

Innovative Models of Care (IMOC) Program – Yolŋu-led family focussed maternity care

Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation will deliver the Yolŋu-led family focussed maternity care: An innovative, codesigned, culturally safe and responsive, multidisciplinary model of maternity care focussed on mums, bubs and families in remote NE Arnhem Land NT.

Round 5: Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation (MHAC) Yolŋu-led family focussed maternity care

Location: NE Arnhem Land NT (MM7).

Funding: \$1.5 million over 4 years from 2024

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The activity will trial an innovative, codesigned, culturally safe and responsive, multidisciplinary model of maternity care. This is focused on mums, bubs and families in remote NE Arnhem Land NT. The model is supported by an existing consortium of MHAC Yolŋu, non-Yolŋu staff and external experts from institutions across Australia. This consortium will contribute advice and some in-kind resources regarding the implementation. The MHAC-led consortium will carry out an implementation trial of the holistic, wellness focussed, community Mums and Bubs Hubs (MBH). MBHs will be family-centred and offer a wrap around, multidisciplinary Yolŋu and western based model of maternity care including traditional healers, cultural educators, Yolngu navigator and midwifery and allied/public health teams.

The grant will allow MHAC to recruit Yolŋu lead Engagement Project Officers. This will help co-create a supported pathway in each MHAC remote community site to channel Yolngu voices. Yolŋu-led engagement, consultations and representation through reference groups and a steering committee will inform and guide the MBH trial process. Additionally it will support travel for the project team and steering committee members to Darwin, Gove and East Arnhem communities.

Benefits:

- Opportunities created for Yolŋu in family focused leadership roles which will improve the health and wellbeing of families in their community.
- Yolngu women and men feel listened to and offered real, informed choices about their care as they embark on their journey to becoming parents.
- A central space in the community where families know they can visit for quality culturally safe support and guidance – a ‘one-stop shop’.
- Heightened exposure to Yolŋu culture and language for non-Indigenous clinical staff leading to improved workforce relationships. This will lead to more meaningful client interactions and promote an overall general sense of two-way cultural appreciation and safety.
- Increased opportunities for Yolŋu staff and community members for exposure to a greater number of employment and career options.

- Improved access to 'on country' skills training and mentoring.
- An opportunity for men in community to explore a strengths-based approach to preparing for fatherhood. Helping them develop a deeper understanding of what this means to them and their partner in their community.
- A space and platform to help community leaders educate for young people and young parents. The focus of this education is traditional Yolŋu modalities of preparation and care for pregnancy, birth and parenting.

The continuous, independent evaluation incorporates real-time feedback to ensure adaptive, culturally appropriate maternity services and increase community wellbeing.

