Local Research Partnership To Strengthen Child Protection In The NT

The NT Government will provide a $1.35 million grant to the Menzies School of Health Research to establish a Child Protection Research Partnership, Child Protection Minister Malarndirri McCarthy announced today.

The funds will not only allow for important research to be conducted locally by Menzies, but for the establishment of an Advisory Board which will guide the new research team on the issues of child abuse, neglect and family dysfunction.

“The issue of child abuse and neglect is of national significance, and the NT Government has a clear commitment to deal with these issues,” Ms McCarthy said.

“We have already started the most comprehensive reforms to tackle child sexual abuse, including establishing the Territory’s first Children’s Commissioner – an initiative under Closing the Gap - to address Indigenous disadvantage.

“This historic three year partnership between Menzies and the NT Government will help guide policies and implementations and assist us in protecting children right throughout the Territory.”

Ms McCarthy said recruitment had begun for the head of the research team.

The team at Menzies will conduct the research locally, and will be guided by the new Advisory Board with representatives from Menzies, NT Department of Health and Families and other research institutions.

“Results of this locally conducted research will assist the NT Government in shaping policies and practices based on a solid foundation of evidence.

“The research team will also assist Government in providing training and professional development for staff relating to child protection.”

Professor Jonathan Carapetis, Director of Menzies School of Health Research said it was important that policies and programs in child protection were based on sound evidence.

“While there is a clear commitment to deal with child abuse and neglect, family dysfunction and community safety not only in the Northern Territory, but nationwide, we don't have enough information about what works and what doesn't.
“It is important that policies and programs in this area are based on sound evidence and are rigorously evaluated to ensure that only strategies with a high likelihood of success are implemented, and that their effectiveness is carefully measured.”