

Wednesday 6 November 2019

MEDIA RELEASE

Coalition of Peaks to start community engagements on Closing the Gap in Queensland

This Monday, Thursday Island will host the first of six face-to-face engagement meetings in Queensland on the development of a new National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

The meetings provide an opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland to tell the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Peaks (Coalition of Peaks) and governments what changes are needed to improve their lives.

The Lead Convenor of the Coalition of Peaks and CEO of the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, Pat Turner said that the engagements, which started in September, will provide an opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and their organisations to be at the centre of decision making on those issues that affect them.

“Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people know what works best for their communities so our voice should be at the centre of policy development,” Pat Turner said.

Unlike the original Closing the Gap agreement reached by governments in 2008, this time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a seat at the negotiating table through the Coalition of Peaks. The Coalition of Peaks are committed to making sure that communities and their organisations across the country can contribute their perspectives and have their voice heard.

“The Coalition of Peaks represent community controlled Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations across Australia, including in Queensland and in key service areas such as health. We have already led community engagements in the other States, from the Northern Territory to Tasmania, and we are very pleased to commence the Queensland engagements on Thursday Island. “It is vital that the Torres Strait Islander people of Australia engage with this process”.

Following the engagement on Thursday Island on 11 November, the Coalition of Peaks will lead meetings in Townsville on 19 November, Cairns on 20 November, Mount Isa on 26 November, Ipswich on 28 November with a date to be confirmed in Rockhampton.

--- Ends ---

For media enquiries contact Andrew Blyberg on 0401 691 666 or andrew@fiftyacres.com

More on the Coalition of Peaks:

The Coalition of Peaks is a representative body comprised of around forty Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak organisations that have come together to have their collective voice heard on the Closing the Gap policy of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG).

We are directly involved in the delivery and monitoring of services to our members and communities across a broad range of sectors. We all have our own unique histories, needs and priorities, but share a commitment to legitimate community-controlled representation of our communities on matters that are important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

For more information on The Coalition of Peaks, The Joint Council, The Partnership Agreement and to sign up for our mailing list, go to: <https://www.naccho.org.au/programmes/coalition-of-peaks/>