

MEDIA RELEASE

Addressing Indigenous health outcomes in the community

1 June 2017

Six Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations will collaborate with Murray PHN to help improve access to health services and health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our area.

They will form the newly-established Murray PHN Indigenous Health Advisory Council, committed to improving indigenous health outcomes in the region, in line with the operational principles of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013-2023.

Matt Jones, CEO of Murray PHN, said the organisation was the first Primary Health Network in Australia to establish an Indigenous Health Advisory Council.

“Our goal is to ensure that primary health services and the health service system across the Murray PHN catchment area are responsive to the needs of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities,” Mr Jones said.

“This is part of wider efforts to close the gap in life expectancy and health outcomes in the Indigenous population.

“As a representative voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our region, the Indigenous Health Advisory Council will allow for the authentic participation of indigenous people in designing and developing models of care,” he said.

The Murray PHN Advisory Council membership will consist of:

- Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service (AWAHS)
- Bendigo and District Aboriginal Cooperative (BDAC)
- Mallee District Aboriginal Service (MDAS)
- Mungabereena Aboriginal Corporation
- Murray Valley Aboriginal Cooperative (MVAC)
- Njernda Aboriginal Corporation
- Murray PHN

Improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health is one of the key health priorities for the region. Murray PHN has more than 14,800 people who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (14,800+), and whose health status continues to be considerably lower than the wider population.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience a burden of disease two-and-a-half times that of other Australians, with 70 per cent of the health gap due to chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, chronic respiratory disease, chronic kidney disease and mental health issues.

The Murray PHN Indigenous Health Advisory Committee will meet quarterly.

Contact details

For more details, or to request an interview contact Caroline Hamilton, Communications Officer e: chamilton@murrayphn.org.au or t: 03 4408 5663 m: 0449 257 776.