



The Hon Ken Wyatt AM, MP

**Minister for Aged Care
Minister for Indigenous Health
Member for Hasluck**

MEDIA RELEASE

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Collaborative Agreement Signed on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

The Federal Minister for Indigenous Health, Ken Wyatt has pioneered a collaborative agreement on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, between the Australian Government and three influential national health organisations.

The agreement, signed at Parliament House in Canberra today, commits the Australian Government, the Council of Presidents of Medical Colleges (CPMC), the Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association (AIDA) and the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) to collaborate on the journey towards closing the gap on Indigenous health.

“This new collaboration marks an important step towards improving the health and wellbeing of First Australians,” Minister Wyatt said.

Minister Wyatt said the initial focus of the agreement will include improving how the health system works with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, ranging from enhanced cultural awareness and training for staff, through to decreasing any form of institutionalised racism.

“In line with tracking the progress of the Tier 3 measures of the Closing the Gap Health Performance Framework, the agreement aims to reduce barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples accessing appropriate health care,” Minister Wyatt said.

“This includes ensuring that health facilities are approachable places that provide a culturally safe and respectful environment.

“It is expected that combining the strengths of all of these organisations, along with coordination by the Australian government, will make an appreciable difference to the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.”

Minister Wyatt said it must be acknowledged that there have been significant gains in Aboriginal health over recent years.

“From 1998 to 2015 the overall mortality rate has declined significantly, by 15 per cent, and there have been improvements in a number of key health indicators, but much work still needs to be done if Australia is to Close the Gap.

“With this new collaborative agreement we have a real opportunity to help address the complex factors that contribute to positive health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples,” Minister Wyatt said.

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