



Central Australian Aboriginal Congress

ABORIGINAL CORPORATION | ICN 7823



BOARD COMMUNIQUÉ

ISSUE 17, March 2016

Board Meeting Wrap

The following topics were discussed at the last Congress Board of Directors Meeting held **2 March 2016**:

- Development Consent Authority for Satellite Clinics
- Pharmacy Business Plan
- IT Strategic Plan
- Abecedarian Education Day Care Centre
- Empowered Communities
- SO Accreditation
- CAAAPU
- The Stolen Generations Service
- Tackling Indigenous Smoking program tender
- The Australian Nurse Family Partnership Program (ANFPP) Darwin
- Syphilis and HIV meetings
- Governance
- Research

The next Board Meeting will be held **21 April 2016**.

Development Consent Authority for Satellite Clinics

Congress has received a Development Permit DP16/0069 and Notice of Consent relating to plans to convert vacant office space at Lot 8478 Spearwood Road, Sadadeen Shopping Complex and Lot 8773, Diarama Village in Alice Springs, to medical clinics.

The Development Consent Authority approvals were presented to the Board at the board meeting.

Works have been awarded and construction is on schedule to commence within weeks.

Directors will attend site meetings during the pharmacy and clinic development stages.

Pharmacy Business Plan

The Congress Board of Directors has endorsed an initial draft business plan for establishing a proposed pharmacy to be located at the new clinic to be developed at Diarama Village in Alice Springs.

The initial endorsement will allow applications contained within the plan to be progressed prior to the adoption of the finalised plan.

The pharmacy application process is a complex one, bearing in mind the particular rules associated with the running a pharmacy and a number of separate applications included within, however, Congress is committed to presenting a strong application and business plan and is optimistic about the outcome.

The finalised plan will be presented to the Congress Board of Directors at the April Board Meeting.



Diarama Village



Medicine Dispensary at Congress' Main Clinic

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IT Strategic Plan

The Board of Directors has endorsed an IT Strategic Plan to consolidate key elements of current IT infrastructure and align with current best practice in order to improve security, efficiency, redundancy and cost-effectiveness of IT systems for the benefit of Congress clients.

The plan will strengthen the IT team's capacity to deliver quality services, reduce costs and align internal processes with best practice.

Abecedarian Education Day Care Centre

That Board of Directors has noted progress made in respect of the development of an Abecedarian Educational Day Care Centre and a proposal to work in collaboration with Children's Ground.

The board supports plans for Congress to tender for the former Teppa Hill preschool site where it hopes to provide the new Abecedarian Educational Day Care Centre and necessary wrap around services. This will be a competitive process.

Congress will also pursue opportunities to work with Children's Ground in delivering services to children in Alice Springs town camps, considering some overlap in both service models.

Chief Executive of the Department of Education, Ken Davies has indicated NT DoE's commitment to providing two years of pre-school for disadvantaged children who graduate from the Abecedarian Centre (birth to 35 months), and invited Congress to add to the NT DoE strategic plan for Central Australia with clear time frames for progress over the next 12 months.

Empowered Communities

The government has indicated it will fund regions participating in its Empowered Communities (EC) projects, however, Congress has advised NPY region's EC regional steering committee that it cannot formally "opt in" to a regional steering committee due to a failure by the Australian government to support the model in its entirety.

Congress believes it cannot be implemented at a regional level only, without the necessary national infrastructure and will continue to advocate for the establishment of an Independent Policy and Productivity Council (IPPC) in the EC model.

For more information view Congress' 2008 Submission on; the development of new national Indigenous Affairs representative body at Congress' Policy, Submission and Publication page on the Congress website at www.caac.org.au/aboriginal-health.

ISO Accreditation

Congress is now certified against AS/ANZ ISO 9001:2008 (Quality Management System) Standards.

For more information see Congress' media release at www.caac.org.au.

CAAAPU

Congress' General Manager Health Services Division, Tracey Brand and Chief Medical Officer, Dr John Boffa have applied for placement on a proposed advisory board recommended for CAAAPU.

The Stolen Generations Service

Congress has signed the contract to provide the Stolen Generation Service in Central Australia in accordance with the needs of the Central Australian Stolen Generations and Families Corporation.

Congress has commenced negotiation with the SG board and Akeyulerre to agree on a service model including a possible subcontracting arrangement through Akeyulerre. PM&C have indicated its support for this arrangement.

Congress will employ a consultant to assist in the development of the service model and to ensure the service is set up and running as quickly as possible.



Ampe Kenhe Apmere Congress Childcare

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The Australian Nurse Family Partnership Program (ANFPP) Darwin

Congress, in partnership with Danila Dilba Health Service in Darwin, has expressed its concern about the Commonwealth Health Department's recent decision to award its ANFPP contract to NT DoH Top End Health Service (TEHS).

For more than 25 years, major national policy development has supported the view that capable Aboriginal community controlled primary health care services should be given preference to deliver programs such as the ANFPP program if at all possible, which in this case, is Danila Dilba.

Congress has declined a request for a site visit from the NT DoH in accordance with its stance on the matter.

Congress considers the decision to be a critical policy decision that should have gone through the NT Aboriginal Health Planning Forum.

Congress will continue to work with Danila Dilba and AMSANT to have the decision overturned.

Tackling Indigenous Smoking program tender

Congress has in most part, successfully tendered for funding to provide the Tackling Indigenous Smoking Program.

Funding of \$1 million per year will be used to establish a small Tobacco Health Promotion section within the Public Health Division consisting of two (2) staff and six (6) Tobacco Action workers to be based at town and remote clinics.

Syphilis and HIV meetings

Congress presented at a national syphilis and HIV workshop held in Brisbane in December on key performance indicators and on the need for intensive case management of HIV positive clients.

At a subsequent Darwin workshop, AMSANT and Aboriginal community controlled health service (ACCHS) representatives called for urgent, coordinated action from governments and Aboriginal primary health care services to effectively resource and respond to the current syphilis epidemic affecting more than 800 young people across Northern Australia and to implement evidence-based programs to reduce highly endemic rates of other curable STIs and increased HIV cases.

Human Resources

The Board of Directors has noted updates made to the Work Health and Safety Act - An Officer's role.



Tackling smoking health promotions

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Governance

The Governance subcommittee has implemented a selection process for the Independent Director position specialising in governance and administration and the vacant member Director position.

An assessment panel was established to assess and shortlist applicants for the Independent Director Governance and Administration for interview. Given the large number of applications received, the assessment selection process was opened up to include other Congress board members.

Interviews were held on 12-13 February 2016 with the panel consisting of William Tilmouth, Roseanne Healy, Graham Dowling and Ricky Mentha.

Referee checks were still underway at the time of the Board Meeting. An out of session board decision will be made following completion of the process.

In regards to the Vacant Member Director positions, the Governance Subcommittee has discussed concerns about gender balance on the Congress board, raised by members at the AGM and supported by existing directors.

In the 2015 elections, the previous board had made the decision to appoint the 4th ranked candidate to its vacant member director position. Because this person is a male, the current board revisited this decision in light of these gender balance concerns and decided to appoint a female Director.

At the board meeting, directors discussed the option of changing the Rule Book as a way of ensuring gender balance on the board in the future. The board agreed to identify a suitable senior Arrernte woman from within the local community to fill the role.

Research

The Board of Directors has approved a new project recommended by the Research Subcommittee; Tackling and reducing heart failure among Aboriginal people in Central Australia.

The study aims to map the current management of people who have been identified at risk of heart failure. Current management (usual care) is based on lifestyle advice and behaviour change.

The study will trial an alternate disease prevention program that introduces a medication regime to prevent the progression to heart failure.

Approximately 100 Aboriginal adults from Alice Springs aged 18-80 years who have known risk factors for heart failure will be recruited from Congress, half of who will be given 'usual care' while the other half will be given 'usual care' plus a new medication regime.

The program will help improve understanding of how to prevent the progression to heart failure as a major contributor to morbidity and mortality in Aboriginal people in Central Australia with about 100 Aboriginal people diagnosed each year.

