



11 August 2010

The silence has been deafening on Aboriginal health – let's hear about it

The coalition of peak groups representing general practice in Australia today joined forces with the peak body representing Aboriginal community controlled health services to call on the major parties to start talking the talk on Aboriginal health.

United General Practice Australia (UGPA) and the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) have called on the Labor Party and the Coalition to confirm their commitment to the COAG National Partnership Agreement on Closing the Gap in Indigenous Health Outcomes. They stated that real increases in funding were needed in the next term of government to make a real difference in the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

With less than two weeks to go in this election campaign what should be our number one health priority – the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people – has received no attention.

Closing the gap on the health status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians to that of non-Aboriginal Australians is critical in this country if Australia is to seriously claim to be a compassionate and caring nation capable of addressing health inequalities.

The Aboriginal population is most at risk from chronic illnesses, particularly preventable ones like diabetes and the best model of care for these patients is in a primary health care setting.

The major parties need to produce Aboriginal health policies that provide tangible reforms and deliverables for Aboriginal populations.

The COAG Agreement on Closing the Gap in Indigenous Health Outcomes was signed by former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd. Both potential Prime Ministers need to confirm their willingness to commit to the COAG Closing the Gap Agreements and to at least maintaining the current level of Commonwealth Government funding commitment over the course of the next term of government.

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