

# NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH CONFERENCE – INDIGENOUS HEALTH

## **Health Equality In A Generation: A Rural Action Plan**

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MARCH 2007

# The Role of the Public Sector: Progress in Addressing Indigenous Health

## Future Challenges and Possible Solutions

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OUR COUNTRY OUR HOME  
RURAL AUSTRALIA



*Original Mud Map*

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# SYDNEY CIRCULAR QUAY

An aerial photograph of Sydney's Circular Quay harbor. A large white cruise ship with a red hull is docked at the quay. In the foreground, a red and yellow fireboat is spraying a large plume of water towards the cruise ship. The harbor is filled with numerous smaller boats, including yachts and ferries. The Sydney city skyline, featuring several tall skyscrapers, is visible in the background under a clear blue sky.

Our Contrast

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# CREDENTIALIALS

- As a child and teenager I
  - Was born in Bunbury Western Australia (1year)
  - Lived in Nannine 50 kms west of Meekatharra Western Australia (4 years)
  - Grew up in Corrigin Western Australia (14 years)
- Travelled throughout Rural Australia

# PUBLIC SECTOR

## GOALS

- To keep people healthy
- To provide the health care that people need
- To deliver high quality services
- To manage health services well

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# PUBLIC SECTOR CHALLENGES

- The pressures an ageing population will place on some Government services
- Economic competition from emerging economies in our region
- Pockets of entrenched disadvantage in our communities
- Environmental challenges, particularly climate change and drought
- Planning challenges arising from continuing population growth

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# All Australian Governments

- Provide Strong Leadership for the greater and common good of Australian society.
- Manage within a emerging global society and the external influences.
- Manage judiciously existing health resources.



# All Australian Governments

- Facilitate performance effectiveness and efficiency
- Produce services with public benefits and create the benefits for all.
- Coordination of the total range of Government Legislation, Regulation, Policies, Programs and Services
- A Benevolent Controller for Health Equity

# EQUITY CHALLENGES

- Complexity of Health Care and Service provision a barrier?
- Access to Health and Medical Services
- Communication Services
- Community Services
- Transport – Oil.
- Distance to local Doctor/AMS, Hospital

# EQUITY CHALLENGES

- Changing Demographics – drift to urban centres
- Shortage of skills
- Income disparity – financial strain
- Differential health outcomes and life expectancy.
- Multiple Indicators of Social Disadvantage

# EQUITY OPPORTUNITIES

- Improve Educational Outcomes
- Strengthen/reorient existing Indigenous health, education/training, family and community programs
- Strengthen informed consent decision making processes to empower communities and families
- Establish milestones
- Measure outcomes

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# EQUITY OPPORTUNITIES

- Deliver evidence based Maternal, infant and child health programs to build future human capability in a child and adolescents – early intervention
- Develop training opportunities to meet the projected workforce shortages
- Develop new models of health care and service delivery

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# DRIVERS OF CHANGE FOR EQUITY

- The Australian Government
- State and Territory Governments
- Health Systems
- Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services
- Divisions of General Practitioners
- Non Government Organisations

# Government Frameworks

- Framework of the Overarching Agreement On Indigenous Affairs Between The Commonwealth Of Australia And The State of New South Wales 2005 – 2010
- National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health.
- Aboriginal Health Performance Framework

# Government

- **Wider strategies that impact on health.**
  - **Health and Education,**
  - **Child and Maternal Health,**
  - **Health in custodial settings,**
  - **Aged and Disability Services.**
  - **Physical activity.**
  - **Employment.**
  - **Disposable Household Income**
  - **Transport and access to health services**



# Directions for Government

- Aligning program and service provision with Community needs - Understand The Community And The Problem.
- Developing sustainable policy through informed consent decision making consultation - Build The Best Possible Solution.
- Dedicating resources as a platform to encourage involvement - Build The Best Possible Solution.

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## Understand The Community And The Problem.

- What is the problem or reason for change.
- What are the implications of doing nothing.
- What is the level of buy in by both parties
- What are the trade offs to deliver final change and has this been tried before.
- How will things be different or better once the project is complete

# Build The Best Possible Solution.

- Identify the criteria for a successful solution.
- Identify what cannot be done.
- What is the budget/resources and timescale.
- What has been tried before and who tried it.
- What risks need to be taken and planned for.
- What flexibility is there in working towards a solution.

# Launching New Initiatives

- Spending time and energy on change effort requires new opportunities to maintain and renew enthusiasm and vigour.
- Build on existing work and expand new initiatives.
- Negotiate other joint government and community programs and service delivery opportunities with the vision of self management.

# SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ME

- Leadership
- Connecting
- Working in changing approach
- Creating Supportive Environments
- Being given information

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## SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ME

- Being part of a team in planning , implementation and monitoring;
- Opportunities – identifying new ways
- Partnerships – in a team, ACCHS's
- Informing – NSW Health, Community
- Improving outcomes

If you can see the invisible then you can see the impossible and provide the opportunities for trust, commitment and the ways of empowering others to manage their past, present and futures.

You are the change brokers.

Ken Wyatt

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**Our lives begin to end  
the day we become  
silent about the things  
that matter**

Martin Luther King

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