

# The Australian Women's Register

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**Entry type:** Person  
**Entry ID:** AWE1172

## Mayers, Naomi Ruth

(1941 - )

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**Born** 1 January, 1941, Australia

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**Occupation** Administrator, Health worker, Welfare worker

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### Summary

A committed advocate for Aboriginal health and welfare, Naomi Ruth Mayers was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia in 1984 in recognition of her services to the community – much of her work was centred in the Aboriginal community of Redfern, Sydney.

### Details

Naomi Ruth Mayers was born in 1941. A niece of Doug Nicholls, she comes from a family with a long record of service to Aboriginal causes. Mayers was a founder of the Aboriginal Medical Service in Redfern in 1972. As its Administrator, Company Secretary and Chief Executive Officer over a period of more than thirty years, she has superintended its growth from a small shop-front into a nationwide network of kindred services.

Mayers has been one of the principal figures behind Redfern's community development projects, including those which established the Murawina preschool program in 1973 and the Aboriginal Housing Company in 1976. She also served as a delegate to the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. As an authority on Aboriginal health issues, she proved an influential witness during the inquiries of the 1977 House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal Health. In 1981 she was appointed as consultant by the Royal Australian College of Ophthalmologists. She was founding president of the Federation for Aboriginal Women in 1983.

Subsequently, Mayers was Chair of the National Aboriginal Health Strategy Working Party, set up in 1988 to develop a draft national Aboriginal health policy. She has served on numerous government committees, boards and international reference groups. She was a founding member and chair of the National Aboriginal and Islander Health Organisation and served as Deputy Chair of that body's successor, the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, after its formation in 1993.

Mayers' contributions to Aboriginal welfare were officially recognised with a Medal of the Order of Australia in 1984. She holds a doctorate in Aboriginal Affairs from Tranby Aboriginal College in Sydney.

### Published resources

#### Edited Book

The Encyclopaedia of Aboriginal Australia : Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, society and culture, Horton, David, 1994

#### Resource

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

### Author Details

Leonarda Kovacic and Barbara Lemon

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