



**MEDIA STATEMENT**

Friday 30 August 2019

**2019 NACCHO Ochre Day Men's Health Conference**  
*Key topics: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men being  
in control, innovative and influential*

The National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) held its seventh annual Ochre Day Men's Health Conference over August 29-30 at Pullman On the Park, Melbourne.

Mr John Paterson, CEO of [Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory \(AMSANT\)](#) in his inspiring opening address said, "NACCHO Ochre Day is an important event that reflects on the social and emotional issues our men face and are less likely to seek help for themselves. It is a great platform to hear stories of hope and empowerment and to learn what is working in our communities – of strategies that are successful for our men to take better care of their health and wellbeing.

"This year's conference saw great participation from all 200 delegates who embraced the three focus areas of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men being in control, innovative and influential. Problems were met with solutions, with many delegates taking home new skills and knowledge to face the challenges in improving the health of men in their communities."

Mr Paterson added, "NACCHO's commitment is to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males to live longer, healthier lives and reduce the rate of preventable hospitalisations, which is almost three times higher than for other Australian men."

The comprehensive program had an eminent line-up of speakers cover diverse topics, such as behavioural change and using data to tell stories about health. Lomas Amini and Ernie Dingo spoke about their successful men's health remote community program - [Camping on Country](#), where culture is an integral part of health. While Delroy Bergsma and Robert Binismar of [Youth Focus](#) shared their success stories in using art and music to help young people in rural areas deal with mental health.

Former NRL star and community leader Preston Campbell moved delegates, speaking about what it means to be a leader and an Elder. He drove home the message that "Leaders aren't the ones proclaiming to be leaders. Leaders put their hand up and take accountability". Preston shared how his NRL career taught him the value of self-reflection and honesty in articulating a vision for his community.

Every year, during the Ochre Day conference, NACCHO hosts a memorial dinner in honour of Jaydon Adams, a young leader whose contribution to youth participation in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health lives on. The winner of the 2019 Jaydon Adams Memorial Award was Nathan Taylor from Dandenong and District Aborigines Co-operative Ltd. Nathan was recognised for his exemplary work as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth worker. This year's dinner featured an oration from Diana David, CEO of Reconciliation Victoria, on the Victorian Treaty negotiations.



**NACCHO**  
National Aboriginal Community  
Controlled Health Organisation

The NACCHO Ochre Day Conference celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander male health and wellbeing. It upholds traditional values of respect for the law, elders, culture and traditions, responsibility as leaders and men, holders of lore, providers, warriors and protectors of families. The enduring theme for the conference is – Men’s Health, Our Way. Let’s Own It!

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**More on NACCHO:**

*NACCHO is the national peak body representing 145 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations across the country on Aboriginal health and wellbeing issues.*

*Many NACCHO members have almost 50 years of experience in the delivery of comprehensive primary health care. Services are delivered through fixed, outreach and mobile clinics operating in urban, rural and remote settings across Australia.*