

Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation



PRESS RELEASE

Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation welcomes the holistic health approach of the Commonwealth's response to addressing Child Abuse in the Northern Territory, however does hold serious concerns on any draconian measures in land control and policing and implores the Prime Minister to be culturally sensitive in any approaches, forceful measures will not result in sustain positive change or participation by Aboriginal people.

General Manager Jeff Warner stated, "the Prime Minister should consider that the Barkly Region has a long history in ground breaking and world first concepts in tackling areas of health and social change; examples are Night Patrol self community policing and Thirsty Thursday the no alcohol sales day created and implemented here for over 10 years, any action planned for this region must involve the communities.

Although the question can be asked "Why now" for such action, given the evidence of numerous reports and studies showing the condition of Aboriginal crisis for decades, it is irrelevant. The Prime Minister has committed to change and we will hold him to that."

Anyinginyi Health agrees the care and welfare of children is paramount, however disputes that the Northern Territory has acted slowly. We agree the Child Abuse Report recommendations build on programs previously implemented to address alcohol, health and education; however we believe this report shows the need of resources beyond the provision of the Northern Territory and thus requiring Commonwealth assistance.

Anyinginyi Health further welcomes the commitment in housing and essential services infrastructure and social investment in the areas of welfare and school attendance. "For far to long some members of our community have drank and gambled away child money, and neglected their children's growth, relying on other family members or social service providers, this must stop. In saying

this it also must be recognised help will be needed by these individuals and families to change violent living environments, and stop the addiction to gambling, alcohol and other drugs.

The perception that this is an Aboriginal problem or that all Aboriginal families are dysfunctional is wrong. There are families in this region, who have supportive, loving and caring home environments and want the best for their children like any other Australian.

As an Aboriginal Medical Service we are open to discussions and plans in a regional Child Health Check program, but again we reiterate the need for on the ground support by appropriate health professionals and long term commitment to housing growth and essential services improvements.”

For further information please contact Mr Jeff Warner

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