



NATIONAL RURAL  
HEALTH  
ALLIANCE INC.

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## Joint Media Release

### National display of unity to mark Close the Gap Day

The huge range of National Close the Gap Day events planned for today across urban, regional and remote Australia shows the level of public support for further action to Close the Gap, says Justin Mohamed, Chair of the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO).

In a joint statement with Gordon Gregory, Executive Director of the National Rural Health Alliance (NRHA), the two bodies called for more health resources to be put into the areas of greatest need – including the health of Aboriginal people in metropolitan, rural and remote areas.

“Our 150 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services across the country are affected by the shortage of professional health staff,” Mr Mohamed said.

“Our services are suffering, with the recruitment and retention of staff and providing adequate facilities especially difficult.

“NACCHO and the National Rural Health Alliance’s shared concerns include that the closing down of birthing services outside of our cities is having an enormous impact on Aboriginal families in rural and remote areas. Due to the lack of services, many Aboriginal women giving birth have to leave their families at this crucial time and travel to an alien environment without their cultural and family supports.

“NACCHO believes that Aboriginal people having more control over the design and delivery of Australia’s health services will make lasting gains in helping to close the existing health gap between Aboriginal and non Aboriginal peoples.

“It is through public support such as the 30,000 people due to take part in over 500 Close the Gap Day events – and the support of organisations such as the Alliance and other partners in the Close the Gap coalition like Oxfam, the Human Rights Commission and the Australian Indigenous Doctors Association – that we will win the firm commitment of governments towards actually Closing the Gap,” Mr Mohamed said.

#### Contacts

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