

Communique

MEETING 7 MARCH 2024

The Kimberley Aboriginal Health Planning Forum (KAHPF) met on 7 March 2024 in Broome and via MS Teams.

The KAHPF noted that Rex O'Rourke, former **Co-Chair of the KAHPF** has taken up an opportunity with Queensland Health as Chief Executive of the Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service. Ron Wynn was welcomed to the KAHPF as Co-chair, in his capacity as Acting Regional Executive Director for WACHS Kimberley.

The KAHPF extended congratulations to **Emily Carter**, for being awarded a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for her significant service to Aboriginal communities. The KAHPF recognises Emily's lifetime of work for her community including leadership on liquor restrictions and harm prevention, and her role as CEO of Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre.

The KAHPF noted concerns raised by the Kimberley Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service (ACCHS) Lead Clinicians' Forum in relation to the **Central Referral System** which have been raised with the WA Department of Health. The KAHPF will continue to monitor progress on this issue until it is resolved.

The KAHPF noted that the State Government have formalised changes to the Banned Drinkers Register (BDR) and have proposed increased liquor restrictions in Derby and Broome. They noted that the Kimberley Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service (ACCHS) sector has released a ['Call to Action'](#) stating that "liquor restrictions alone are not the answer. Governments must invest in regional health planning, services, capital infrastructure and workforce". The KAHPF endorsed a proposal to seek funding from the State Government to support the development of a regional **Aboriginal-led alcohol and other drug plan**. The KAHPF is willing to provide governance of this and notes that the Drug and Alcohol and Mental Health Sub-committee are well positioned to lead a comprehensive planning process.

The KAHPF welcomed a presentation from James Christian, CEO of the **Council of Aboriginal Services WA** (CASWA). The aim of CASWA is to strengthen and increase the capacity of WA Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) involved in service delivery to Aboriginal people in WA across priority sectors identified under the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*. The KAHPF endorsed that CASWA join the KAHPF as associate members and looks forward to hearing more from CASWA as it continues to expand its reach and influence across WA.

The KAHPF received an update on the **Kimberley Aboriginal Health Research Alliance** (KAHRA) and noted that funding is being sought to secure a sustainable future for the alliance. Since its inception KAHRA has worked in partnership with the KAHPF, providing services to all KAHPF members (as well as other health services and research bodies) as secretariat to the Research Sub-committee. Collectively, the KAHPF aspires to derive maximum benefit from any research activity that occurs in the region, and the important role that KAHRA plays in ensuring this is recognised.

A revised draft **Strategic Plan** has been distributed to KAHPF, Sub-committee and Working Group members for review. To date, their input towards the review has been invaluable, and the KAHPF looks forward to launching a revised strategic plan this year that will better align efforts to the *National Agreement*.

Updates were noted by the by the Environmental Health, Chronic Disease, Sexual and Reproductive Health, and Maternal, Child, Youth and Family Health Sub-committees; the Kimberley Ear Health Coordinating Panel; the Aboriginal Health Council of WA, Rural Health West and the Commissioner for Children and Young People.

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At the meeting, the KAHPF endorsed:

- That Environmental Health Partnership Commitments, to support improvements in Aboriginal health outcomes through linkage with environmental health services, be signed for a further four years.
- The Sexual and Reproductive Health Sub-committee's Action Plan.

Members agreed to hold their next meeting in Derby in April. The meeting will include a presentation from KAHRA on the **Kimberley Health Evidence Data Platform** project – that will create a linked Kimberley primary health care data platform – collaboratively, safely, and securely with appropriate access and use for health services and researchers.

Organisations in attendance at the 7 March 2024 meeting

Core Members

- Boab Health
- Broome Regional Aboriginal Medical Service
- Derby Aboriginal Health Service
- Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services
- Lions Outback Vision
- Ord Valley Aboriginal Health Service
- Milliya Rumurra Aboriginal Corporation
- Nindilingarri Cultural Health Services
- Nirrumbuk Environmental Health and Services
- Royal Flying Doctor Service
- WA Country Health Service
- Yura Yungi Medical Service

Associate Members:

- Aboriginal Health Council of WA
- Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care
- Australian Government Department of Social Services
- Kimberley Stolen Generation Aboriginal Corporation
- Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre
- Men's Outreach Service
- National Indigenous Australians Agency
- Rural Health West
- St John WA
- WA Primary Health Alliance
- WA Department of Communities

