John Elferink
Minister for Health

Investing in Indigenous health in Budget 2015

28 April 2015

The Country Liberals Government will continue to invest in Indigenous health in this year’s Budget.

More than $2 million will be made available to boost the number of Indigenous health practitioners and create a framework which supports greater community control in health care services in remote parts of the Territory.

“This Government is creating opportunities for Indigenous Territorians to become more involved in their health care system,” Minister for Health John Elferink said.

“Funding of $920 000 will facilitate and assist Aboriginal community control in the planning, development and management of primary and community health care services.

“The initiative is about locals taking control of their health care system and creating solutions which suit individual communities.

“Research suggests that the development of greater levels of local community engagement in the management and provision of health services leads to improves health outcomes.”

Already in the Northern Territory, there are a number of successful community-run Indigenous health services, including Wurlinwurlinjang and Sunrise Health in the Katherine Region.

The Northern Territory Government is working with Miwatji and the Milingimbi community to transition the local primary health care clinic to their control.

“The Country Liberals Government also realises that to achieve a greater level of Indigenous engagement in the health system, there must also be more Aboriginal practitioners,” Mr Elferink said.

Last month, the Northern Territory Government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE) to build Indigenous health worker number and committed to expand the successful Back on Track Indigenous Health Practitioner training program.

“As part of this Government’s commitment to bolster the Indigenous health workforce, we are investing $1.17 million to provide accredited training and practical skills which can be used in local communities,” Mr Elferink said.
“Indigenous students will come out of the program with qualifications which can lead to jobs back in their local communities, and with more local workers trained in the field of health, we can increase the delivery of health services for more Territorians.”

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