

Thursday, 16 March 2017

## Community control remains key to closing the gap

### National Close the Gap Day 2017

As the Close the Gap campaign enters its second decade, Brisbane North PHN Chief Executive Abbe Anderson has praised the work of local Aboriginal community controlled health services.

“We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land upon which we work to achieve our vision of a community where good health is available for everyone,” Ms Anderson said.

“On National Close the Gap Day, we also acknowledge the leadership shown by the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health (IUIH) in providing health and community care services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in our region,” she said.

“We have a significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of around 14,000 people in our region and our partnership with IUIH is critical to meeting their care needs.

“Among the areas in which we’ve seen excellent results from IUIH is in the care of people with chronic and complex conditions.

“An evaluation of the former Coordinated Care and Supplementary Services Program (CCSS) shows that from October 2015 to June 2016, almost 1,900 clients in South East Queensland (SEQ) received at least one CCSS service.

“Up to 85 per cent of CCSS clients in SEQ would otherwise not have had a formal care plan (MBS item 721 or 723) in place, had they not accessed the CCSS program through IUIH,” Ms Anderson said.

In 2016-17, the Federal Government combined the CCSS program with the Improving Indigenous Access to Mainstream Primary Care (IIAMPC) program to form the Integrated Team Care (ITC) Activity.

ITC is provided by a team of Indigenous Health Project Officers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Outreach Workers and Care Coordinators.

Brisbane North PHN now leads a collaborative effort, involving three other Primary Health Networks, which pools and directs all ITC funding in South East Queensland to IUIH

“In coordinating ITC program funding through IUIH, we can achieve greater collective impact in South East Queensland and improve program efficiency by reducing administrative overheads,” Ms Anderson said.

“It is clear the community controlled model, working alongside mainstream health services, can deliver the results we’re looking for,” she said.

Brisbane North PHN’s Closing the Gap strategy aims to improve health outcomes for its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, which experiences significant health inequalities across a number of indicators and poorer life expectancy than the population as a whole.

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This strategy also includes community aged care services, which IUIH delivers through the PHN's healthy@home consortium, and mental health, alcohol and other drug services.

For more information, visit: <http://www.brisbanenorthphn.org.au/page/health-professionals/closing-the-gap/>.

### ENDS ###

#### Editor's note:

Press quality images of Abbe Anderson are available from Dropbox here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/oam50efcrp6h6ro/AADr8LzQXkdsJ567bWDHtq0da?dl=0>

#### About Brisbane North PHN

Brisbane North PHN is one of 31 Primary Health Networks nationwide and supports clinicians and communities within North Brisbane, Moreton Bay and parts of the Somerset region. It covers approximately 4,100 km<sup>2</sup> of urban, regional and rural areas, with a population of over 900,000.

The key objectives of the PHN are:

- increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of medical services for patients, particularly those at risk of poor health outcomes, and
- improving coordination of care to ensure patients receive the right care in the right place at the right time.

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