



# NACCHO

National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation

## Media Release

19-11-2010

### Improving the Primary Health Care Agenda to Close the Gap

"Aboriginal Medical Services delegates meeting in Canberra have proposed improvements to the government's primary health care reforms outlined in Minister Nicola Roxon's address to the delegates Wednesday" said Mr Justin Mohamed, Chair of the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO).

"Our members proposed to build on the primary health care reform focus on Medicare Locals as responsive regional community boards supporting local primary health care.

"Our 152 Aboriginal community controlled health services across the country believe the best way to Close the Gap and enhance their services is to establish a network of regional Aboriginal Medicare Locals to support local Aboriginal Medical Services.

"These would also help coordinate the relationship between our services, local hospital networks, allied health and specialist services which are used by the Aboriginal communities.

"The Aboriginal Medicare Locals model would build on successful models of regional support for our services such as the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health in South East Queensland and regional groupings of our independent services in the Kimberly.

"The development of the Aboriginal Medicare Locals should be led by the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health sector based on our expertise in providing comprehensive primary health care for almost 40 years in our communities.

"The Aboriginal Medicare Locals could be rolled out in parallel with the mainstream Medicare Locals. The Commonwealth already has funding responsibility for Aboriginal primary health care and a benefit of the Medicare Locals reforms is it is now extending its responsibility to mainstream primary health care taking it over from the States and Territories eliminating that tier of bureaucracy.

"NACCHO and our Affiliates in the States and Territories presenting submissions to the Government on the development of Medicare Locals this month and are discussing their improvements to the model in more detail with the responsible ministers" Mr Mohamed said.

Over 200 people attended the four day NACCHO AGM and members meeting in Canberra this week.

**NACCHO Media Contact:** Chris Hallett 04 0770 4788