Project Team
Review of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for Health Professionals
Level 14/50 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, VIC 3000
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Friday, 10 October 2014

To whom it may concern,

Summary Response for the Review of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for Health Professionals

These were the collated responses from the meeting of National Health Leadership Group held on Wednesday 8th of October 2014 at NACCHO. The NHLF is made up of a collective of national Aboriginal Community Controlled Health peak bodies that work in Aboriginal Health and have formulated a summary to be used for the Review of the National registration and accreditation scheme for health.

NACCHO has received an extension for a comprehensive submission to be lodged on the 17th of October 2014 on behalf of the NHLF, however we have also arranged to provide a letter which can inform a summary to Kim Snowball AHMAC Lead Representative on this matter.

From a NACCHO perspective we should be stating that the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations providing the following within the Australian Health System:

- NACCHO has 150 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations across Australia, they are small, medium and large organisations who have 302 sites
- Over 2 million episodes of care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians;
- The largest private industry employer of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with estimated 7000 workforce within the sector 3,500 are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander;
- 80% of the NACCHO membership see over 300,000 clients per year;
- Client utilisation of ACCHOs at 6% increases annually;
- Have contributed to 2 of the key Closing the Gap targets by:
  - Reducing the child mortality rates 62%
  - Increase overall life expectancy by 33%

The overall review lacks the cultural aspects of both regulation, legislation, models and standards that are applicable amongst the NACCHO Membership and therefore offer the following to be considered for further exploration:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Allied Health Workforce component are widely diverse in discipline and will require further review, reform or special consideration;
- Registration requirements on Police Checks - Justice implications on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people due to incarceration rates;
Grandfather clauses that enable linkages between Registration requirements and Accreditation Standards that are applicable to this review however impact largely on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people due to lack of support and opportunity;

Workforce Target of 1,200 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people – There are many systematic flaws which prohibit the success of reaching these targets such as State & Territory Legislation prohibiting practice standards; AHMAC representatives are part of the target solution to enable this as part of their state and territory structures;

Current 330 Registered Aboriginal Health Practitioners require greater scope to include other workforce within the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health space such as Social Emotional Wellbeing Workers; Drug and Alcohol etc

30 years Recognition of Standards of Aboriginal Health Workers within the Northern Territory which need to be applied widely and also a system that underpins a 2 tiered system of Aboriginal Community endorsed by Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation and the other National recognition currently in practice;

AHMAC target should be assist the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health peak bodies by enabling a National Standard of Practice of Aboriginal Health across all disciplines;

AHMAC consider overseeing body that has an annex or cultural arm to assist in advising structures as part of the review process this is to ensure no Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander is disadvantaged – eg Aboriginal Lead Clinicians Group for Doctors, Nurses, AHW’s, Allied Health within compliance or complaints processes this would ensure the mechanisms can make informed decisions on correct processes;

In the current Fiscal environment where governments are seeking effective and efficient processes the Review team consider maintaining the status quo however streamlining processes such as complaints processes and notifications systems for small boards, Filtering registration pathways;

AHMAC consider Systems and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professionals in all discipline surrounding registration fees and requirements to maintain or within a complaints process.

The above would similarly apply to Overseas Trained Doctors that work within Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations;

Lisa Briggs

NACCHO CEO