



National Aboriginal Community
Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO)

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MEDIA RELEASE

FUNDS CRITICAL TO IMPROVING ABORIGINAL HEALTH MISDIRECTED

Australia's peak body for Aboriginal health; the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) says the Australian Government's latest Budget announcement does not direct funding to where it is most needed.

NACCHO Chairperson, Mr Henry Councillor called the Budget allocations and funding of new health brokerage services, a retrograde step.

"This has not directed funds to where it can have the most impact. It is aimed at primary medical care – rather than primary health care," said Mr Councillor.

"Instead of providing additional resources to the Aboriginal community controlled sector, this budget favours non Aboriginal community controlled methods of service delivery," he said.

"It's an approach that violates the major principle of the *National Aboriginal Health Strategy* and every other existing major policy in Aboriginal health at both the national and state level."

The Budget earmarks \$40 million in expenditure over four years for 'health brokerage services' that are to link Aboriginal people with mainstream primary and allied health care providers.

"Profound change in Aboriginal health outcomes will only be achieved through ensuring services meet the needs of those who need it, and in improving access for Aboriginal people through the culturally appropriate, community controlled health sector," he said.

Worse still, NACCHO says the initiatives outlined in the Budget duplicate existing services because Aboriginal Medical Services refer people onto specialists and hospitals on a daily basis.

"We are also alarmed by the lack of consultation on this," Mr Councillor said.

***For comment please contact: NACCHO Chairperson, Henry Councillor 0419 929 422
or Executive Officer, Dea Delaney-Thiele 0417 046 692***

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ALIA House, Ground Floor, 9-11 Napier Close, Deakin, ACT 2600 Ph. (02) 6282 7513