

# Media Release

6 June 2021

## **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Academy on the way for Lismore**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander high school students in the Northern Rivers will have access to an exciting new training pathway right on their doorstep in 2022.

A new IAHA National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Academy in Lismore is aiming to support education and increase career opportunities in the health and social assistance sectors, thanks to a new partnership between Indigenous Allied Health Australia Ltd (IAHA), the Northern NSW Local Health District (NNSWLHD) and local Aboriginal Medical Services.

IAHA National Academy will give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Year 11 and 12 in the Northern Rivers region the opportunity to complete a school based traineeship undertaking a nationally recognised Certificate III in Allied Health Assistance (HLT33015) qualification through TAFE NSW.

Students will also gain experience in the health workforce with both IAHA and local health service providers, gaining relevant employability skills and work readiness.

The partnership will build on existing relationships and also strengthen local health workforce development strategies, including paid employment for school-based trainees, mentoring, leadership development and career planning.

Pathway options for students range from gaining employment in the health field, to continuing study with partner organisations, including Bulgarr Ngaru Medical Aboriginal Corporation, Rekindling the Spirit Aboriginal Medical Service, Bullinah Aboriginal Medical Service, Northern NSW Local Health District, TAFE NSW and Southern Cross University.

Donna Murray, IAHA Chief Executive Officer, said: “The IAHA national academy program has been developed with community and is Aboriginal-led, providing a culturally safe and responsive holistic approach to education, training and employment at the local level.

“To date, many of the graduates are first in family to complete year 12, and graduates have transitioned successfully into further education, and employment across the health and related sectors.”

Scott Monaghan, CEO Bulgarr Ngaru MAC said: “This partnership is an opportunity for our future leaders to gain the skills necessary to make a difference in their own life journey and that of their community.”

Jody Irwin, CEO Bullinah AMS said: “We are excited to be part of this initiative and are looking forward to supporting and growing opportunities for local young people at home on Bundjalung Country.”

Kirsty Glanville, NNSWLHD Associate Director Aboriginal Health said the Academy in Northern Rivers is unique to others around the country, being the first to have direct engagement with the Aboriginal Community Controlled sector.

“This partnership highlights the very important role Aboriginal Medical Services provide in our communities in improving the health outcomes for Aboriginal communities and empowering people to take an active role in their health journey,” Ms Glanville said.

“The Academy will also provide opportunities to develop the AMS’ future workforce.”

The Northern Rivers Academy will commence in 2022 and be based at Southern Cross University campus in Lismore.

For more information contact the IAHA via email: [academy@iaha.com.au](mailto:academy@iaha.com.au), phone: (02) 6285 1010 or website: <https://iaha.com.au/>

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**Photo Caption:**

*From left, Donna Murray CEO Indigenous Allied Health Australia, Georgina Cohen CEO Rekindling the Spirit, Jody Irwin CEO Bullinah Aboriginal Health Service, Kirsty Glanville, Assoc Director Aboriginal Health NNSWLHD and Scott Monaghan CEO Bulgarr Ngaru Medical Aboriginal Corporation.*

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