



VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY CONTROLLED HEALTH ORGANISATION

Thursday 8th July 2010

VACCHO invites an ongoing commitment to Aboriginal Health building on commitments past and on reforms into the future.

As we go into a period of significant change to the health system funding and organisation VACCHO looks to ensure that the commitments to Aboriginal Health are maintained and that health system reform is also health system improvement for the people with highest health service needs, the Aboriginal people.

With the Commonwealth and Victorian governments making commitments through the framework agreement on Aboriginal Health and in the "Statement of Intent to close the gap on Aboriginal Health Inequality" VACCHO has been working with its members and partners to implement the suite of health programs to maximize the improvements to Aboriginal Health.

A coalition of civil society organizations supported the statement of intent and made a commitment to working with VACCHO to see it implemented. This group includes the Colleges of General Practice, Surgeons and Psychiatrists, the AMA, the Red Cross, the Cancer Council, the Heart Foundation, Beyond Blue and the Human Rights Commission among others.

As the peak body of Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Sector VACCHO represents twenty five community controlled health services which specialize in meeting the health service needs of Australia's most health disadvantaged citizens. Each ACCHO is an expert in its community history, context, culture and health needs and takes a wholistic approach to the clinical and social determinants of health, the individual, the family and the community.

While commitments have been welcomed to some health program areas much remains to be done to achieve health equality for Victoria's and Australia's first peoples.

- VACCHO seeks a commitment to a systemic review of the current and future infrastructure needs of its members to meet the health service, partnership, training and community development needs of their communities.
- VACCHO wants Aboriginal Health funds to be ring fenced for Aboriginal Health needs with community working with government to allocate residual funds to areas of unmet need, such as infrastructure.
- VACCHO seeks a recommitment to the partnership with community which was outlined in the framework agreement and the Statement of Intent with true partnership with the community in planning, developing, delivering and evaluating programs.
- VACCHO and its members should be resourced to make the best input and participation to the partnerships which are essential to Aboriginal Health improvement and to provide expert advice to the forums where it can have the most impact. The sustainability of the ACCHOs as a health system asset is central to improvements to Aboriginal Health.

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- In the emerging primary health system arrangements VACCHO seeks support to establish an institute of Koori primary health care.
- To meet its targets of the highest needs patients each “Medicare Local” should have an Aboriginal Health strategy developed in partnership with ACCHOs in the region with ACCHOs as the priority referral for Aboriginal patients.

VACCHO supported by the coalition of peak, community and civil society organisations which signed the Statement of Intent seek these commitments as part of the ongoing efforts to improve the health of Aboriginal Australians.

These commitments to ongoing partnership and to maintaining the pledges to Aboriginal Health improvements in a changing health service system are essential if we are to the governments commitments to “Close the Gap” within a generation.

List of VACCHO member organisations.

Aboriginal Community Elders Services, Ballarat & District Aboriginal Co-operative, Bendigo & District Aboriginal, Co-operative, Budja Budja Aboriginal Co-operative, Dandenong & District Aboriginal Co-operative, Central Gippsland Aboriginal Health Services, Dhauwurd Wurrung Elderly and Community Health Service, Gippsland & East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-operative, Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative, Gunditjmara Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd, Kirrae Health Services Inc., Lake Tyers Health & Children’s Service, Mildura Aboriginal Corporation, Moogji Aboriginal Council East Gippsland Inc., Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation, Murray Valley Aboriginal Co-operative, Ngwala Willumbong Cooperative, Njernda Aboriginal Corporation, Ramahyuck District Aboriginal Corporation, Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd, Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative, Western Suburbs Indigenous Gathering Place Association, Winda Mara Aboriginal Corporation.

List of Signatories to the Statement of Intent.

AMA, Amnesty International, ANTaR, Australian Council of Trade Unions, Australian Red Cross, Australian Nursing Federation, Cancer Council Victoria, Beyond Blue, Dental Health Services Victoria, Diabetes Foundation, Fred Hollows Foundation, General Practice Victoria, National Heart Foundation, Human Rights law and Resource Centre, Human Rights and Equal Opportunities commission, Melbourne General Practice Network, Onemda, OXFAM, Palliative Care Victoria, Public Health Association, Reconciliation Vic, Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, Rural Workforce Association of Victoria, Save the Children Fund, Stolen Generations Victoria, Uniting Church, Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc., VicHealth.