



## **The Hon Greg Hunt MP**

Minister for Health

Minister Assisting the Prime Minister  
for the Public Service and Cabinet

## **The Hon. Ken Wyatt MP**

Minister for Indigenous Australians

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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#### **\$5.6 million for research into healthy ageing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples**

The Morrison Government is investing more than \$5.6 million in medical research focusing on healthy ageing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Coinciding with NAIDOC week and the release of two key Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) reports, the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) will provide the funding to support six research projects.

The aim of this targeted research is to address the need for rigorous, culturally-informed research that ultimately improves the health and experiences of ageing in older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples currently have poorer health outcomes and higher rates of disability than non-Indigenous Australians of the same age.

They are also more likely to live with chronic and complex conditions that lead to a poorer quality of life and to die at a younger age.

This funding will support practical and innovative research into the best approaches to prevention, early intervention, and treatment of health conditions of greatest concern to ageing Indigenous communities.

Ultimately, parity in health outcomes is the only acceptable goal, and this funding will help to achieve it.

Data released today by the AIHW for the 2017–18 period showed 198 organisations provided primary health services to around 483,000 clients, most of whom were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (81%).

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Organisations providing Indigenous primary health services employed nearly 8,000 FTE staff, and over half of these (54%) were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people.

Improvements in health included:

- First antenatal visit before 13 weeks (up 3.2 percentage points to 42.4%)
- Influenza immunisation for clients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (up 5.3 percentage points to 37.2%)
- Influenza immunisation for clients with Type 2 diabetes (up 3.2 percentage points to 33.8%)
- Absolute cardiovascular risk (down 3.5 percentage points to 29.8%)
- HbA1c (refers to glucose and haemoglobin joined together) result recorded for clients with Type 2 diabetes (up 3.1 percentage points to 52.0%).

However the reports also highlighted an increase in:

- Low birthweight (up 1.8 percentage points to 13.2%)
- Smoking status of women who gave birth in the previous 12 months (current smoker) (up 0.5 percentage points to 49.5%)
- Smoking status result (current smoker) (up 0.2 percentage points to 51.7%)
- Recording kidney function test results for clients with Type 2 diabetes (down 0.6 percentage points to 62.0%)
- and reported service gaps in mental health and youth services.

The Morrison Government is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all Australians.

Our government has a long-standing and important commitment to achieving health equity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

The Government's strong economic management ensures the continued record investment of funding into vital health initiatives including mental health, life-saving medicines, Medicare and hospitals.

(END)

*Data sourced from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reports:*

- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health organisations: Online Services Report — key results 2017–18*
- *National Key Performance Indicators for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care: Results to June 2018.*

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<b>NHMRC projects and grant recipients</b>			
<b>Researcher Name</b>	<b>Application Title</b>	<b>Administering Institution</b>	<b>Budget</b>
Associate Professor Kim Delbaere	Standing Tall-with our Mob": A holistic approach towards active and healthy ageing.	University of New South Wales	\$990,165.20
Associate Professor Edward Strivens	A framework for healthy ageing in the Torres Strait.	James Cook University	\$1,100,540.00
Professor David Currow	Exploring Healthy Ageing amongst Aboriginal Australians through the window of cancer.	The Sax Institute	\$1,167,301.20
Professor Leon Flicker	Defining and predicting Healthy Ageing in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Populations (HATS).	University of Western Australia	\$931,119.40
Professor Alex Brown	Designing Indigenous aged care with a 'whole of community' perspective.	University of South Australia	\$741,947.30
Professor Robert Sanson-Fisher	Improving implementation of Health Assessments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients in mainstream general practice: a cluster randomised controlled trial.	The University of Newcastle	\$745,056.50