



Term 4, ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body

Dear Community members

As we make our way through another week, I am happy to see that this weekend will see some further restrictions eased. We need to be careful and make sure social distancing is still in place but I am looking forward to taking the kids to a park this weekend – weather permitting!!

I wish to acknowledge that in the past couple of weeks our community members have lost loved ones, including some Elders here in our community. We would like to pass on our condolences to family members and hope there is a time soon when as a community we may be able to gather to pay tribute to the contributions they made to our lives.

Over the past week there have been a couple of funding announcements from the ACT Government that will directly benefit our community. Importantly many of these will be delivered directly through our community-controlled organisations which is appropriate recognition of the important roles our services play and the surge on demand they have experienced in dealing with pandemic related issues.

The funding is to assist with demand created by COVID-19 specifically for our community and includes funding for:

- The development of a targeted mental health program for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, which I understand will focus on suicide prevention. The ACT Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Lifespan Working Group is currently undertaking community consultation about what the community needs are. The consultation is expected to be finalised by the end of June 2020 at which time there will be a call for applications with an emphasis on culturally appropriate suicide prevention services and demonstrated expertise. Funding for this program is expected to be available from July 2020.

- Gugan Gulwan to enhance their youth support and integrated services for families.
- Winnunga Nimmityjah to deliver a range of holistic wellbeing supports for families. This is in addition to the service securing COVID 19 health response funding for a COVID specific clinic for our community.
- Dhunlung Yarra program at Relationships Australia to enhance its capacity to provide counselling and conflict resolution services.
- The Canberra Rape Crisis Centre Nguru Program to increase the provision of holistic, culturally appropriate counselling for people who have experienced sexual assault and their families.
- Tjillari Justice Aboriginal Corporation and Yeddung Mura Aboriginal Corporation to continue their important work supporting individuals and families, including those who are or have been engaged with the justice system.
- Grass roots organisations to support activities that support connection to culture and mental health. This includes support for funerals and Sorry Business during the COVID-19 pandemic. Work to identify the most appropriate organisations to receive or distribute these funds will continue in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. When more information is available on how to access this funding we will let you know.

Of course, our community members and organisations are also eligible and able to access the breadth of COVID 19 support available across Canberra. Several of these are being delivered in collaboration with our organisations such as the Food Relief Network through Gugan Gulwan.

If you have issues linked to COVID-19 that we haven't covered there is also the ACT Government Helpline on 02 62077244, between the hours of 8am and 8pm (7 days a week), or go to the ACT Government COVID-19 website [www.covid19.act.gov.au](http://www.covid19.act.gov.au).

Take care of yourselves and each other over the coming weeks, if you have any topics that you need more information on please send them through to [atsieb@act.gov.au](mailto:atsieb@act.gov.au) so that we can find out more and provide you with the updated information.

***Katrina Fanning***  
***Chairperson***

***ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body***



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PROVIDING A **STRONG**  
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