



17 November 2017

The Northern Territory Government must work with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations in true partnership on Royal Commission recommendations

The National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) calls on the Northern Territory and Australian Governments to work with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations on the implementation of recommendations of the Royal Commission and Board of Inquiry into the Protection and Detention of Children in the Northern Territory released today.

It is clear from the report that the current system of detention in the Northern Territory is failing our children and young people, leaving many more damaged than when they entered. The system of detention is punitive, harsh, and not in keeping with modern rehabilitative standards. We also know that the child protection system in the Northern Territory is letting down children and their families and is inextricably linked to youth justice issues.

Aboriginal children and young people living in the Northern Territory are overwhelmingly impacted with ninety four per cent of children and young people in detention being Aboriginal.

“The extent of this over-representation of Aboriginal children and young people compared with all other children and young people compels a special Aboriginal led response.” said NACCHO Chief Executive Officer Ms Pat Turner.

“The Northern Territory Government must now sit down with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to work in true partnership on the implementation of the recommendations.”

“Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHO) have the greatest coverage across the Territory and work with Aboriginal children, young people and families everyday on child protection and youth justice system prevention and early intervention support.”

Ms Turner called on the Northern Territory Government to show national leadership in responding to the recommendations, “The Northern Territory Government has a unique opportunity to lead the rest of the nation in developing a children and family centered public health approach to youth justice and child protection, responsive to Aboriginal people needs.”



NACCHO acknowledges the young people and their families who shared their stories of trauma and survival and the Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations that supported them.

“I particularly want to acknowledge the work of Danilla Dilba, led by Ms Olga Haven, in providing evidence based submissions to the Northern Territory Government and the Royal Commission to inform their considerations,” said Ms Turner.

“Danilla Dilba has also provided immense support to families and young people to share their own stories and experiences throughout this time, as well as ongoing health and wellbeing services to Aboriginal people across the top end.”

It is now time for the Northern Territory Government to take full responsibility and lead a change by working with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations on the implementation of the Royal Commission recommendations.

Media contact: Alice Kemble 0413 034 011