



# Central Australian Aboriginal Congress

ABORIGINAL CORPORATION | ICN 7823



## BOARD COMMUNIQUÉ

ISSUE 9, June 2014

### Board Meeting Wrap

At the last Congress Board of Directors meeting held June 2014, the following topics were covered:

- 2014 Congress AGM
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan
- Remote Services
- Internal Cultural Advisory Group
- Alukura Cultural Awareness Camp
- Review of Social and Emotional Wellbeing Service
- Budget impacts on Aboriginal health care
- AMSANT 20th Anniversary
- Central Australian Integrated Health Science Centre

### 2014 Congress AGM

Central Australian Aboriginal Congress is approaching its 2nd Annual General meeting to be held in November 2014 under the rules applying to corporations registered under the Corporations, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act 2006 (CATSI Act).

While the election of Directors is a standard part of any AGM agenda, so too is the planning and preparation put in place to ensure a best practice election result.

As such, the Board has decided to establish a Governance Committee comprised of Roseanne Healy, Steve Rossingh, Mark Wenitong, Graham Dowling and a representative from AMSANT and/or ORIC, to oversee matters relating to membership and the nomination/election of Directors.

The Board will seek advice from its Governance Committee regarding the making of changes to the Rule Book as well as the Board's Policies and Processes, in order to ensure best practise management of the membership.

The Annual General Meeting will also offer an opportunity to present the Congress Strategic Plan.

The strategic plan will be based on a logical approach that defines the future state of the organisation and the milestones necessary to achieving its strategic goals.

The content of the plan will be guided by broad stakeholder input. An initial consultation meeting will be held on 30 July at the WestPoint Training Room; the Board invites all Congress Members and members of the wider Aboriginal community of Central Australia to contribute to discussion regarding the development of the plan.

### National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan

**Assistant Minister for Health, Fiona Nash has announced the Coalition Government's decision to endorse the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan developed by the former Labor Government, and released late last year.**

The new Health Plan will recognise a more holistic approach to health care and will support the Government's efforts to close the gap in life expectancy and infant mortality between Aboriginal people and the broader population.

During her visit to Alice Springs earlier this year, Minister Nash sought advice from Congress regarding the implementation of the plan. Congress recommended the plan be informed and endorsed by the Aboriginal Health Ministers Advisory Council as well as each state and territory in order to ensure a truly national plan.

Download a copy of the Health Plan [here](#).



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## Remote Services

**Substantial effort has been placed on clarifying information relating to funding agreements and budgets to defuse long held concerns and suspicions.**

Most services have been provided with copies of their budgets and funding agreements, while detailed budget presentations are being made to each Board or are planned in the very near future. The simplification of the current budget has facilitated wide understanding and demystification of financial relationships.

Congress is progressively resolving long term organisational and human resource issues in each location. This responsiveness has been well recognised by the respective communities.



## Internal Cultural Advisory Group

**A new internal Cultural Advisory group will be established to ensure Executive Management is informed and mindful of cultural factors relevant to the operations of the organisation and which impact on the delivery of services.**

The group will be made up of Aboriginal staff with strong cultural connections, a long standing commitment to Congress and also direct and regular contact with our clients.

The group will report directly to the CEO.



## Alukura Cultural Awareness Camp

**The annual Alukura Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Camp (ACAC) was held on site at Alukura on Thursday 29 May.**

Approximately 65 women attended the camp, including Aboriginal girls and women from Alice Springs and Amoonguna as well as Alukura employees.

The camp included a smoking ceremony and traditional dancing, while participants also took part in making bush medicine, 'initi' beads, music sticks and damper.



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## Review of Social and Emotional Wellbeing Service

**An external review of the Social Emotional Wellbeing Service is underway in order to inform its 2014/15 Operational Plan.**

The review team will consult with key stakeholders to develop a model that will support continuous improvements and integration of this service within Congress.

The findings of this review will be presented to the Board for their consideration.



## AMSANT 20th Anniversary

AMSANT is holding a two-day conference on 5-6 November to celebrate its 20th Anniversary and 40 Years of Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services in the NT.

In recognition of the key role that Congress has played in the development of AMSANT, the Congress Chair will be invited to give the keynote address in the first session of the conference.

For more information about the conference, visit the AMSANT website [here](#).

## Budget impacts on Aboriginal health care

**Concerns regarding the effects of the proposed Medicare co-payments have been heard by Assistant Minister for Health, Fiona Nash, who has since requested a submission detailing the impact of the proposed co-payments on the delivery of services and programs.**

NACCHO is developing this submission based on case studies from individual services in order to demonstrate the impact that the proposed co-payments will have on the delivery of services and programs ran by the sector.

The submission is expected to be completed soon.



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## Central Australian Integrated Health Science Centre

Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute has developed a proposal to establish a Central Australian Integrated Health Science Centre in order to bring researchers and decision makers together to improve the delivery of primary health care services in Central Australia.

The Centre is part of an international movement to better integrate research institutions and health care services, and is expected to deliver outstanding original research regarding a range of issues in order to improve patient care.

In many ways its purpose mirrors that of the original Cooperative Research Centre in Aboriginal and Tropical Health (CRCATH), which is now in its fourth iteration as the Lowitja Institute. This approach to research has proven itself as the best way to achieve quality research on the issues that matter most to health services and the community.

A collaboration meeting was held on 26 May to discuss and seek support for the proposal. Congress attended the meeting, as did representatives from AMSANT, Central Australia Health Service (previously known as the Hospital Network), Centre for Remote Health / Flinders University, Charles Darwin University and Menzies School of Health Research.

The stakeholders present at the meeting agreed it would be useful to continue to explore the establishment of such a Centre in Central Australia.

At the meeting there was discussion about a possible governance structure for the Centre and support was given to the idea of an informal structure such as an unincorporated joint venture.

It was agreed that Baker IDI would draft an initial proposal for the proposed centre and distribute examples of the unincorporated joint venture model.

The Board has approved the continued participation of Congress in the development of the proposal which will be considered by the Research Subcommittee.

## Human Resource Subcommittee Report

**Voting on the new Enterprise Agreement was conducted during the week of 26 May to 1 June 2014 and the offer made to employees was rejected by majority of voters.**

The Executive Management has since decided to return to bargaining with employees and employee representatives.

Bullying and Harassment training was provided for all managers and staff as an outcome of recommendations made by the subcommittee as part of its obligations to ensure a harmonious and productive workplace.



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