



# NACCHO

National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation

## Media Release

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### Health workforce boost vital to Close the Gap

Mr Justin Mohamed, Chair of NACCHO\* has welcomed the Rudd Government's intention to "make further announcements about investments in the Australian health workforce over the coming weeks" in addition to the \$632m for training doctors announced yesterday.

"Our 150 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services across the country are especially affected by the shortage of professional health staff which includes not just doctors and nurses but also the Aboriginal Health Workers who play a vital role in helping to close the gap in health equality" Mr Mohamed said.

"We estimate another 1500 Aboriginal Health Workers are needed to perform a range of frontline clinical procedures in our services nationwide.

"They are an important element in the ability of Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services being able to access to the most difficult to reach and marginalised of patients

"Their importance was recently recognised with the Minister for Indigenous Health Warren Snowdon launching their professional body, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker Association and providing \$1.3m to help it grow and for the profession to achieve national registration.

"We need to dramatically ramp up the training and recruitment of Aboriginal Health Workers in Aboriginal Community Controlled Health services and look forward to further initiatives to support this.

"We also hope to see health workforce initiatives directly encouraging and supporting more Aboriginal people to enter the health professions including as Aboriginal Health Workers, Nurses, Doctors, Dentists and Allied Health Workers.

"It is through Aboriginal people having more control of the design and delivery of their health services both as community representatives and as health professionals that we will make lasting gains in closing the health gap" Mr Mohamed said.

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