



**THE HON NICOLA ROXON MP**  
**Minister for Health and Ageing**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**\$50 million to tackle Indigenous alcohol abuse**

The Australian Government has allocated \$50 million to reduce alcohol and substance abuse and its impact on families, safety and community wellbeing in remote Indigenous communities.

This is the implementation of the Government's commitment at last December's COAG meeting of \$50 million nationwide over four years for substance and alcohol rehabilitation and treatment services across Australia, particularly in remote areas.

This commitment builds on COAG's investment of \$49.3 million over four years announced in July 2006 to address drug and alcohol use in Indigenous communities.

This funding is another example of our determination to work with the states and territories to tackle the health challenges confronting our country.

The allocations to each state are:

Queensland – up to \$20 million  
Northern Territory – up to \$8 million  
Western Australia – up to \$8 million  
South Australia - \$7 million  
NSW – up to \$4 million  
Victoria, Tasmania, ACT – up to \$1 million each.

This commitment builds on our existing commitments to Indigenous health, including:

- \$260 million package for maternal and children's health
- \$10 million to upgrade and expand remote NT health care facilities
- \$5 million to establish satellite renal dialysis facilities in remote NT communities
- \$4.6 million for sexual assault counselling in remote NT areas
- \$15.7 million additional funding for to support additional Link Up and Bringing Them Home Services for members of the stolen generations
- Supporting the additional \$100 million committed by the previous Government to improving primary care and health workforce in the NT as part of the intervention.

The Australian Government is committed to tackling the issue of alcohol abuse in Indigenous communities. However, we recognise that this is a crisis that will not be tackled overnight. It requires a substantive, sustained effort, with a commitment to the long term.

We are determined to close the life expectancy gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a generation. Much needs to be done, but this is an important step.

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