



## **MoU signed showing housing is a critical health priority**

**14 October 2024**

A new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Menzies School of Health Research (Menzies) and Aboriginal Housing Northern Territory (AHNT) has been signed, formalising a collaborative partnership to improve the quality of remote housing.

This comes at a critical time, with the federal and Northern Territory governments recently commencing a ten-year remote housing funding package for the Northern Territory.

Negotiations led by Menzies Senior Research Fellow, Dr Liam Grealy, and AHNT Chief Executive Officer, Skye Thompson, enabled this MoU, with the vision to work together to find practical solutions that support Aboriginal self-determination over remote housing.

Safe, secure, and culturally appropriate housing is a key social determinant of health. AHNT and Menzies have a common interest in investigating the most effective and culturally appropriate interventions to support better health and wellbeing outcomes in remote communities.

This MOU also recognises the ongoing success of collaborations between the two organisations. Menzies has engaged AHNT as a member of Expert Advisory Groups to inform work on monitoring and evaluation projects for the Healthy Homes program and the Homelands Housing and Infrastructure Program. Additionally, AHNT has independently commissioned research from Menzies to investigate options for Aboriginal-controlled governance of the remote housing system.

This partnership also provides the opportunity to expand remote housing research, helping to grow the capacity of Northern Territory-based researchers to support progress on remote housing through on-the-ground research.

Adequate housing plays a vital role in supporting early childhood development and the overall physical and mental health of families. It is key in helping to reduce skin, respiratory, ear, nose and throat infections, and to lower the risk of developing serious chronic conditions like rheumatic heart disease.

### **Quotes attributable to Menzies Senior Research Fellow, [Dr Liam Grealy](#):**

“This MOU with Aboriginal Housing NT provides a significant opportunity for Menzies School of Health Research. Building on an already strong collaborative research partnership, the MOU will ensure that housing research is informed by the NT Aboriginal peak body for housing and its vision of Aboriginal housing in Aboriginal hands.

“Housing quality is central to householder wellbeing and to the sustainability of town camps, remote communities, and homelands. Solutions to improve housing quality require the input of Aboriginal community-controlled organisations, remote householders, and NT-based researchers working in collaboration.”

### **Quotes attributable to Aboriginal Housing Northern Territory Chief Executive Officer, [Skye Thompson](#):**

“Aboriginal Housing NT is proud to formalise our relationship with Menzies School of Health Research. Aboriginal households in the NT continue to experience significantly poorer housing and health than non-Indigenous people. We see this partnership as an important opportunity to build the evidence base to drive better housing and health outcomes for Aboriginal Territorians.”

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**About Menzies School of Health Research:**

Menzies is one of Australia's leading medical research institutes dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and a leader in global and tropical health research. Menzies continues to translate research into effective partnerships and programs in communities across Australia and the Asia-Pacific region.

**About Aboriginal Housing Northern Territory:**

Aboriginal Housing Northern Territory (AHNT) Aboriginal Corporation is the community-controlled peak body for Aboriginal housing in the Northern Territory. AHNT strives to build a strong Aboriginal community-controlled housing sector. AHNT does this by working with our member organisations, the four Northern Territory land councils, the Northern Territory and Australian governments and other stakeholders in the housing sector to influence policy, improve practice and promote agency and transparency in decision-making around Aboriginal housing.