

MEDIA RELEASE



NACCHO
National Aboriginal Community
Controlled Health Organisation



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12 July 2023

MSAC support funding pharmacists in First Nations Primary Health Services

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (PSA) and the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) have welcomed today's release of Medical Services Advisory Committee (MSAC) advice supporting funding to embed non-dispensing pharmacists within Aboriginal Health Services.

Australia's principal medical advisory group's recommendation is based on a joint submission from PSA, NACCHO and James Cook University (JCU) calling for funding for the *Integrating Pharmacists within Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services to improve Chronic Disease Management* (IPAC) project.

The IPAC project integrated 26 pharmacists into 18 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations for 15 months across Queensland, Victoria, and the Northern Territory. Through the project, some Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services embedded pharmacists directly into their services, while others worked with community pharmacies to deliver pharmacy services.

The independent expert advice recognises the significant impact pharmacists can have when integrated into comprehensive primary healthcare teams.

MSAC considered that the model was safe and effective compared to usual care. MSAC considered that the estimated costs for providing this integrated, collaborative, culturally appropriate patient-centred care to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples was good value for money.

NACCHO and PSA are looking forward to working with government on rolling-out this important service nationally. PSA and NACCHO also recognise the leadership of JCU on this work that has led to this successful outcome.

Quotes attributable to the Chair of NACCHO Donnella Mills

"Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to experience a higher burden of chronic disease due to cardiovascular, diabetes and other health problems than other Australians.

"We are thrilled that this independent medical advisory group has officially supported funding for integrating pharmacists into ACCHOs' model of care.

Quotes attributable to PSA National President Dr Fei Sim FPS

"Through the IPAC project, pharmacists have proven how valuable we are in improving the health outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' health.

Aboriginal health in Aboriginal hands

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www.naccho.org.au/contact-us



Address: Level 5 East, 2 Constitution Avenue, Canberra City ACT 2601

All correspondence: GPO Box 299, Canberra ACT 2601

Phone: +61 (02) 6246 9300 **Fax:** (02) 6248 0644

Email: reception@naccho.org.au

ABN 89 078 949 710

“One-third of pharmacists involved in the IPAC project were contracted from community pharmacies, highlighting further opportunities for capacity building initiatives within the pharmacy sector to collaboratively deliver better health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

“PSA is proud to have co-designed the Deadly pharmacists: foundation training for pharmacists working within Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Services, which more than 900 pharmacists have accessed since its launch in late 2022, but we must continue to work together to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.”

Quotes attributable to the Chair of NACCHO Donnella Mills

“Having the support of MSAC confirms when pharmacists are present within our services, both patients and staff at the clinic are better supported to provide safe and effective use of medicine.

“Our member services have been calling for support and funding for non-dispensing pharmacists integrated into ACCHOs for years, this endorsement further validates their requests and demonstrates the impact of team-based community-controlled healthcare.

“Now that support for funding for pharmacists integrated into ACCHOs has been provided through the advisory committee, we look forward to working with government on how it can be rolled-out nationally.”

Quotes attributable to PSA National President Dr Fei Sim FPS

“Both NACCHO and PSA are ready and willing to work with the Federal Government to implement a collaborative model of care which meets the needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and is consistent with the Federal Government’s commitment to the Priority Reforms of the National Closing the Gap Agreement.”

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Media Contacts:

Verity Leach (NACCHO) M: 0438 944 113 E: Verity.Leach@naccho.org.au

Georgia Clarke (PSA) M: 0410 505 315 E: Georgia.Clarke@psa.org.au

[NACCHO](#) is the national peak body representing 145 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 of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background.

[The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia](#) is the professional organisation of Australian pharmacists. PSA is the only government-recognised peak national body for pharmacists, representing all of the pharmacy profession in Australia.



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