Media Release

Robyn Lambley, Member for Araluen
Minister for Health

Opening of the ‘Our Health Our Way’ Conference

5 November 2014

Minister for Health, Robyn Lambley, will this morning open the ‘Our Health Our Way’ Conference, celebrating 40 years of Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services in the NT.

The conference brings together local and national speakers to discuss successes and future developments in Aboriginal primary health care.

“I am pleased to be participating in the Our Health Our Way Conference and have opportunity to recognise and reflect on 40 years of Aboriginal community controlled health services across the Northern Territory.

“In 1973, this sector first came in to being in the NT, with the establishment of Central Australian Aboriginal Congress. To put this in to perspective, this was just two years after the nation’s first Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Service was established in Redfern, Sydney,” Mrs Lambley said.

“A measure of success of Aboriginal primary health care in the NT is that we are the only jurisdiction meeting the Closing the Gap targets”.

As a key partner to the Northern Territory Aboriginal Health Forum, AMSANT has provided significant leadership and advice to drive service and system improvements in Aboriginal Primary Health Care in the NT for twenty years.

Mrs Lambley will talk about the “Back on Track strategy”, a plan for additional Aboriginal Health Practitioners to be employed in health centres, drawn from local communities either through re-employment or training and development.

The Back on Track plan will concentrate on five communities initially. The second target is to achieve an increase of 10% additional Aboriginal Health Practitioners registered or on a training pathway each year across the NT.

To drive this vision Mrs Lambley has established a Ministerial Taskforce comprising Marion Scrymgour, AMSANT Chair; John Paterson, AMSANT Chief Executive Officer; and Donna Ah Chee, Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Chief Executive Officer.
Mrs Lambley said “I am very appreciative of the personal commitment of Marion, John and Donna to work with me on this important plan. The experience and commitment that this Taskforce brings gives me significant hope that achieving this ambitious target is within our grasp”.

“This is a time to celebrate and acknowledge the work and achievements that have led the Aboriginal Community Controlled health sector to this important milestone, while we look ahead to the bright future for Aboriginal primary health care in the NT.”

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