



12 Jul 2017  
Koori Mail, Lismore

Section: General News • Article type : News Item • Audience : 6,018 • Page: 49  
Printed Size: 318.00cm<sup>2</sup> • Market: NSW • Country: Australia • ASR: AUD 1,635  
Words: 400 • Item ID: 808153069



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# Consortium to help close gap



A CONSORTIUM bringing together Aboriginal community-controlled health services and leading medical researchers will spearhead efforts to close the health gap in central Australia.

Eleven organisations have united to form the new Central Australia Academic Health Science Centre (CAAHSC).

CAAHSC has just been accredited by the National Health and Medical Research Council as one of Australia's first Centres for Innovation in Regional Health. It will receive \$222,000 in seed funding from the Medical Research Future Fund's Rapid Applied Research Translation Program.

The partners in CAAHSC have identified five research priorities, all focused on comprehensive primary health care.

They are:

- chronic conditions;
- health determinants and risk factors;
- health services research;
- policy research and evaluation; and
- workforce and capacity building.

Federal Indigenous Health Minister Ken

Wyatt described the centre as "a hub of hope for the future".

"Its unique make-up, led by the Aboriginal community controlled health service sector, is a step in the right direction that I believe will show the way in Indigenous health improvement," he said.

"Aboriginal leadership is fundamental to success in this field, and this also applies to quickly translating research into results on the ground.

## "Appropriate"

"It's appropriate that Aboriginal people take ownership of research and review of

programs and services for Aboriginal health, as well as the design and development of improvements."

The CAAHSC partners include:

- Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory, the peak body for Aboriginal community controlled health services in the NT;
- Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute, Australia's premier research institute focused on cardiovascular disease, diabetes and related disorders;
- Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Aboriginal Corporation, the largest Aboriginal community controlled health service in the Northern Territory;
- Central Australia Health Services, which provides primary and tertiary health services across Central Australia;
- Charles Darwin University, the only university with its base in the NT;
- Flinders University, including its Centre for Remote Health and the Poche Centre for Indigenous Health and Wellbeing;
- Menzies School of Health Research, specialising in Indigenous and tropic health research. Menzies is a body corporate of the NT Government, and is a school in Charles Darwin University's Institute of Advanced Studies;
- Ngaanyatjarra Health Service which provides comprehensive health care services in the Ngaanyatjarra lands in Western Australia; and
- The Council of Remote Area Nurses of Australia, which supports and educates health professionals working in remote areas.