



The Hon. Greg Hunt MP
Minister for Health and Aged Care

The Hon. Ken Wyatt AM, MP
Minister for Indigenous Australians

MEDIA RELEASE

17 March 2022

\$140 million to improve health services for indigenous communities

Today is National Close the Gap Day, a day to reflect on the gap in health and wellbeing outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians.

All of us can contribute to closing the gap by working together to recognise and address the factors behind the health gap.

The Morrison Government continues to take strong and effective action towards achieving parity in health outcomes. In the past year, we have announced new commitments totalling more than \$1.1 billion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, targeted to priority areas including birthweight, early childhood, aged care and mental health.

To continue to improve the health and wellbeing of Indigenous communities, the Morrison Government will on Friday open a \$140 million major capital works program for Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHS) to build, buy or renovate health clinics and staff housing.

A key part of the Government's \$254 million Closing the Gap health infrastructure measure announced in August 2021, the funding will deliver up to 120 projects, including new health clinics, housing, and major refurbishments.

ACCHS are operated by and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, delivering comprehensive and culturally appropriate primary health care services.

Minister for Health, Greg Hunt, said the grants would address key areas of health infrastructure for the ACCHS sector.

“Across the country, ACCHS play a vital role in the health of their local communities,” Minister Hunt said.

“This was particularly evident throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and during the vaccination roll out.

“To continue to offer the highest quality care to their communities, ACCHS can now set their sights on the future by applying for funding to undertake capital works.”

The Major Capital Program grant opportunity complements the recent Service Maintenance Program grant opportunity which was for repairs, maintenance and minor upgrades.

Minister for Indigenous Australians, Ken Wyatt, this funding would continue the Morrison Government's strong reforms to the indigenous health sector, creating real partnerships with the community.

"Just as important as the funding we are announcing today, we are changing the way we deliver health programs," Minister Wyatt said.

"For the first time, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, communities and people will become genuine partners in efforts to support their mental and physical health.

"The National Agreement on Closing the Gap, reached in July 2020 between the Commonwealth, all state and territory governments, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak bodies, and the Australian Local Government Association, was an historic step forward.

"Through the agreement, in health and other areas of government service, we are working with indigenous experts to design and deliver policies and programs for indigenous people.

"We are also adopting more effective, better targeted approaches to other major health issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people."

Both grant programs were co-designed in partnership with the sector through the national peak body – the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO).

Lead Convenor of the Coalition of Peaks and CEO of the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, Ms Pat Turner, said,

"NACCHO has advocated for a long time for increased funding for infrastructure for the health sector and this funding supports and recognises the critical role that ACCHS play in the Australian primary health care architecture".

"I am pleased to see that this funding is being delivered in line with the Priority Reforms in the National Agreement, where programs and services are developed in partnership with our peoples and where funding is delivered through our community-controlled organisations".

ACCHS grant opportunities are part of the Government's first Closing the Gap Implementation Plan, backed by a commitment of more than \$1 billion to help achieve Closing the Gap outcomes.

The plan sets a foundation for efforts in achieving the targets in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap over the next decade.

The investment is in addition to the Morrison Government's ongoing commitment through the Indigenous Australians Health Program (IAHP) of more than \$4 billion from 2021-22 to 2024-25 to deliver culturally appropriate initiatives to increase access to health care and improve the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Information about the Major Capital Program grant opportunity can be found [here](#).

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