

The impact of current funding policies on the provision of Aboriginal primary health care

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In 2005, Tom Calma, the then Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, released the Social Justice Report 2005 calling for the governments of Australia to commit to achieving equality for Aboriginal people in the areas of health and life expectancy within 25 years. From this point on a considerable amount of work has been undertaken to close the gap in life expectancy between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians. Despite some successes, there is still considerable work needed. In the current environment of short-term funding cycles, an open market approach to tendering, restricted funding opportunities and policies that negatively affect the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal peoples are having negative impacts on the ability to close the gap. John will briefly describe the impacts of a selection of policies, their actual or potential negative effect, and what can be done to address concerns.