

# Innovative Aboriginal led service helping older hospital patients return to their communities

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McGowan Government pilot launched to better support older Aboriginal Western Australians leaving hospital

Pilot to be delivered in partnership with Aboriginal Medical Services

Promises enhanced out-of-hospital care options for better transition to community

The first of five partnerships with Aboriginal Medical Services (AMSs) to deliver care for older Aboriginals leaving hospital care has begun in Bunbury.

The Transitional Care Program (TCP), jointly funded by the Federal and State Governments, is a long-standing program which provides care to older people for up to 12 weeks after their hospital discharge, including social work, nursing support, personal care and allied health care.

It ensures that people who no longer require hospital care have the necessary supports in place to safely return to the community and ensure hospital beds are available to patients with acute care needs.

The McGowan Government has partnered with AMSs to deliver more culturally appropriate services for Aboriginal people aged 50 years and over and extend the reach of the service to more regional areas.

It is anticipated that the innovative approach will enable greater access to aged care services for Aboriginal people.

The Bunbury program is being delivered by the South West Aboriginal Medical Service while the Broome and Geraldton Aboriginal Medical Services will also welcome clients in the coming months.

A further two AMSs are expected to sign up to the pilot program, with services to begin later this year.

The pilots each have an initial State investment of approximately \$1.8 million, of which up to \$1.26 million could be subsidised by the Commonwealth Government over the term of each pilot. The Commonwealth has also contributed a further \$1 million towards an evaluation and small capacity building grants for providers.

The pilot strategically aligns with a number of Sustainable Health Review recommendations including reducing inequity in health outcomes for Aboriginal people, priority reform areas of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and the WA Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Framework 2015-2040 guiding principle of Aboriginal community control and engagement.

**Comments attributed to Health Minister Amber-Jade Sanderson:**

"This WA initiative is the first of its kind in Australia and will attract more Aboriginal people to the Transitional Care Program by offering more culturally secure services closer to, or within their home community.

"This is an excellent opportunity for the AMSs to expand the types of community services they deliver so they can better support Aboriginal people in their areas.

"The pilot is an outstanding example of our commitment to continual service improvement to deliver equity in care outcomes for all Western Australians.

"It will be evaluated and contribute to a national evidence base on improving services for this vulnerable population."

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