



**The Hon Linda Burney MP
Minister for Indigenous Australians**

**Senator Malarndirri McCarthy
Assistant Minister for Indigenous Australians
Assistant Minister for Indigenous Health**

CLOSING THE GAP IN HEALTH

The Australian Government is progressing on a commitment to train 500 new First Nations health workers to fill gaps across the health system, ahead of the Joint Council on Closing the Gap in Adelaide today.

National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) is working hand-in-hand with the Australian Government to design the program to ensure it meets the needs of First Nations people, and the health services which care for them.

The program will support up to 500 First Nations trainees to undertake Certificate III or IV accredited training to enable them to work in various health settings and deliver culturally appropriate care to First Nations peoples.

Training will be provided by Aboriginal Community Controlled Registered Training Organisations (ACCRTOs) and will be delivered as close to home – On Country – where possible.

The workers will help to fill critical workforce shortages in Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services across the country that deliver culturally safe primary health care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families and communities. This includes maternal and childhood health, mental health, aged care and sexual health.

The program will be designed and implemented in genuine partnership and will deliver on key priorities of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

Today will be the first Joint Council on Closing the Gap since 2021.

Quotes attributable to Assistant Minister for Indigenous Health, Senator Malarndirri McCarthy:

“All Indigenous Australians deserve to live long, healthy and happy lives and this training program will be a game-changer in elevating health outcomes and boosting job opportunities.”

“The Government will co-chair a steering committee with NACCHO to ensure we get this program right the first time, and every key stakeholder will have a place at that table.”

“This is a critical component of Labor’s First Nations health agenda which will help deliver other commitments such as better renal services in the city and the bush and efforts to eradicate rheumatic heart disease.”

“An extra 500 well trained First Nations health workers will make an enormous difference to meeting the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, Closing the Gap, and bolstering health services faced with staff shortages.”

Quotes attributable to NACCHO, Chief Executive Officer, Pat Turner AM:

“NACCHO welcomes the Government’s commitment to roll out a NACCHO led national traineeship program.””

“The commitment is an ideal way to grow a suitability qualified and job ready Aboriginal Health Worker and Aboriginal Health Practitioner workforce to fill critical job shortages in the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Sector.”

Quotes attributable to the Minister for Indigenous Australians, Linda Burney:

“Closing the Gap is a top priority for the Albanese Labor Government.

“We are committed to working with the Coalition of the Peaks, Pat Turner and local health services across the country to deliver better healthcare and Close the Gap.

“Expanding the health workforce through culturally appropriate traineeship program and supporting their capacity will save lives and bring us closer to closing the gap in First Nations health outcomes.

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