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Torres Strait Islander
Elected Body

Ngunnawal Bush Healing Farm

The ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body (ATSIEB) has recently requested that the ACT Government outline what it intends to do to provide an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Drug and Alcohol Residential Rehabilitation Service in the ACT.

This request follows the confirmation by the ACT Government this week that the Ngunnawal Bush Healing Farm facility built in the Tidbinbilla Valley at a cost of \$12 million dollars, will be used to deliver a place of healing that addresses the root cause of addiction and substance abuse amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT, and not the provision of the clinical services that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community needs.

Ross Fowler, ATSIEB Chairperson, said, *“The confirmation provided by the Government has left the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community confused about the service to be provided at the Ngunnawal Bush Healing Farm and whether we will have a clinical drug and rehabilitation service here in the ACT for our people, that was originally committed to as far back as 2004”*.

“Currently we have to send our community members interstate for these services and unfortunately this just isn’t working”.

“What we want from the government on behalf of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community is a commitment to a residential drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility that provides the clinical services our community so desperately needs but that also incorporates healing services”.

The ATSIEB goes into Caretaker on Monday 15 May 2017 and had hoped to receive a response to its request prior to Caretaker.

Mr Fowler has sought a response from Minister Fitzharris, and from the ACT Health Directorate on behalf of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, but to date this has not been forthcoming.

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