



Central Australian
Aboriginal Congress
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION | ICN 7823

Board Communiqué

ISSUE 26, APRIL 2018

BOARD MEETING WRAP

The following topics were discussed at the last Congress Board of Director's Meeting held 19 April 2018:

- NACCHO Chair attends Congress Board Meeting
- Save the date: Members called to contribute Congress' Strategic Plan
- Economic Evaluation Workshop
- New Board Director
- Finance Risk and Audit Subcommittee Report
 - » Medicare revenue
 - » Enterprise and Investment Policy
 - » Congress Pharmacy Application Withdrawn
 - » ISO Accreditation
- Governance Subcommittee Report
- Clinics Subcommittee Report
 - » STI Testing Procedures
- CEO's Report to the Board
 - » International Health Advocate Visits Congress
 - » Close the Gap Regional Round Table
 - » Alice Springs Safer Communities Public Forum
 - » NAAJA Legal Health Checks
 - » Child and Youth Assessment and Treatment Service Launched
 - » AMSANT General and Board Meeting
 - » NT Opposition Leader Visit to Congress
- Proof of Aboriginality applications
- Update your details

The next Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Board meeting is on 28 June 2018

NACCHO Chair attends Congress Board Meeting

The Chair of the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO), John Singer attended the April meeting of the Board to introduce himself to the Congress Directors and to provide an overview of activities undertaken by NACCHO. NACCHO is the national peak Aboriginal health body representing Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services throughout Australia.

Save the date: Members called to contribute Congress' Strategic Plan

At its meeting on 29 November 2017, the Board supported the development of a new Congress Strategic Plan. The Plan will set out the priorities for Congress in meeting the health and wellbeing needs of the Aboriginal community of Central Australia for the next three to five years.

An independent consultant, Edward Tilton, has commenced the strategic planning process under the direction of the Board. The Board has asked Edward to consult with Congress members, staff and other stakeholders to develop the plan.

As a member of Congress, you can have input into Congress' strategic direction by attending one of the scheduled consultation sessions for members. These sessions will run for approximately two hours as follows:

Morning Session: 19 June 2018, 9–11am

Afternoon Session: 20 June 2018, 4–6pm

The sessions will be held at the Old Courthouse, located at 27 Hartley St Alice Springs. If you live out of town or cannot make these times, you can still contribute by completing our online survey. You can expect to receive details about this soon. In the meantime, if you'd like more information, please email membership@caac.org.au or call Congress' Company Secretary on 8959 4713.

Economic Evaluation Workshop

Health Economist, Mr Ilan Warchivker presented to the Board on the principles of economic evaluation in health care as an introductory workshop. Economic evaluation aims to achieve better health outcomes by improving efficiency in health service delivery through cost effectiveness.

Mr Warchivker discussed the different approaches to economic analysis and priority setting, as well as the goal of equitable healthcare through treatment and prevention. He also referred to the social determinants of health and their impact by reference to lifestyle, environmental and economic factors—and where a health service stands in addressing these.

A second workshop has been scheduled to be delivered to Congress' Executive Management and senior finance staff. A further workshop with the Board will also be conducted to look at the principles of health economics as applied to a number of Congress projects.

New Board Director

Congress welcomes new casual Director, Mr Joseph Hayes to the Board. Mr Hayes has met all eligibility requirements and provided his consent to act as a Director. His casual appointment is effective from 9 April 2018.

Finance, Risk and Audit Subcommittee Report

The Board noted the report of the Finance, Risk and Audit Subcommittee.

Medicare revenue

It was noted that Congress had achieved its highest ever Medicare return in March 2018, and that this is expected to continue into April 2018. This increase was credited to significant improvements that have been made with regard to Medicare claiming processes and an increase in service delivery through staff and clinic investment.

Further consultation with staff about sustainable and achievable goals is expected to find the right balance for the organisation.

Enterprise and Investment Policy

The Board resolved that an Investment Management Group will be formed to inform decisions about investments and investment strategies for Congress. The group, to consist of the Independent Director–Finance, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Executive Officer and General Manager Business Services (with an open invitation to members of the Finance, Risk and Audit Subcommittee), will meet at least three times a year to discuss Congress' investment breakdown and make recommendations to the Finance, Risk and Audit Subcommittee in this regard.

Congress Pharmacy Application Withdrawn

The Board was advised that Congress' application for a pharmacy licence has now been withdrawn. This decision was one that was beyond our control, and a result of very recent changes to PBS legislation that excluded our eligibility due to our status as a Section 100 organisation. Section 100 refers to the special supply and remuneration arrangements of PBS medicines for clients in remote areas and approved Aboriginal Health Services. Pursuing the pharmacy licence application would jeopardise this arrangement, one that is very important in how Congress delivers services to clients. Alternative arrangements are being considered.

ISO Accreditation

It was noted by the Board that Congress was recently successful in gaining accreditation under the latest ISO standard, with few observations and no non-compliances recorded. This is a great achievement that removes the requirement for an additional assessment that was expected to take place later in the year.



L–R: CEO Donna Ah Chee, Deputy Chair Graham Dowling, Professor Sir Michael Marmot, Chairman William Tilmouth, and Professor Fran Baum and Dr Toby Freeman from Flinders University

Governance Subcommittee Report

The Board noted the report of the Governance Subcommittee.

Strategic Planning has commenced, and the Data Gathering Timeline for Strategic Planning for 2018 was approved by the subcommittee and the Board.

The Board supported the recommendation by the Governance subcommittee for Remote Community Health Aboriginal Corporation Directors to attend ORIC governance training in Alice Springs from 15–16 May 2018.

Clinics Subcommittee Report

The Board noted the report of the Clinics Subcommittee.

STI Testing Procedures

The Congress Board of Directors resolved to approve principles for screening of clients for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) at Congress town and remote clinics. STI screening is to take place in conjunction with screening for diabetes, kidney and other diseases so that STI screening is not stigmatised. Incentives are also being offered for young people to encourage regular testing.

Screening rates for STI and kidney disease will continue to be monitored closely by the Congress Executive through monthly reporting across all Congress town and remote clinics.

CEO's Report to the Board

International Health Advocate Visits Congress

At the time of the April Board meeting, the CEO briefed the Board on an upcoming visit to Congress by leading health advocate, Professor Sir Michael Marmot. Sir Marmot, Director of the University College London's Institute of Health Equity and a leading researcher on health inequality issues, is a powerful international advocate for the social determinants of health.

This visit has since taken place, with Sir Marmot spending 3 days visiting Congress locations – including the Utju Clinic – and hearing about the work undertaken by Congress in working towards health equity for Aboriginal people.

Sir Marmot said of his visit "What I have seen in Alice Springs are examples of good news stories – committed people, adequately resourced, who are engaged with the Indigenous community, doing good things," During his visit, Sir Marmot gave a lecture at the Centre for Remote Health. You can view a video of the lecture at news.flinders.edu.au.

Close the Gap Regional Round Table

On 27 March 2018, a regional consultation forum was conducted jointly by the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples, and Prime Minister and Cabinet. Jackie Huggins,

the co-chair of the National Congress co-hosted the event. Deputy Chair Graham Dowling, Chief Medical Officer Public Health Dr John Boffa and CEO Donna Ah Chee participated on Congress' behalf. The positions outlined in the Congress submission to the Close the Gap refresh were advocated, including the need for new headline indicators in key areas such as poverty reduction, homelessness and early childhood. CLC, CAFLU, Gap Youth Centre and NPY Women's Council were also represented at the round table.

Alice Springs Safer Communities Public Forum

Senator Nigel Scullion responded to community concerns about increasing alcohol related violence in Alice Springs by calling a public meeting on 5 April 2018, to allow the community to discuss the issue and suggest solutions. This was attended by Congress' CEO, Donna Ah Chee and Chief Medical Officer Public Health, Dr John Boffa. The meeting was co-chaired by the CEO of Lhere Artepe Aboriginal Corporation, and included a panel with Senator Scullion, Minister Dale Wakefield and Mayor Damien Ryan. Participants were able to have their say and there was a clear consensus that the police absence from the take-away alcohol outlets has caused a major increase in violence in the town. This was followed by a demand for the immediate restoration of police on outlets and police in all remote community police stations. Senator Scullion agreed to write to the NT Police Commissioner and request the resumption of full lockdown until the police auxiliaries are in place. He also committed to raise concerns about the lack of police in remote communities, and to continue community consultation on the issue.

NAAJA Legal Health Checks

On 29 March 2018 at the invitation of North Australian Aboriginal Justice Association (NAAJA), Congress' Deputy Chair and CEO met with the NAAJA board as an introduction given their new role in Central Australia. They advised that they have been involved in a partnership with Miwatj Health to trial Aboriginal Legal Health Checks which has been very successful,

they therefore wish to seek further funding to deliver a similar NAAJA Aboriginal Legal Health Check Project (ALHCP) in partnership with Congress. This would be a new initiative to work with Aboriginal families and children to identify and help resolve unmet legal needs. The ALHCP will ensure that clients' needs are met in a holistic way and work closely with other legal and Aboriginal organisations to provide targeted, timely and appropriate legal assistance and referrals.

Child and Youth Assessment and Treatment Service Launched

On 30 April 2018, Congress officially launched our enhanced Child and Youth Assessment and Treatment Service. This exciting and innovative initiative will reduce the need for Central Australian families to travel thousands of kilometres for specialised diagnostics necessary to trigger the right support for children with possible developmental vulnerabilities. It is now very clear that many children and young people in youth detention have serious neurodevelopmental conditions that need to be diagnosed to ensure the right treatment services are available. This will help change the lives of many of our children and young people, steering their health and wellbeing towards being the best it can be, and helping them to succeed in school, work, family and community life.

AMSANT General and Board Meeting and Workshop on Child Protection and Out-of-Home Care (Feb-Mar 2018)

The AMSANT General Meeting of February 2018 was well attended by Congress Directors across all of our boards. The meeting was primarily focused on a workshop on the recommendations of the Royal Commission report. There was a clear view that the proposed Tripartite Forum is a critical structure to oversee the implementation of the recommendations and that the community sector should only be represented by Aboriginal organisations. Non-Aboriginal NGOs could have input through an advisory committee.

The Deputy Chairperson also presented a questionnaire to AMSANT members on what community control means for Aboriginal community controlled

health services. This questionnaire was prepared by the Chairperson, Mr William Tilmouth for AMSANT members to consider and discuss at the next AMSANT General Meeting in May 2018. An update will be provided in the next Board Communiqué.

NT Opposition Leader Visit to Congress

The NT Opposition Leader, Gary Higgins made a visit to Congress on 23 March 2018. Meeting with our Deputy Chair and CEO, a range of topics were discussed including the need to commit to the further development of Aboriginal community controlled health services. Mr Higgins also outlined the level of bipartisan commitment to alcohol policy reform through the implementation of the Riley Review and made it very clear that he is advocating for police to resume full lockdown of takeaway liquor outlets in all the regional centres.

Proof of Aboriginality applications

Please be reminded that requests for Proof of Aboriginality are only able to be assessed by the Congress Board of Directors at our scheduled Board meetings.

Update your details

It is important that we have the right details recorded in our membership register so that we can contact you the right way, and for accountability. These are separate to your clinical records at Congress. Because your privacy is important to us, we never access your medical records for membership business. You can help us make sure your details are up to date by emailing membership@caac.org.au or calling Congress' Membership Officer on 8951 0904. Remind your friends and family too!

The next Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Board meeting is scheduled for 8.30am on 28 June 2018



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Featured artwork: Gwen Gillen, *Land & River*,
My Home Place acrylic on linen, 300 x 905 mm,
2016 Courtesy Tangentyere Artists

Tues 19
& Wed 20
JUNE

Have your say!

Help inform Congress' Strategic Priorities for the next 3 to 5 years.

**The Congress Board invites Corporation members to contribute
to Congress' strategic planning process.**

The strategic plan represents a roadmap about what Congress' priorities are, and how we can best take important steps forward in helping to improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people in Central Australia.

THERE ARE TWO WAYS YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE

1 Attend a consultation session for members. Meet with independent consultant Edward Tilton and share what you think are the important focus areas for Congress in the next 3 to 5 years.

Session 1: Tuesday 19 June, 9–11am

Session 2: Wednesday 20 June, 4–6pm

at The Old Courthouse

27 Hartley St Alice Springs.

*Tea, coffee and light refreshments
will be provided.*

2 Complete a survey. Confidential surveys will be available online or in person at Congress from 28 May 2018.

If you have provided your email address to our membership officer, you will receive an invitation to complete the survey online. If you'd like to provide us with your email address, you can do so by emailing membership@caac.org.au.

Paper copies of the survey can be requested by calling Congress' Company Secretary on (08) 8959 4713, or by request at any Congress location. You can then return this via post, or by placing in the locked Feedback box found in reception at any Congress location.

Want more information?

**Email membership@caac.org.au or call
the Company Secretary on (08) 8959 4713**