Study: Air Report, released in 2017, reinforced the importance of Mount Isa residents taking active steps to minimise their exposure to lead, including maintaining good personal hygiene, a clean home and a healthy diet, and highlighted the importance of regular blood lead testing of Mount Isa residents, particularly children.

In response, we committed an additional $100,000 in funds to the Lead Alliance to increase testing rates in the community. In 2018, this money was used to fund an extensive media campaign to educate the community on the importance of washing, wet wiping and eating well, as well as participating in regular blood lead tests.

Mount Isa Mines welcomes Queensland Health’s latest blood lead level results for children tested in Mount Isa in 2017, which indicated more children than ever before are participating in blood lead level testing, and demonstrated a significant positive improvement since testing began in 2006.

We acknowledge the positive contribution the joint approach championed by the Lead Alliance, local and state governments, and the Mount Isa community has had in driving this important change.

To further support the Lead Alliance’s important work, Mount Isa Mines provided $90,000 to fund the development of a dynamic community Lead Alliance smartphone application.

The Lead Alliance LEASmart app launched in June 2018 and provides Mount Isa community members with fingertip access to useful information for limiting exposure to lead. The app can be used to track and monitor family blood lead levels, giving families the targeted tips they need to proactively monitor and manage their exposure risk.

Following on from our launch of the Air Quality in Mount Isa online portal and app in 2016, we will incorporate a new metals dashboard to the portal by the end of the first quarter of 2019. This initiative goes well above and beyond our regulatory requirements, and builds on our commitment to industry-leading transparency in relation to our environmental performance.

The dashboard will provide community members with the facts about our operational emissions, including real time air quality performance data based on hourly, daily and annual results and comprehensive information on our emissions management practices and procedures.
Mount Isa is our home, and we are proud to demonstrate almost a century of coexistence between mine and community. This longevity is built on Mount Isa Mines’ proven track record as a responsible operator with regard to safety and environmental performance, and genuine commitment to the people with whom we share the community.

We firmly believe Mount Isa is a safe place for our people, their families and the community to live and work. We will continue to work collaboratively with the Lead Alliance, including Queensland Health and Mount Isa City Council, to minimise the impact of our operations on the surrounding environment and community.

Maryann Wipaki
General Manager Health, Safety, Environment and Community, North Queensland Glencore
PART B
WHAT’S NEW FOR
2017-2018

The LEADSmart App
Get Creative in the Playground
MICRHH Survey 2018
Community Awareness of Living with Lead in Mount Isa

The Lead Alliance
The LEADSmart smartphone app is a new Lead Alliance initiative, launched on 22nd June 2018, at the Mount Isa Show. This tool enables families to monitor and manage their exposure to lead by providing fingertip access to useful information for limiting exposure to lead; and enabling families to track and monitor their members blood lead levels.

Acclaimed rugby league football legend, Matt Bowen was enlisted as ambassador for the campaign. Present at the launch and appearing on the app’s promotional materials, Matt Bowen is also the face of the Alliance’s new LEADSmart television advertising campaign.

The LEADSmart app is the next big step in the Lead Alliance’s mission to achieve sustainable improvements in the health of the Mount Isa community through education, so we can work together towards a safer and healthier community. Development of the app was set as a goal in the 2017-2020 Action Plan. This initiative recognises that modern technology is the way forward in delivering information throughout the broader population. Suitable for both IOS and Android phones, the LEADSmart app can be downloaded via the App Store or Google Play.
The LEADSApp

With this app users can:

- Access information about limiting lead exposure at their fingertips
- Create profiles for each family member
- Record and track blood lead level results over time
- Receive reminders for testing dates
- Send appointment information to your smartphone personal calendar
- Receive notifications about Lead Alliance programs, events and news

LeadSmart is a tool to help you manage your family’s blood lead levels, and limit your exposure to lead in Mount Isa. It allows you to:

- Create a profile for you and each member of your family
- Record and track blood lead level test results over time
- Know the facts about living near and limiting your lead.

Free testing

Free blood lead level testing is available to all Mount Isa residents at OML.

Testing is available Monday to Friday from 7am to 2.30pm. No appointment is necessary.

OML 13a Isa Street Mount Isa 07 4743 4299

Alert Notification

You had a blood lead level test result between 5ug/dl and 16ug/dl.

A follow up venous test is recommended within three months to ensure the steps you are taking to reduce your child’s blood lead level are working. Call 07 4743 4299 to book your free test.

Blood Lead Levels
During 2017, The Lead Alliance launched a competition for Mount Isa Day Care Centres, Kindergartens and Prep classes. The Get Creative in the Playground program gives centres the opportunity to win one of two cash prizes: 1st prize $5,000, 2nd prize $2,000; to go toward reducing the risk of lead exposure in outdoor areas where the children play or congregate. For example, covering bare soil areas in the outdoor play areas, installing turf, soft fall, synthetic grass, play equipment, an outside handwashing station, watering systems or whatever the centres require to make a lead safe environment.

Entrants were required to create a colourful and imaginative vegetable garden with the children by using recycled products such as tyres, boots, plastic bottles, buckets, wheel barrows and old furniture. The Alliance provided bags of garden compost, vegetable seeds and a $100 voucher for the Mount Isa Home and Garden to get them started.

The Get Creative in the Playground Program was designed to assist and encourage facilities to work with the children to grow healthy fruit and vegetables at the centre to (1) promote healthy eating (2) to teach the children the importance of hand washing after playing outside and gardening (3) encourage and support lead safe behaviours in educational facilities; which are essential to reducing the risk of elevated blood lead levels in Mount Isa children.
Get Creative in the Playground

Nine of the fourteen Mount Isa facilities participated and created colourful and imaginative vegetable gardens. The Lead Alliance commend the efforts and achievements of all the entrants for their commitment to educating children about living safely with lead. Prizes were presented by Rob Katter, State member for Traeger and Chair of the Lead Alliance.

1st Prize winner of $5,000, Mount Isa Day Nursery and Kindergarten

2nd Prize winner of $2,000, C&K Sunset Community Kindergarten
Mount Isa region contains one of the world’s largest deposits of copper, lead, silver and zinc and has been mined since the 1920s. The presence of lead in the environment and its potential to elevate blood lead levels in those living and working in the Mount Isa community has been acknowledged for many years and has been an issue of concern in the Mount Isa community.

In response to community concern, the Living with Lead Alliance (the “Alliance”) was established in 2007-2008 to develop and deliver ongoing public education campaign to increase awareness of living safely with lead in Mount Isa. The Mount Isa Living with Lead Alliance runs extensive and ongoing public education campaigns aiming to improve awareness on how residents live and work with both naturally-occurring and non-natural sources of lead. The major message of the campaign has been “wet wipe, wash and eat well.”

The target audience of the health promotion efforts is community members, especially children 0 to 7 years and their parents. A broad range of strategies, e.g., TV advertisements, e-newsletters, free blood lead testing and LEADSmart school program have been used to increase parental actions to reduce their children’s exposure to environmental lead. This study aimed to examine the extent to which Mount Isa residents report hearing the Lead Alliance’s campaign message, their knowledge level regarding home remediation strategies, and the extent to which they self-report acting on the health messages.

A 32-item questionnaire was utilised to assess parental and caregiver knowledge of reducing environmental lead exposure and penetration of Lead Alliance’s campaign messages. A mix of open and closed questions was asked to facilitate depth of responses to critical issues such as the perceived barriers to the implementation of the recommended strategies for reducing children’s exposure to lead in the environment. In addition to online recruitment, i.e., by posting the survey link and study details on the community Facebook page, potential participants were recruited through brief face to face invitation during the community fun events and community playgroups.

A total of 272 participants (~90% females, ~69% Caucasian, ~21.4% Indigenous) from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds took part in the study. Just over half of the participants were young adults (age group 20-35 years). About half of the participants reporting having living in Mount Isa for more than ten years. Most participants had heard “wet wipe, wash and eat well” messages and linked them to Living with Lead. We found that 65.6% perceived that Mount Isa has a high lead level risk but just under half perceived that their child might have high blood lead levels. About 43% of parents and carers reported that their children had been tested for blood lead levels and only 32% of participants were aware of a capillary blood test. There was high penetration (>70%) of all key messages from the Alliance. Media campaigns and free blood lead test was found to be well known in the community. However, among the various campaign strategies, there was relatively less awareness for brochures from the Alliance (10%) and LEADSmart School program (34%) in the community. It was also found that new entrants in the town have significantly low awareness of lead contamination sources.

The Lead Alliance’s campaign messages need to focus on new entrants and promote the availability of capillary blood testing in the community. It is suggested that giving Lead Alliance’s flyers in real estate packs and revisiting the promotional strategy for LEADSmart school program will help in further penetration of the campaign messages.
Blood Lead Testing Programs
Publications and Promotional Resources
Squeaky Says “be lead smart” Campaign
Healthy Eating Campaign
Community Events
Backyard Improvement Program
LEADSmart Education Program
Dr Mark Little, Toxicologist Seminars
Mass Media Campaign
Television, Radio and Print Advertising
Website, Facebook, E-Newsletter
FREECALL 1800

The Lead Alliance
Blood Lead Testing Programs

It is a goal of the Alliance to increase the promotion of the three blood lead testing programs available in Mount Isa, with a view to increasing (1) community awareness of these free programs and (2) testing of Mount Isa children.

Children under 5 years of age are at greater risk of being affected by lead than adults and other children. Children absorb more of the lead that is taken into their bodies than adults and their developing brains and nervous systems are more vulnerable.

Blood Lead Level Testing Programs in Mount Isa

There are three lead level testing programs available to Mount Isa residents:

**Venous Blood Test at Queensland Medical Laboratory (QML)**
Funded by Glencore Mount Isa Mines, available free to all Mount Isa residents at QML. This is a venepuncture test, where the blood sample is taken from a vein. Blood sampling from venous blood remains the most reliable method for blood lead testing and is regarded as the clinical standard.

**Venous Blood Test at Mount Isa Base Hospital (Queensland Health)**
2014 saw the introduction of routine screening of lead levels for children 0-4 years and women attending the Antenatal Clinics from 2018. This venepuncture test is added to other blood tests ordered, using residual blood available after other tests have been performed.

‘Point of Care Test’ at Maternal, Child Youth Health Centre (Queensland Health)
In 2016, Queensland Health introduced Point of Care Testing (POCT) at Maternal, Child and Youth Health. This is an early indicator test which is quick and less invasive (finger prick test using capillary blood) and results are provided at the time of testing. POCT is offered at the same time as child immunisations at age 6, 12, 18, 24 months and 3 ½ years. Children can still be tested up to five years of age.

Identifying and Supporting Children with Elevated Blood Lead Levels

The blood lead testing programs available though QML and Maternal, Child and Youth Health assist local families to identify children which have elevated blood lead levels or are at risk of elevated levels, so that appropriate supports can be put in place to assist those families and children.

In Queensland, it is mandatory that blood lead level results from venepuncture tests, above 5ug/dL (micrograms per decilitre), be reported to Queensland Health, Public Health Unit. The notifiable level of elevated blood lead levels was reduced from 10ug/dL to 5ug/dL in 2016.
Monitoring Blood Lead Levels in the Community: Mount Isa Children

Surveillance data helps us to understand the blood lead levels in the population and what the trends are. The two most reliable sources of surveillance data currently available on lead levels in Mount Isa children are from (1) the previous Queensland Health Blood Lead Surveys and (2) the continuous data from Mount Isa Base Hospital.

Blood Lead Surveys, Queensland Health

In 2007, Queensland Health completed a study in Mount Isa of children between 1-4 years to determine blood lead levels in this age group. The average (geometric mean) blood lead level of 400 children tested was 4.97µg/dL. Forty-five (11.3%) of children sampled had elevated blood lead levels (greater than 10 µg/dL). Of these, two had blood lead levels greater than 20µg/dL.

In 2010, Queensland Health commenced a second study in Mount Isa children aged 1-4 years in order to continue to monitor blood lead levels in this age group. The average (mean) blood lead level for the 167 children tested was 4.27µg/dL. Eight children (4.8%) had blood lead levels greater than or equal to 10µg/dL. Of these, one child had a blood lead level greater than 20µg/dL.

The decline in the average blood lead levels and the percentage of children’s blood lead levels at or above 10µg/dL, between the first and the second study was found to be statistically significant. The studies demonstrated a declining but continuing significant association between elevated blood lead levels and Indigenous status. Due to the different sampling methods between the two surveys, care should be taken in interpreting such declines. The results do however indicate a step in the right direction.

Mount Isa Base Hospital Data

Caution must be taken when interpreting the hospital data set because the population of children attending the hospital is not the same as the child population of Mount Isa. The hospital sample tends to be lower socioeconomic and have a greater proportion of Indigenous children than the Mount Isa population. However, it is considered a good indicator of local trends, particularly for groups which are at higher risk of elevated blood lead levels.

Each year, more children are being tested through the hospital blood testing program. One hundred and eighty-nine (189) children were tested in 2017, compared to 125 children 2016, 101 children in 2015 and 57 children in the first year of the program.

The blood test results show a continued reduction in the average lead level of children tested (including Indigenous children), which is below the notifiable threshold of 5ug/dL. And we continue to see a positive trend toward fewer children with blood lead levels over the 5ug/dL threshold. In 2017, the average blood level of children tested at the Mount Isa Hospital was 2ug/dL and two of these children had blood lead levels over the notifiable threshold of 5ug/dL.
**The data sets from the Queensland Health Studies and the Mount Isa Hospital are for illustration only; due to their different sampling methods, they cannot be compared directly.**

**Blood Lead Testing Programs**

![Graph of Average Blood Lead Level in Mount Isa Children (Mean ug/dL)]

5ug/dL or over = notification threshold

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![Graph of Percentage of Children with Blood Lead Level over Notifiable Threshold 5 ug/dL]

- 2007 QLD Health Study (400 children)
  - Mean BLL all children: 7 ug/dL
  - Mean BLL Indigenous children: 4.3 ug/dL

- 2010 QLD Health Study (167 children)
  - Mean BLL all children: 5.4 ug/dL
  - Mean BLL Indigenous children: 4.3 ug/dL

- 2014 Mt Isa Hospital (57 children)
  - Mean BLL all children: 3.2 ug/dL
  - Mean BLL Indigenous children: 3.2 ug/dL

- 2015 Mt Isa Hospital (101 children)
  - Mean BLL all children: 3.7 ug/dL
  - Mean BLL Indigenous children: 3.2 ug/dL

- 2016 Mt Isa Hospital (125 children)
  - Mean BLL all children: 2.7 ug/dL
  - Mean BLL Indigenous children: 2.2 ug/dL

- 2017 Mt Isa Hospital (189 children)
  - Mean BLL all children: 2 ug/dL
  - Mean BLL Indigenous children: 2 ug/dL

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**Average Blood Lead Level in Mount Isa Children (Mean ug/dL)**

**Percentage of Children with Blood Lead Level over Notifiable Threshold 5 ug/dL**
Since its inception in 2007, the Lead Alliance has distributed over 601,200 educational publications and promotional items to the Mount Isa community; 65,196 were given out this financial year. The Alliance distribute their publications to residents at Community events. To enhance our reach and public access to information, especially to new families and high risk groups, our publications are also available through local medical facilities, child care and educational facilities, community based organisations, and the Alliance website.

**Fact Sheet**

- Living Safely with Lead Fact Sheet
- Living Safely with Lead Brochure
- Lead & Your Mob Brochure
- Lead Safe Gardens Brochure
- Free Blood Lead Level Testing Poster
- Reduce Lead Dust in your Home Poster
- Provide a Healthy Breakfast Poster
- Wash your Hands Regularly Poster
- Wet Wipe, Wash & Eat Well Poster

**Brochures**

- Healthy Eating Recipe Books x 3
- Healthy Tuckers Recipe Books x 2

**Community Education Publications:**

- Living Safely with Lead Fact Sheet
- Living Safely with Lead Brochure
- Lead & Your Mob Brochure
- Lead Safe Gardens Brochure
- Free Blood Lead Level Testing Poster
- Reduce Lead Dust in your Home Poster
- Provide a Healthy Breakfast Poster
- Wash your Hands Regularly Poster
- Wet Wipe, Wash & Eat Well Poster
- Healthy Eating Recipe Books x 3
- Healthy Tuckers Recipe Books x 2
Many of the Alliance’s educational products and promotional materials include the Alliance mascot “Squeaky”, who was developed so that children aged between 0 to 5 years associate Squeaky says “Be lead smart” with the Alliance’s key messages: wet wipe, wash & eat well. The Squeaky products are designed to be fun and interactive; to support parents and teachers to engage with children in a fun way, when teaching them about lead safe behaviours.

Squeaky says “be Lead Smart” resources:

- Squeaky Tote Bag
- Squeaky Activity Books x 2
- Squeaky Soap
- Squeaky Hat
- Squeaky Sticker
- Squeaky Temporary Tattoo
- Squeaky Pencil Case
- Squeaky Balloons
- Rainbow Pencil set
- Squeaky Song CD
- Squeaky Brochure
- Squeaky Poster
- Squeaky Sail Banners
- Squeaky Events Marque
- Squeaky Mascot Costume
The Lead Alliance has developed five recipe booklets to raise awareness of the importance of nutrition in reducing lead absorption, and to assist families adopt healthy eating behaviours. Research has shown that a healthy diet, rich in vitamins and minerals, not only improves well-being, but also the body’s ability to resist and eliminate toxins. There are five main vitamins and minerals that can help reduce lead absorption: iron, vitamin C, calcium, magnesium and zinc; each play a different role in reducing lead absorption and aiding elimination.

Our recipe resources not only incorporate the five key vitamins and minerals, they are easy, delicious and culturally relevant for our Indigenous community. They also include the Alliance’s key messages for reducing lead exposure through diet and eating behaviours, particularly for children. Children will absorb 50% more lead that is ingested than adults. Children with empty stomachs will absorb more lead than a child with a full stomach. Therefore, it is important for children to have regular nutritious meals and snacks throughout the day; with breakfast being the most important meal of the day. It is well-established that iron deficiency is associated with increased blood lead levels. Children at high risk of lead exposure should also be tested for iron deficiency (anaemia). Iron deficiency may cause a condition known as “pica” that leads to a person to ingest non-food items such as dirt, which will result in raised blood lead levels.

**Vitamin C**
An important vitamin to help enhance the absorption of iron and zinc from foods and reduces the amount of lead your body absorbs.

**Calcium**
An important mineral for strong bones and teeth and reduces the amount of lead your body absorbs.

**Iron**
An important mineral for strong blood and energy and may help reduce the amount of lead your body absorbs. Eating fruit and vegetables helps absorb the most iron from foods.

**Magnesium**
An important mineral for energy and muscle function and enhances the role of calcium in the body and reduce the amount of lead your body absorbs.

**Zinc**
An important mineral for growth and development, it is vital in helping the immune system fight bacteria and reduces the amount of lead your body absorbs.
As part of the Alliance’s commitment to keeping Mount Isa residents informed on living safely with lead, the Project Officer attends key community events to provide health promotion activities. The Alliance is committed to attending events in collaboration with other organisations with shared goals, to raise awareness about Mount Isa’s blood lead testing programs, and to deliver ‘lead safe’ messages and resources.

Attending public events reduces barriers for people to access information, education and referral. At events, the Project Officer is readily available in a fun and family orientated environment for residents to receive information and have their questions answered. They also provide a unique opportunity for visitors and new residents of Mount Isa to learn about the Lead Alliance and access its services.

**Events 2017-2018**

- Ngukuthati NAIDOC Family Fun Day, 04 Jul 2017
- MOBFM NAIDOC Family Fun Day, 07 Jul 2017
- Mount Isa Health Expo, 24-25 Aug 2017
- Save the Children Open Day, 25 Oct 2017
- Gidgee Healing POCT Fun Day, 03 Nov 2017
- Isa Kids Expo, 05 Nov 2017

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- Welcome Babies Day, 16 Mar 2018
- Harmony Day Mega Play Group, 21 Mar 2018
- Playgroup QLD Messy Play May, 15 May 2018
- Mount Isa Show, 22-23 June 2018
The Backyard Improvement Program (BIP) continues to be a great success in providing Mount Isa residents with essential information on lead safe practices, while also stimulating lifestyle behaviours that reduce the risk of elevated blood lead levels in our children. The aim of this program is to encourage residents to reduce the amount of bare soil areas in their yards and gardens that are accessible to young children. Covering bare soil areas also reduces the amount of dust that can enter the home.

Entrants are required to submit before and after photos of the yard areas they make improvements too. The Alliance provides them with a Backyard Improvement Program Kit to get them started. The kit contains items such as drought hardy grass seed, a tap timer, garden gloves, vegetable seeds packs, a $40 gift voucher for Mount Isa Home & Garden Centre, and useful information to assist in creating lead safe and water wise yards and gardens. Small changes can make a huge difference. For example, creating a small raised bed vegetable garden as a family not only reduces the possible risk of lead exposure; it also creates an opportunity for families to teach their children about good nutrition and develop the habits of hand washing after outdoor activities, and leaving yard shoes outside.

The past five years has seen a fantastic response to this program with over 119 families making positive changes to their yards to ensure their children have a safe and healthy environment to play, learn and grow. The 2017 competition saw 45 entrants, with 29 completing the program by submitting their after photos. The Alliance commend all entrants on the improvements made, and their ongoing commitment to providing a healthy lifestyle for their families.

Congratulations to Glandy Angon and family, winners of the 2017 Backyard Improvement Program. Making essential improvements to their backyard by reducing bare soils areas, creating a lead safe and healthy place for children to play.

The Lead Alliance thank all of our sponsors for making this program a success:
Adels Grove, Bunnings  Mount Isa, Mount Isa Home & Garden Centre, The North West Star, 4LM 666 AM, HotFM 102.5, and MobFM 100.9
Working together as a community to improve the safety and health of Mount Isa children.
In 2010 the Living with Lead Alliance initiated a LEADSmart Education Program into all schools, day care centres & kindergartens in Mount Isa. The aim of the LEADSmart Education Program is to raise awareness throughout local day care and educational facilities on living safely with lead and to stimulate them to incorporate lead awareness and education into their policy, curriculum and practices. To be a part of the LEADSmart Education Program all facilities must meet the criteria set by the Lead Alliance and initiate a policy on living safely with lead within their facility. Through this program, the Alliance aims to improve the health of Mount Isa children by educating teachers, parents, and students/children about the facts on lead and how to reduce the risk of elevated blood lead levels.

Ninety-eight percent of Mount Isa’s schools, day care centres and kindergartens currently participate in this Program. The Alliance recognises their efforts in incorporating lead awareness and education into their policy, curriculum and practices and educating their staff, parents/carers and students/children. LEADSmart educational facilities are presented with a LEADSmart Education Program sign which is prominently displayed at their entry gate.

The Alliance congratulate the following LEADSmart educational facilities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY CARE CENTERS &amp; KINDERGARTENS</th>
<th>PRIMARY SCHOOLS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eileen Fisher Memorial Kindergarten</td>
<td>Barkly Highway State school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estelle Cardiff Kindergarten</td>
<td>Central State School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Day Care Centre</td>
<td>Happy Valley State School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Start Early Education Centre</td>
<td>Healy State School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injilinji Pre-school &amp; Kindergarten</td>
<td>St Joseph’s Catholic school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Isa Day Nursery &amp; Kindergarten</td>
<td>St Kieran’s Catholic School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Oasis Early Education &amp; Child Care</td>
<td>Sunset State School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Joseph’s Kindergarten</td>
<td>Townview State School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Pauls Lutheran Child Care</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HIGH SCHOOLS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good Shepherd Catholic College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spinifex Junior College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spinifex Senior College</td>
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<td>Spinifex Residential College</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OTHER</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mount Isa State Special School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngukuthati Child &amp; Family Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mount Isa PCYC</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Dr Mark Little, Toxicologist Seminars

The Lead Alliance sponsors leading toxicologist and Emergency physician, Dr Mark Little to visit Mount Isa to provide expert lead education seminars for the community. Dr Little’s seminars are offered to all local education facilities; for staff, parents and students. Specialist seminars are delivered to our health industry staff to support their workforce development and training. All other community residents can directly access Dr Little at the North West Health Expo which he attends as a guest of the Lead Alliance. A broad range of advertising methods are used to raise awareness of this unique education opportunity available to the community.

Since 2010, Dr Mark Little has visited Mount Isa on six occasions. With an encouraging number of Mount Isa residents attending his seminars, the Alliance is committed to bringing Dr Little to Mount Isa every two years in conjunction with the North West Health Expo. Dr Little’s next visit to Mount Isa is scheduled for 28-30 August, 2019.

Lead - from a toxicologist’s perspective

Dr Mark Little returns to Mount Isa Health Expo

Dr Mark Little returns to Mount Isa Health Expo (Mount Isa Civic Centre), Friday 30th August, 3:30pm.

This FREE seminar will give you all the information you need to reduce the risk of elevated blood lead levels in your children and family. All Mount Isa residents and families welcome.

Dr Mark Little leading toxicologist and emergency physician, will be covering topics we all should be aware of when living in a lead environment, including:

- How lead enters the body
- How you can reduce exposure to lead in your home
- How you can reduce the risk of lead absorption in your body
- How you can reduce lead absorption in your unborn baby
- What foods will help reduce the amount of lead your body absorbs
- How you can make sure your children have a lead safe garden to play in

You can learn more about lead at this year’s Mount Isa Health Expo, Dr Mark Little will be discussing the issue of lead and will be available to answer any questions you may have.

For further information FREE CALL The Lead Alliance on 1800 457 547

Topics covered in Dr Little’s seminars:

- how lead enters the body
- toxic effects of lead
- who is at higher risk
- understanding blood lead testing
- reducing lead absorption in unborn babies
- reducing exposure to lead with food and lifestyle factors
- how to reduce high blood lead levels

Do you want to know more?

Point of Care Testing

Are you worried about your child’s lead levels? You can now make use of Point of Care Testing and ease your concerns with a simple finger prick blood lead test for your children.

- Less painful and less invasive for your child
- Instant results showing early detection
- Quick testing process
- Only two drops of blood required
- Free - no cost blood lead testing

Point of Care Testing will be available FREE all:

The Mount Isa Health Expo, Friday 30th August & Saturday 31st August

For further information on Point of Care Testing and living safely with lead, FREE CALL The Lead Alliance on 1800 457 547 or phone Maternal, Child Youth & Health Service on (07) 4743 2168.
Mass Media Campaign

The Lead Alliance utilises a range of media technologies to support its commitment to raising awareness and keeping the Mount Isa community informed about ways to reduce lead exposure, and about the Alliances programs and activities. To ensure a broad reach throughout the community, the Alliance delivers information and announcements through broadcasting media (television and radio), internet media (website, Facebook, E-newsletter) and print media (posters, newspaper, and flyer mail-outs).

**TELEVISION**

The Alliance currently has four television advertisements:

- Wash children’s hands
- Healthy eating for children
- Reducing lead dust in the home
- LEADSmart app with Matt Bowen

Lead safe messages are broadcast daily on channels:

- 7Central
- 7Two & 7Mate
- 9Imparja
- 9Gem & 9GO!

Over 3342 lead safe broadcasts per year via television

**RADIO**

The Alliance currently has three radio advertisements with lead safe messages about:

- Healthy Eating
- Blood Lead Testing
- Ways to reduce lead dust in the home

Lead safe messages are broadcast daily through:

- 4LMAM 666
- MOBFM 100.9
- HOTFM 102.5

Over 8,558 lead safe broadcasts per year via radio

**NEWSPAPER**

The Alliance utilises The Northwest Star for weekly print and digital ads to promote Mount Isa’s free blood lead testing programs. Plus, additional advertising is placed to promote specific programs and activities throughout the year.

Over 60 lead safe print ads appear in The North West Star newspaper each year, plus 5000 digital website ads.
The Lead Alliance website was developed in 2008 to provide easily accessible information to the Mount Isa community. The website has had over 31,000 users visiting the site for information, and 2635 were during the 2017-2018 period.

The website includes information about the following: (1) The Lead Alliance organisational structure, Action Plans, newsletters and annual reports (2) information about Mount Isa and its environmental monitoring and quality (3) local and national research studies and media releases (4) blood lead testing and local testing programs and locations (5) the Alliance’s programs (6) information about lead health risks how to prevent elevated blood lead levels and exposure to lead (7) the Alliance’s publications, including our nutritional recipes.

The website also enables direct access to the Project Officer through email.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Users</th>
<th>Page Visits</th>
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</thead>
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</tbody>
</table>
The Lead Alliance utilises social media pages through Facebook; an important platform for reaching the Mount Isa community. By ‘Liking and Following’ our Facebook page residents can receive current information, and announcements about the Alliance’s programs, activities and community; the Alliance’s newsletter; press releases; and other information to assist the community in living safely with lead.

Facebook also provides the community with an alternative interface to access the Project Officer directly via Messenger.

The Lead Alliance’s newsletter: ‘Living Safely with Lead’, is produced quarterly. It is distributed to community members, organisations and our educational facilities through electronic media.

The newsletter is also available on the Alliance’s website:

In 2008, the Lead Alliance established the FREE CALL 1800 number as part of the Alliance’s commitment to public access to information, education and referral.

The free call number gives people direct access to the Project Officer to discuss issues and to answer questions residents may have regarding lead and lead blood testing. All Community members can get the facts about lead exposure risks and how to reduce the risk of elevated blood lead levels in children and family members.

### FREE CALL 1800 457 547

**Number calls**

- 2010: 139 calls
- 2011: 66 calls
- 2012: 232 calls
- 2013: 239 calls
- 2014: 63 calls
- 2015: 165 calls
- 2016: 395 calls
- 2017: 193 calls
- 2018: 359 calls

### 1800 CALLS 2017-2018

- Backyard Improvement Program, 74%
- Blood Lead Level Testing, 18%
- Information requests, 8%