

Landmark Aboriginal medical education agreement signed

Australia's leading national Aboriginal health organisation and Australia's peak medical education body have signed a landmark agreement aimed at increasing medical student placements in Indigenous primary health care settings.

The Memorandum of Understanding between the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) and Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand will also support NACCHO's potential to build the capacity to recruit more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students.

The agreement was signed in Canberra during National Reconciliation Week by NACCHO Chair Mr Justin Mohamed and Medical Deans President Professor Justin Beilby.

'This is a valuable and important agreement that will build the capacity for medical student placements in Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, which increases students' understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' diverse and distinct cultures and their health issues,' Professor Beilby said.

'These settings are the most effective places to learn about Aboriginal health, and this agreement will help formalise and strengthen some of the understandings that are already in place.'

'It also has the potential to recruit more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to medicine and build the capacity of NACCHO health services across the country.'

Professor Beilby said Medical Deans, in conjunction with its partnering Aboriginal organisations and networks, was committed to reducing the gap in health outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

'Our formal collaboration with the Australian Indigenous Doctors Association (AIDA), the Deans' Leaders in Medical Education (LIME) Network and our Indigenous Health Expert Advisory Group have contributed to this, and we look forward to our agreement with NACCHO taking this to the next level,' he said.

Mr Mohamed said 'we welcome the formal collaboration with the Deans and individuals within their organisation who have contributed to this. We're looking forward to working together towards developing capacity within the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Sector to increase the effectiveness of clinical training and the Australian medical workforce.'

NACCHO is the peak national body in Aboriginal health and represents more than 150 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services in State and Territories across Australia.

Medical Deans represents professional entry-level medical education, training and research in Australia and New Zealand. The organisation comprises the Deans of Australia's 18 medical schools and the two New Zealand schools.

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