



NATIONAL INDIGENOUS HEALTH EQUALITY COUNCIL

Meeting 9

14 and 15 October 2010

COMMUNIQUÉ

The National Indigenous Health Equality Council (NIHEC) held its ninth meeting in Sydney on 14 and 15 October 2010. The Chairs of the Close the Gap Steering Committee for Indigenous Health Equality and the National Congress of Australia's First People joined NIHEC for a working dinner and agreed there was value in continuing these relationships.

The Council is finalising the work on the *Health Workforce Target: Analysis and Recommendations Part 1: Indigenous Health Workforce* as well as the policy recommendations arising from the Indigenous Health Workforce Forum on the three priority areas which are; building the education-health workforce pipeline for Indigenous health, Indigenous health workforce portal, and a national approach to developing cultural competence for presentation to the Minister.

Other topics for discussion included the monitoring and evaluation framework of the Commonwealth's Indigenous Chronic Disease Package and advice into the Australian Health Survey. NIHEC also discussed identifying mental health issues that are of NIHEC's immediate interest to develop as policy advice, and NIHEC's role in relation to the Government's health reform agenda.

Ms Maria Jolly, from the Department of Health and Ageing, led a discussion on the Commonwealth's workforce activities, NIHEC identified their representative on the Health Workforce Australia Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker Project Expert Reference Group, and discussed their submission to the Government's proposed Indigenous Economic Development Strategy.

Mr Simon Gordon, from the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, led a discussion on Commonwealth's programs on nutrition and food security for Indigenous communities and Council identified that they would be interested in receiving data on particular programs when available.

NIHEC is currently finalising the scope of research and analysis projects to be undertaken on behalf of NIHEC to inform their evidence-based advice to Government.

NIHEC's Meeting 10 is proposed to be held in Darwin on 30 November 2010 and 1 and 2 December 2010.