

## Media Release

### Close the Gap Day | North East

15 March 2016

Murray PHN is holding a 'Close the Gap Day' event on Thursday 17 March on the banks of the Murray River at Hovell Tree Park, Albury.

'Close the Gap' is a national strategy that aims to reduce Indigenous disadvantage with respect to life expectancy, child mortality, access to early childhood education, educational achievement and employment outcomes. This was endorsed by the Australian Government in March 2008.

The event being hosted by Murray PHN in partnership Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation, Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service, Department of Health and Human Services, Albury Wodonga Health, Gateway Health with the aim to bring people together, to share information and take meaningful action in support of achieving Indigenous health equality by 2030.

The Albury event will open with a 'Welcome to Country' by a local Aboriginal Elder, then the community is invited to join many CEOs and senior managers for a BBQ lunch (gold coin donation going to Oxfam), and to sign the pledge to close the gap whilst enjoying a traditional dance performance.

Murray PHN Chief Executive Officer, Matt Jones said that genuine long-term partnerships between our community, local agencies and services, governments and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are needed.

"Working together as a community to close the gap in Indigenous disadvantage is the pathway to achieving Indigenous equality by the year 2030", Mr Jones said.

"Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people still experience much lower life expectancy rates, acute levels of sickness and poorer access to appropriate medical care than most non Indigenous Australians.

"Whilst we as an organisation have made the pledge to close the gap, Indigenous disadvantage is not a problem for any one individual or organisation. It is a responsibility for us to all work together and join our efforts in a cohesive and collaborative way to improve the life expectancy and health status of Indigenous Australians," he said.

**Media are invited to attend the Murray PHN 'Close the Gap' Day event:**

Thursday 17 March 12-2pm | BBQ lunch | Murray River, **Hovell Tree Park Albury**

#### Media contact

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