The Minister for Health Natasha Fyles will fight for the rights of Territorians at this week’s National COAG Health Council in Canberra.

Minister Fyles said the Commonwealth must commit to adequately funding the Northern Territory’s public hospitals.

“Territorians want and deserve access to high quality services and she’ll work to ensure that’s reflected in the new health agreement,” Ms Fyles said.

“While our population is relatively small compared with other jurisdictions, our rates of illness and chronic disease are extraordinarily high and we have the additional challenge of providing health services across a vast land.

“Our hospitals have to be funded adequately to meet demand. This isn’t just critical to the health of Territorians, but to the national commitment to Close the Gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous health outcomes and life expectancies.

Minister Fyles said she’ll be lobbying hard to make sure her State and Federal counterparts understand the Northern Territory’s position on long-term health reform.

“It is vital that the unique challenges facing the Territory are considered in any health reforms now and into the future,” she said.

**Topics for discussion at COAG include:**

- National Health Agreement
- The Impact of Mandatory Reporting for Health Practitioners
- National Immunisation Education Framework
- Safety or remote and rural nurses

The Minister will also push for the Meningococcal vaccine to be fast tracked onto the national agenda.

“Territorians are rightly concerned about the recent outbreak of Meningococcal W in Central Australia,” Ms Fyles said.

“While the Territory Government has stepped in to provide an outbreak response in the Territory – a national approach is needed.”

The Health Ministers will meet in Canberra today.

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