

Indigenous health at crisis point

- Indigenous children born today have a life expectancy that is dramatically less than that of non-Indigenous children. The life expectancy of Indigenous children born between 1996 and 2001 is around eighteen years less than that of the general population.
- Poor health outcomes are directly affected by inadequate housing, education, employment and access to basic services.
- Successive reports have shown the impact of devastating intergenerational abuse of children in remote communities over the past two decades.
- Federal Government health spending on Indigenous Australians is less than for other Australians, despite Indigenous illness rates being three times higher than the rest of the population.

What would a better system look like?

According to Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation (ANTaR), the essential elements of an improved Indigenous health system include:

- primary health care delivered on the basis of need, through Aboriginal community-controlled health services and more accessible mainstream services;
- a significantly increased health workforce, particularly of Indigenous background;
- comprehensive early intervention and prevention programmes;
- significantly improved education and employment outcomes, housing and infrastructure provision.

Ask your candidates

- Do you support the campaign to end the health and life expectancy gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians?
- How would you use your elected position to substantially address the disadvantage suffered by Indigenous people?
- Does your party have any plans for improving consultation with Indigenous peoples?
- If your party is elected how will it begin to address current inequities in the provision of education and housing in Indigenous communities?

FAST FACTS

Indigenous Australians are **three times more likely to have a major coronary event** and around **three times more likely to have diabetes** than non-Indigenous Australians.

Deaths from **respiratory conditions are four times, circulatory conditions three times and rheumatic heart disease 20 times higher** for Indigenous Australians. (AMA report card, 2007)

Infant mortality is 2.5 times that of other Australian infants. (ANTaR, 2007)

Solving this crisis is possible. In NZ, the USA and Canada, indigenous health has improved over the past 25 years through Government action.

It is an indictment of our shared failures that forty years after the referendum that finally recognised Indigenous people count in this country, Indigenous Australians still suffer enormous disadvantages in health, education and employment. In a country of such wealth, it is shameful that the life expectancy of Indigenous Australians is seventeen years below the national average."

UCA National Assembly President Gregor Henderson on Sorry Day, 2007

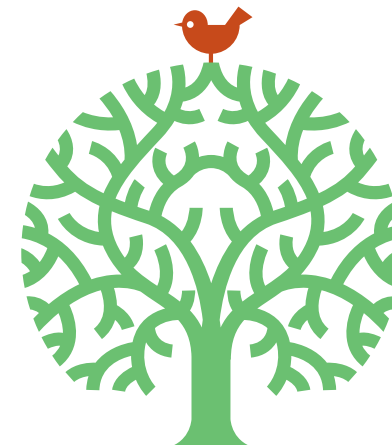


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