



FIRST NATIONS HEALTH FUNDING TRANSITION ADVISORY GROUP

Communique

29 September 2023

The First Nations Health Funding Transition Advisory Group met virtually on 29 September 2023. The meeting was chaired by Mr David Hicks, A/g First Assistant Secretary, Financial Management Division.

Review of Integrated Team Care and Indigenous Mental Health Programs

Members received an update from Departmental representatives on the review of sector funding arrangements and service provider capability for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Services (MHSP) and the Integrated Team Care (ITC) Program. These programs are currently delivered through PHNs with current grant arrangements due to cease on 30 June 2024.

[Ninti One](#) and [First Nations Co.](#) were engaged to undertake the review which commenced in late 2022. An Expert Advisory Group (EAG) was established to provide advice on the conduct of the Review and its outcomes. EAG membership includes representation from PHNs, Broome Regional Aboriginal Medical Service, Danila Dilba Biluru Butji Binnilutlum Health Service, the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, and Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Australia. The EAG has met five times to date.

The final report of the review is currently being finalised. Its findings report can inform the Department's First Nations Health Funding Transition Program by offering insights to First Nations funding principles and concepts, future arrangements for delivery of MHSP/ITC services and a phased transition approach.

Members discussed learnings from the review process (e.g., consultation expectations) and the need for the final report to give First Nations people and the community-controlled sector a clear indication of future funding arrangements and timeframes for the delivery of the MHSP and ITC Program.

First Nations-led organisations and Development of a Prioritisation Framework

Members were introduced to KPMG's team that has been engaged to conduct the initial review to support the work of the First Nations Health Funding Transition Program. Members received an overview of KPMG's project plan which commenced on 5 September 2023 and is scheduled to be completed by 22 December 2023. This project will inform a longer-term program of work for the Department and builds upon the policy direction, priorities, and

objectives outlined in the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2021–2031.

KPMG’s approach is predicated on seeking expert advice from the Advisory Group to inform its key objectives, namely to:

- i. identify the First Nations health programs and sub-programs that could be transitioned and delivered by First Nations-led organisations,
- ii. determine the general population-based health programs that should reasonably be expected to be targeting First Nations health outcomes and could be improved to enable better access by First Nations peoples, and
- iii. strengthen and improve the sustainability of First Nations-led organisations to deliver health, aged care and/or community services.

KPMG facilitated a robust discussion with members and valuable insights were harnessed to refine the review’s approach. Members discussed the need for the First Nations Health Funding Transition Program to bring about structural reform and the pivotal role that this review will play in establishing the roadmap for systemic change.

To inform a funding transition prioritisation framework, members emphasised the importance for an agreed definition of an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation and other First Nations-led organisations, a strong understanding of the burden of disease among First Nations peoples, and consideration for First Nations communities’ priorities (e.g., system-wide delivery of culturally safe healthcare).

KPMG will facilitate topic-focused workshops at upcoming Advisory Group meetings to continue centring First Nations voices throughout the review.

Engagement and Further Information

Organisations and individuals seeking to engage with the review should feel comfortable to reach out to Advisory Group members. Further information on the review is available by emailing: funding.transition@health.gov.au.