



THE HON WARREN SNOWDON MP
Minister for Indigenous Health, Rural and Regional Health
and Regional Services Delivery

SHARON GRIERSON MP
Federal Member for Newcastle

7th October 2009

Meeting to Make a Difference to Male Health

Today men, health professionals, researchers and educators gathered in Newcastle as part of the National Men's Health Gathering 2009.

Speaking at the event, Minister for Indigenous Health, Rural and Regional Health, and Regional Services Delivery, Mr Snowdon said it is time for the issues of men's health to be front and centre in the health debate, and he is pleased to see so many people working together to achieve change in male health.

“Last month I marched down the main street of Katherine with Indigenous men who are determined to tackle the hard issues confronting Aboriginal communities and to take action to improve their lives, their families' lives and their community.

“Last year I met with Indigenous men at Ross River for the Inteyerrkwe Aboriginal Male Health Summit, when they reclaimed their role and responsibility in developing strategies for their health and the healing of their communities.

“And by the end of the year, the Rudd Government will deliver Australia's first National Men's Health Policy to address the continued health challenges faced by Indigenous men, rural men, men in prison, fathers, and all our Australian men who simply feel they can't find the time for a doctor's appointment.”

Member for Newcastle, Sharon Grierson said the National Men's Health Policy will focus on delivering more male-friendly health services, and will raise awareness about the preventable health problems that disproportionately affect the male population.

“Less than two per cent of Australia's health expenditure is being dedicated to preventative activities, and yet according to Australian Bureau of Statistics more than one in five Australian men smoke; a staggering 95% of men do not meet the recommended daily intake of fruit and vegetables; well over half of men don't get enough exercise; and nearly 68 per cent of adult men are overweight or obese.

“The Rudd Government is already making an \$872 million investment in health promotion through COAG, alongside a further Indigenous Health commitment of \$116 million to target smoking, poor nutrition and alcohol in Indigenous communities, but it is only by working with those gathered here today that effective, sustainable change can occur,” said Ms Grierson.

For more information on the development of the National Men's Health Policy, see <http://www.health.gov.au/menshealthpolicy>.

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