MEDIA RELEASE

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New resources to help Indigenous Australians broach end of life discussions

A discussion starter about end of life care, specifically developed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, was launched today at Parliament House by the Minister for Aged Care and Minister for Indigenous Health, Ken Wyatt.

Launching the Dying to Talk resources, Minister Wyatt said that starting a discussion about dying is never easy and can be hard when we want to talk to our families and friends about dying but they don’t want to listen.

“Sometimes, we put these discussions off because its confronting and we don’t want to face our own mortality,” he said.

“No matter what the reasons, I am very grateful to live in a country that has such a strong palliative care system in place and palliative care health professionals who help us tackle these discussions.

“I hope that today, with the launch of these new resources, we edge a little closer to making these conversations less difficult and more open.”

The Dying to Talk resources include a culturally appropriate step-by-step guide to make those difficult discussions about death that bit easier and a set of cards that can be used as a tool to start the conversations.

“Throughout the pages of the discussion paper and on the cards it asks us to consider a number of critical questions,” Minister Wyatt said.

“It’s structured. It’s succinct. It’s clear. It helps start the discussion about what would happen if you or a loved one were sick.”

“When you are sick, what would happen to your family? What would happen to your belongings? What sort of health care do you want? How important is it to visit country? How important is it to be on country when you die?”
“These are all questions that need to be asked, and answered when we are still able to make our wishes known to the people we care about.”

The Australian Government provided $95,000 to Palliative Care Australia to develop the *Dying to Talk* resources which has been co-designed with the support of the Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives, Indigenous Allied Health Australia and the Australian Indigenous Doctors’ Association.

“The resources will be distributed across Australia to Aboriginal Medical Services and Aboriginal Health Services which will in turn help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people start a discussion about dying in a way that is helpful, constructive and compassionate,” Minister Wyatt said.

“It will help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the most difficult of discussions, with respect and dignity.”

The resources can be accessed at [www.dyingtotalk.org.au](http://www.dyingtotalk.org.au).

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