



**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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### **A new NACCHO Board with a big agenda ahead**

Hon Mark Butler, Minister for Health – representing the Prime Minister – opened the NACCHO members conference yesterday in Canberra.

Over 500 delegates from Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) are coming together over three days in Canberra. It is the first major gathering for the sector since the pandemic.

They re-elected Donnella Mills as Chairperson of NACCHO. Ms Mills, a Torres Strait Islander woman, is also the Chair of Wuchopperen Health Service in Cairns and works as a Senior Associate at King & Wood Mallesons, an international law firm. She said, 'I was honoured to be elected for a second term by our deadly ACCHOs across the country for another term.' She, along with her Broome-based Deputy, Chris Bin Kali, will lead a Board of 16 directors in addressing a big agenda in front of them.

'We have a challenging agenda ahead. I took the opportunity to say to Minister Butler that, while we understand that the new Government has a thankless task ahead of itself in repairing the Budget and guiding the country through a period of fiscal restraint, we still need to ensure that the health funding gap for First Nations communities does not widen. Our health funding cannot slip further behind.'

'So, our challenge – when the Budget well is dry – is threefold. First, we must maximise what funding we do have to best effect. Second, we must get a fairer share of existing mainstream funding. Third, we need to implement structural reform in line with the priority reforms of the new National Agreement on Closing the Gap'

NACCHO commissioned Equity Economics earlier this year to estimate the health funding gap. They found in their report that the gap is a staggering \$4.4b per year. That is, over \$5,000 per year for every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person in Australia. Ms Mills said, 'We have the data. The gap is real. Yet dangerous myths prevail that Aboriginal programs are over-funded.'

The next two days will be spent at the NACCHO conference by delegates from most of the major Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Australia. They will hear presentations from experts in the Pilbara, the west coast of SA, and Ballina NSW (on the impact of the floods). There will also be presentations from the Kimberley, the Northern Territory and Yarrabah on efforts against acute rheumatic fever as well as by experts and leaders ranging from Pat Anderson, Fran Baum, Mary Belfrage, Alex Brown, Kelvin Kong, Tamara Mackean, Seth Westhead, and many more. The event is being MC-ed by Dan Bourchier.



**NACCHO**  
National Aboriginal Community  
Controlled Health Organisation

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*NACCHO is the national peak body representing 144 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) across the country on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing issues. NACCHO is the third largest employer of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia, with over 3,500 out of the 6,000 staff working in ACCHOs being either of Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander background.*

*Many NACCHO members have almost 50 years of experience in the delivery of comprehensive primary health care. Services are delivered through fixed, outreach and mobile clinics operating in urban, rural and remote settings across Australia.*