

PRESS RELEASE

\$1M Grant to improve disability services for Aboriginal Communities

In Eyre Peninsula and Far West Regions

Aboriginal communities living in Eyre Peninsula and the Far West Coast will be able to access more culturally appropriate disability services, thanks to a \$1M Federal Government Grant that was recently awarded to 4 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHO's).

Nunyara Aboriginal Health Service (Whyalla), Yadu Health Aboriginal Corporation (Ceduna), Tullawon Health Service (Yalata) and Oak Valley (Maralinga) Aboriginal Corporation as the consortia group were awarded the Grant on 1 September 2020. By the Australian Government Department of Social Services. Port Lincoln Aboriginal Health Service join the consortia with their own funding from a prior grant. Together, this group is known as the SA West Coast ACCHO Network (SAWCAN) and supports 4,976 Aboriginal people in a region that stretches from Whyalla in the east, right over to the WA border.

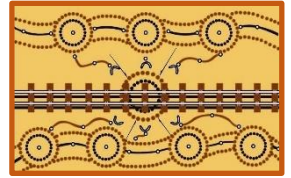
The grant will fund a 2-year project called 'Aboriginal DisAbility Alliance', aiming to support Aboriginal communities to access culturally appropriate disability services.

"NDIS has been delivering good outcomes for non-Aboriginal people in metropolitan areas, but unfortunately Aboriginal people in the far west of SA aren't yet seeing the benefits of NDIS," Nunyara Chief Executive Officer Cindy Zbierski said.

"It is important that Aboriginal people with disability can choose to use their NDIS funding in a culturally appropriate way. This may look very different from how non-Aboriginal people in metro areas use their NDIS funding. The Federal Government has agreed with our model and has awarded us a grant to do things differently for our communities. A grant agreement with the Federal Government is expected to be signed shortly."

The key objective of the Aboriginal DisAbility Alliance is to build the capacity of Aboriginal people with disability to acknowledge:

- eligibility for NDIS
- how NDIS is different from other Government funding
- in practical terms what kinds of goals NDIS funding can support them with (currently a barrier to many Aboriginal people accessing NDIS)
- how to articulate goals in a culturally meaningful way e.g. with pictures/art. This will use newly developed picture-based planning tools.
- how NDIS funding can build capacity of siblings and family i.e. in Aboriginal culture, kinship means that the individual cannot be considered separate from the family
- pooled support coordination, how to procure culturally relevant services, not necessarily regular/mainstream NDIS services



Our Aboriginal communities are strong, thriving networks of kinship where contribution to community is a given for all community members. This project will enable greater participation in cultural activities for Aboriginal people with disability, including language, lore, hunting, women’s business, men’s business, connection with country and return to country.

Another important outcome of this initiative will be the generation of employment opportunities for community members who are motivated to supply services to the NDIS, either as employees of the ACCHO or as independent businesses.

“Without culturally appropriate services being offered by Aboriginal people, NDIS participants aren’t able to spend their NDIS funding, so we will be supporting anyone who wishes to offer such services,” Tullawon Aboriginal Health Service Chief Executive Officer Joanne Badke said.

“We will be working with Government to put in place a one-stop-shop so that Aboriginal service providers can get assistance to set up an ABN, look after finance, tax, IT, HR and other admin functions. Not having this kind of support has been a big barrier to local community members and business offering services. We want to make sure that NDIS delivers social **and** economic benefits to our communities.”

Each ACCHO will employ a part-time facilitator within their local community, and two full time positions will be based across the regions to oversee the Aboriginal DisAbility Alliance project.

For further media enquiries please email reception@nunyara.org.au