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Closing The Gap In Remote Health Services

Remote health service delivery is set for a $15.5 million boost under joint Territory and Federal Government funding, Minister for Information, Communications and Technology Policy Karl Hampton announced today.

“This is one of the largest ICT milestones in the Territory’s history that will help deliver life-changing services for thousands of remote Territorians,” Mr Hampton said.

“Improved health service delivery in remote Territory towns such as Lajamanu, Dagaragu and Papunya will go a long way towards Closing the Gap in Indigenous Disadvantage.

“Enhanced communications for health, education and emergency services will also be delivered through this $15.5 million package.

“This $15.5 million will enable e-health services at 17 remote Territory towns, including:

- Mobile clinical video-conferencing units with digital clinical equipment, enabling some remote digital diagnostics, care monitoring and specialist clinical work;
- Provide a web-based interface for the health clinical information and decision-support systems; and
- Interactive video-conferencing for small group training and professional development.

“Access to high-speed broadband in remote towns is critically important - that’s why we gave a presentation to state and federal ministers at last month’s ministerial council meeting in Alice Springs, outlining the potential benefits of improving remote e-health.

“I am delighted that my Federal counterpart, Senator Stephen Conroy, has approved our application for the maximum funding of $7 million to improve remote service delivery.

“We will contribute an extra $8.5 million on top of the Commonwealth funding towards boosting the electronic service delivery in the Territory’s 17 health e-towns.

“Today’s announcement comes a week after Mr Conroy announced National Broadband Network funding of $250 million that includes linking the Territory with Australia’s east coast.

“I will continue to build on the very strong relationship with the Federal Government to deliver more beneficial outcomes to Territorians.”

Member for Lingiari and Federal Minister for Indigenous Health, Rural and Regional Health, Warren Snowdon, said the $15.5 million of new funding would provide more support to health professionals in remote health e-towns to check and update their patients' medical records.

“This $15.5 million of funding will help our hard-working medical professionals in remote towns provide their patients with the best possible medical advice and treatment,” Mr Snowdon said.

Contact: Edwin Edlund 0401 119 563