

24 May 2023

NCACCH Board of Directors Update

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to share an important update on the way NCACCH will be providing its allied health services via the Brokerage model.

NCACCH's client base and community's primary health care needs have increased significantly with the continuing growth in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population across the Sunshine Coast and Gympie regions. The 2021 ABS census data shows that the Indigenous population in the NCACCH catchment area increased from 5,870 in 2011 to 11,596 in 2021. During this time, NCACCH has also had a significant increase in overall total client numbers from 3,955 in 2011 to 10,606 in September 2022.

As a result of these large increases, the Sunshine Coast and Gympie regions have been severely impacted by the lengthy waitlist of clients to access Indigenous-specific services and other General Practice services, seriously impacting access and primary health care for our mob. Furthermore, the demand on NCACCH Brokered allied health services has also increased with data showing mental health and dental as the top two requested services.

Based on current funding received, the Board and Executive have conducted a risk assessment on continuing to provide services via the Brokerage model and have decided to move towards offering clinics for some of our allied health services. We believe this will ensure NCACCH is able to continue providing our mob with available access to appropriate services, support and information you require to meet your health needs.

“Based on highest service request, significant waiting lists and highest workforce needs, NCACCH is currently working on offering mental health and dental clinics”

NCACCH is currently:

- developing a plan to provide Mental Health Services from both its Gympie Family Hub (via the Aboriginal Medical Service) and Birtinya Head Office (via referrals from external General Practices). We are hopeful, there will also be the option for outreach clinics
- working with a local Aboriginal owned dental practice on the Sunshine Coast to provide dental clinics with a focus on clients who do not hold a concession or pension card
- working with the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service to improve access to public dental clinics across numerous locations for clients with a health care card or pension card issued by Centrelink / Dept Veteran Affairs, Commonwealth Seniors Health card or Qld Seniors card
- working with the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service to reform our Nanna Bills Mums and Bubs program to allow a transition to a future clinical setting

We are hoping to commence the mental health and dental clinics over the coming months and will keep our community updated on the progress. **In the meantime, the current Brokerage system will continue as normal.** However, due to high demand and financial limitations, the allowable visits to some allied health services may be decreased. Where possible, we encourage all of our clients to access their General Practice for an Aboriginal Health Check (715) where relevant referrals and care plans may be developed to access required allied health services. More information can be found on our website at <https://ncacch.org.au/our-services/>

We thank you for your patience while we work to improve our Brokered services to continue meeting the needs of our community. If you have any questions regarding this update, please contact Sharelle Eggmolesse, Chief Executive Officer, on sharelle@ncacch.org.au or for any general enquiries please contact NCACCH on 5346 9800.

Yours Sincerely



Kerry Staines

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On Behalf of the NCACCH Board