



## *media release*

NACCHO demands urgent review to save the ‘generation of despair’

**Yet another generation of Aboriginal people will suffer a tragic alienation from mainstream society unless vast improvements are made quickly in health, housing and education services, especially in remote areas, says NACCHO Chairperson Henry Councillor.**

He has called on the Federal Government to undertake an urgent and wide-spread review of service provision following the leaking of an independent report that called the COAG trial at Wadeye, Northern Territory a “disaster”.

“The lack of adequate services in the bush is crushing many of our people and setting them up for a life of poverty, poor health, despair and alienation,” he says.

“The reasons for this are many and varied in the bush — lack of basic infrastructure, insufficient housing, too few doctors and health workers, isolation, minimal economic activity — which is a recipe for further social crises in some remote Aboriginal communities, and must be tackled head-on.

“The recent announcement of increased funding for mental health and housing services is welcomed but there’s been no talk yet of how they will be delivered.”

Mr Councillor, a Junggal man from the Jaru people near Halls Creek, was speaking before NACCHO’s AGM in Perth next week. NACCHO supports, and advocates for, more than 130 Aboriginal community controlled health services across the country.

He said that federal, state and territory governments must increase the capacity for improved services in remote areas and involve Aboriginal people in the delivery of those services, to help break the “vicious cycle” of despair.

“We know that, deep in their hearts, all governments have compassion and concern for our Indigenous peoples — it’s now time for them to express that in practical, long-lasting terms that will bring a sense of ‘equality’ to Aboriginal people.”

**3 November, 2006**

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