

ABORIGINAL HEALTH FUNDS MISDIRECTED

Dear Editor

The Australian Government's latest Budget announcement will unfortunately not direct funding to where it is most needed if it is to improve Aboriginal health outcomes.

As Chairperson of Australia's peak body for Aboriginal health; the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO), I believe that although there is money to address workforce issues and substance misuse in communities, the \$40 million in funding for new 'health brokerage services' is a retrograde step.

The funds are not directed to where it can have the most impact, but instead is aimed at primary medical care – rather than primary health care and is earmarked for non Aboriginal community controlled health sector – not the Aboriginal community controlled sector.

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.

This Budget for Aboriginal health duplicates existing services and has been cobbled together with no regard for previous state/territory of Australian government policies or the advice of experienced Aboriginal health experts.

For verification

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