

Commissioner Romlie Mokak
Productivity Commission
By email: indigenous.evaluation@pc.gov.au

17 August 2020

Dear Commissioner Mokak,

RE: Indigenous Evaluation Strategy Draft

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on the Productivity Commission's Indigenous Evaluation Strategy Draft.

The Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory (AMSANT) is the peak body for Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHSs) in the Northern Territory (NT). Established over 40 years ago, the ACCHS sector is the largest provider of primary health care to Aboriginal people across the NT, delivering more than 60 per cent of all episodes of care to Aboriginal patients in urban and remote settings. ACCHSs deliver comprehensive primary health care in an integrated, holistic and culturally secure framework that utilises a population health approach under the principles of self-determination. AMSANT provides guidance and support to ACCHSs through policy and advocacy work at both jurisdictional and national levels.

AMSANT supports the position put forward by the Coalition of Peaks (CoP) and the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) that the Indigenous Evaluation Strategy must be built on and in alignment with the new National Agreement on Closing the Gap. As such, AMSANT joins the CoP and NACCHO in withholding our support of the strategy until this alignment is demonstrated.

AMSANT echoes the points raised by both the CoP and NACCHO, emphasizing our support for the following points in particular as they bear the most relevance for our member organisations:

- Shared decision-making with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and community-controlled organisations as a core part of evaluation, consistent with priority reform area 1 of the new National Agreement on Closing the Gap
- Priority-setting and evaluation that is informed by the priority reform areas identified in the new National Agreement, and in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, rather than the proposed whole-of-government approach that leaves the onus of setting evaluation priorities in the hands of government
- Stronger commitment by government on how evaluations will be used, acknowledging the significant burden of reporting and scrutiny already placed on Aboriginal organisations, in particular the Aboriginal community controlled health services (ACCHS) that AMSANT represents.

AMSANT strongly supports NACCHO's call for genuine and formal partnership between Australian governments and Aboriginal community controlled organisations and that this must be made explicit throughout the strategy.

To discuss this submission further, please contact:

- Dr David Cooper, Manager Research Advocacy Policy,

Yours sincerely,

John Paterson
Chief Executive Officer