



**MEDIA RELEASE: INDIGENOUS ALLIED HEALTH AUSTRALIA WELCOMES PARTNERSHIP
APPROACH TO CLOSING THE GAP REFRESH**

Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA) is joining with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Peak Bodies Across Australia, welcoming the announcement that COAG has agreed to a formal partnership approach to the Closing the Gap Refresh.

The details of formal partnership between COAG and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will be settled in February 2019, following a determined campaign by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak bodies.

The partnership will include a Ministerial Council on Closing the Gap with expanded membership to include representation from COAG and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through their peak bodies.

Before the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak bodies intervened, COAG was due to settle a new Closing the Gap framework and targets without the full involvement and agreement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through their representatives.

“We are extremely pleased that COAG endorsed the formal partnership proposal that IAHA and the peak bodies put forward to work in genuine partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples,” Donna Murray, IAHA CEO said.

“We expect that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through their representatives will have an ongoing role in the co-design, implementation, monitoring and review of the Closing the Gap strategy going forward.

“This announcement marks a positive step forward for our sector and we are committed to working with COAG, our IAHA members and partner Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to negotiate and agree the refreshed framework, targets and action plans which will be finalised through the new joint Committee by mid-2019.”

Last week the Prime Minister agreed that Closing the Gap needed to be more than a strategy for governments, but a strategy that is owned and led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) CEO Ms Pat Turner said: “We are pleased that the Prime Minister and COAG have finally recognised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must play an integral part in the making of the decisions that affect their lives – and it’s the only way forward to closing the gap.”

**MEDIA CONTACTS: For more information or to arrange interviews contact
Renae Kilmister on 0421 505 553 or renae@iaha.com.au**