



Take Note:

NACCHO Newsletter



April 2010

From the NACCHO Chair Justin Mohamed

Welcome to our second NACCHO newsletter for the year.

Since the last month's newsletter following the NACCHO Board meeting, I've had a busy round of engagements. These include the National Indigenous Health Equality Council, the QUMAX Conference in Melbourne (see the report later in the newsletter) and meetings with our members, the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service in Melbourne, the Bendigo and District Aboriginal Cooperative and the Kalwun Health Service at Miami in Queensland.

I attended a Close the Gap Steering Committee meeting, attended an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Working Group (ATSIHWWG) and a meeting of the Leaders in Indigenous Medical Education (LIME) Steering Committee.

I took part in the workshop with our South Australian members about the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) health changes and I hope to attend the workshops in other states

On behalf of NACCHO I've been interviewed by the media on topics ranging from, outreach workers, the Rudd hospital plan, workforce announcements, Close the Gap day, QUMAX, swine flu and the government's diabetes package.

I've also contributed an article to the AMA's *Australian Medicine* magazine stating NACCHO's cause.

International common cause

NACCHO has accepted an offer for me and our CEO Dea Thiele to accompany at no cost to NACCHO, a delegation of women from Yarrabah and Rockhampton to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in New York.

As NACCHO has Civil Society Membership of the United Nations, we were approached by the delegation of women to provide support for them at the Forum and to auspice their funding for the trip from an overseas philanthropic foundation.

We are at the Forum from Monday 19th April to Friday 30th April along with a range of other Aboriginal delegations from Australia focusing on different issues of concern.

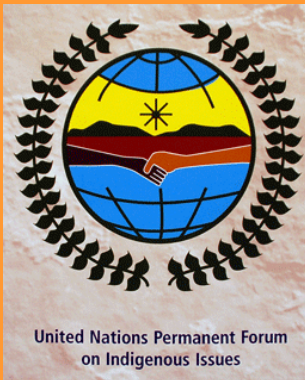
United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues - Ninth Session

We will present a paper on NACCHO's issues at the Forum and have many other chances to share our health journey in Australia and to learn from the experience of other indigenous people in asserting their rights to control of their destiny.

The Permanent Forum is an advisory body to the UN's Economic and Social Council with a mandate to discuss indigenous issues related to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights. The Forum was first held in May 2002 and this is the ninth annual two-



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[Click here for background on the UN Permanent Forum](#)

[Click here for Ninth UN Forum updates](#)



week session in New York.

The special theme of this ninth session of the Permanent Forum is "Indigenous Peoples: Development with Identity and Culture" from the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people, James Anaya, who many in a sector met on his recent Australian trip, will report back to the Forum. Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is on the agenda and the Global Indigenous Women's Caucus will meet before the Forum.

I look forward to advancing our cause through the Forum.

COAG

As the peak body in Aboriginal health, NACCHO is challenging the government's assumptions about the best way forward in the implementation of the COAG health package.

The most effective way of making significant gains in the health of our people is through investment in expansion of the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services. Diverting a large share of the COAG Aboriginal health funding to mainstream GP practices will do little other than weakening our community controlled services that could achieve so much more with it.

Justin

A NACCHO Profile: Who is on NACCHO's Board?

The 16 members of the NACCHO Board are the **Chairperson Justin Mohamed**, the **Deputy Chairperson Glenda Humes** and one representative each from the ACT and Tasmania and two representatives each from the other five states and the Northern Territory (as on the map below).



[Click here to download NACCHO's 2008/09 Annual Report](#)



State and Territory representatives on the NACCHO Board are elected every year at each Affiliate's Annual General Meeting. However, NACCHO's Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson are elected for two-year terms by delegates from each of the 150 member Aboriginal Community Controlled Health

Services at every second NACCHO Annual General Meeting of Members.

The NACCHO Board meets four times a year. The second 2010 board meeting starts May 25th.



QUMAX National Conference 2010

One of the good news stories in Aboriginal health, the QUMAX program, that means more Aboriginal people get the medications they need, brought together delegates from Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services and the Pharmacy Guild of Australia in Melbourne in March.

The QUMAX (Quality Use of Medicines Maximised for Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islanders) National Conference attracted over 200 delegates.

An independent evaluation of the QUMAX program by Urbis Pty Ltd was presented at the conference. It showed under QUMAX there were more patient visits to services, earlier clinic visits for acute infections, better medication adherence, improved control of chronic disease, and stronger interest by patients in managing their own health.

The QUMAX program is an initiative of NACCHO and the Pharmacy Guild of Australia who jointly manage the \$10.9m program. It is funded as part of the Fourth Community Pharmacy Agreement negotiated between the previous Federal Government and the Guild. QUMAX became operational in November 2008.

It has subsidised the cost to clients, drastically improved medication compliance and health outcomes through the quality use of medicines by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples attending participating Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHSs) in rural and urban areas.

Clients of remote area Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services already had access to free medicines through the successful Section 100 scheme prior to QUMAX.

Mr Justin Mohamed, the Chair of NACCHO says, "QUMAX has been an unprecedented success in increasing medicines access for many Aboriginal patients. They are now getting the prescriptions they need and their repeats filled. The program is an example of true partnership in Closing the Gap.

"By getting the medicines they need, patients are visiting clinics earlier, treating their illnesses more quickly and better managing chronic disease. They are receiving advice tailored to their needs from pharmacists about using their medications. The scheme sets up a bond between local pharmacists and the Aboriginal community, overcoming barriers that existed before.

"Each Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service prioritises patient's needs within their community, managing medication costs, dosage administration aids and patient transport," Mr Mohamed said.

The QUMAX National Conference delegates examined changes to the scheme as a result of the COAG Chronic Disease Package but found these would not have a major impact on the operation of the successful program.

Latest NIDAC Report

A National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee (NIDAC) report launched in



April, *Identifying the areas of greatest need to address harmful drug and alcohol use*, is useful practical research.

The most telling findings highlighted in the report are that levels of one off, short term funding in the sector have increased and resulted in a huge turn over in programs available, and the organisations and staff delivering them.

Between 1999–2000 and 2006–2007:

- the number of Aboriginal community-controlled organisations providing Alcohol and Other Drugs services fell from 177 to 159
- The percentage of projects they conducted fell from 82% to 73% of the total
- And, the percentage of operational funding spent by Aboriginal community-controlled organisations fell from 90% to under 70% of the total.
- The number of non-Indigenous NGOs providing Aboriginal specific services increased from 16 to 44 and the percentage of projects they conducted increased from 6% to 17%.

Another significant trend in the report is the under servicing in the Aboriginal Alcohol and Other Drugs area of the large metropolitan Aboriginal communities especially in Sydney and Brisbane.

The needs of our large urban communities for targeted, culturally appropriate health services are being overlooked as the needs in rural and remote areas gain much needed attention.

[Click here for more details http://www.nidac.org.au/news/media12.html](http://www.nidac.org.au/news/media12.html)

**Australia's Inaugural
National Indigenous
Drug and Alcohol
Conference**

**16 – 18 June 2010
Adelaide Convention
Centre, South
Australia**

www.nidaconference.com.au

**NACCHO is a member
of the NIDAC
Committee and
encourages people
working in Alcohol
and Other Drugs in
the community
controlled sector to
attend the NIDAC
2010 conference if
they can**



The leading voice in
indigenous drug and alcohol policy



Invitation from the NIDAC Chair, Associate Professor Ted Wilkes

As the leading voice in Indigenous drug and alcohol policy the National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee is proud to host Australia's Inaugural National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Conference (NIDAC 2010).

As Chair of the National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee, it is my pleasure to invite you to participate in this important event at the Adelaide Convention Centre in June. We anticipate the Conference will be the largest gathering of Indigenous people working in the drug, alcohol and related fields to take place in Australia.

NIDAC 2010 aims to bring Indigenous and non Indigenous workers and stakeholders together from across Australia to celebrate the great work that is being done to address harmful Indigenous alcohol and drug use. There will also be plenty of opportunities for you to share and meet with others. The Conference will also see a number of Australia's most prominent leaders in this field presenting over the 3 days.

Based on the theme, "Listening, Learning and Leading", NIDAC 2010 will feature an exciting Programme focusing on the latest research, policy, prevention and treatment. I am sure you will find the range of presentations, workshops and opportunities for discussion interesting, useful and practical.

I encourage you to register for what promises to be a unique and rewarding experience.

See you in Adelaide in June!

Associate Professor Ted Wilkes

Proudly Hosted By the National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee



As the leading voice in Indigenous alcohol and drug policy, the National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee (NIDAC) assists the Australian National Council on Drugs (ANCD) provide expert advice on Indigenous alcohol and other drugs issues across Australia and the most appropriate and effective ways to address them.

The ANCD which provides independent advice to the Australian Government on alcohol and drug policy, in agreement with the Australian Government established NIDAC in 2004.

16 – 18 June 2010 Adelaide Convention Centre, South Australia

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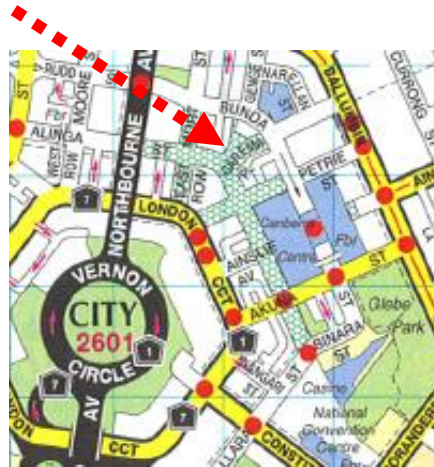
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A Reminder...

NACCHO Secretariat moved offices in February

**The Secretariat is now on the 2nd & 3rd floors of
NACCHO House 3 Garema Place Civic**



Phone, Fax & PO Box numbers remain the same.
Entry is from the pedestrian mall on the corner of Garema Place
and City Walk in the Canberra CBD

