



Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia

Dilhorn House, 2 Bulwer Street, East Perth WA

MEDIA RELEASE MAJOR FUNDING BOOST FOR AHCWA

13 April 2011

An unprecedented funding commitment to the Aboriginal Health Council of WA by the State Government of \$550,000 over the next three years has been welcomed by AHCWA Chairperson Vicki O'Donnell.

Announced by the Minister for Health Kim Hames this morning, the funding is the most significant amount since the formation of AHCWA.

As AHCWA's Annual State Conference continues today, Ms O'Donnell said the Minister had shown a sincere and ongoing commitment to involving AHCWA – the State's peak Aboriginal health body - in determining the best outcomes for Aboriginal health in WA.

"The Minister recognises that AHCWA has led the way and will continue to lead the way," Ms O'Donnell said.

"The Minister has done more than any previous Government in pledging a considerable amount to our operations. As the peak Aboriginal health body in the State, this recognition further boosts our profile.

"The funding will enable us to review and refocus the organisation to better meet the needs of the 19 services we represent across Western Australia.

"These Aboriginal Medical Services (AMSs) manage a huge number of remote clinics. We are one of the biggest providers of Aboriginal health services to people across WA, as well as a key employer of Aboriginal people."

Ms O'Donnell said the funding also recognised the historical first AHCWA had achieved in rolling out the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) funding. Over the past year, the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Sector (including AHCWA) worked together to decide where the funding would be delivered and what programs would be implemented in partnership with the Commonwealth and State Governments. WA was the only state in the nation to work in partnership.

Ms O'Donnell said that during the State Conference over the next two days, representatives would discuss how the Office of Aboriginal Health (OAH) would develop under the leadership of new Director Ms Jenni Collard and how AHCWA partnered with OAH. Similarly, representatives would also be looking at how the Aboriginal health sector could influence the justice system, housing and other areas.

AHCWA was incorporated under the Commonwealth Corporations Law in February-March 2005, replacing the WA Community Controlled Health Organisation as the peak body for Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHSs) in WA (ACCHSs are also known as Aboriginal Medical Services).

The State Conference runs from April 12 to 13 at the Rendezvous Hotel in Scarborough.

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