NATSIAACC
National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Ageing and Aged Care Council

HALLS CREEK AGED CARE COMMITMENT A STEP TOWARDS COMMUNITY-LED, CULTURALLY SAFE CARE

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ageing and Aged Care Council (NATSIAACC) welcomes the Australian Government's $42.5 million investment in a new residential Aged Care home in Halls Creek, Western Australia. Announced through a joint public statement by Minister for Aged Care and Seniors Sam Rae and Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care Rebecca White, Aged Care infrastructure investment was also acknowledged by Minister Rae during NATSIAACC's inaugural national conference in Canberra.

The investment will support Yura Yungi Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation to deliver a new 40-bed home, replacing the existing 28-bed Menkawum Ngurra Elders Residence, and providing 12 additional places.

NATSIAACC welcomes the investment in Aboriginal community-controlled Aged Care and the opportunity it presents for Elders and Older People to receive care close to family, community, culture and Country or Island Home.

NATSIAACC CEO Kim Whiteley said:

"This is an important investment, not only in Aged Care infrastructure, but in the capacity of an Aboriginal community-controlled organisation to provide care that reflects the needs and aspirations of its own community.

"Our Elders and Older People should be able to age with dignity and choice, close to family, kin and community, and remain connected to Country or Island Home. Those connections are fundamental to identity, wellbeing and quality of life.

"At our inaugural national conference, we heard clearly that culturally safe Aged Care must be shaped by the people receiving it. In Halls Creek, that means the Elders and Older People living at Menkawum Ngurra, their families and community must have genuine influence over the design of the new home and the care delivered within it.

"But investment in buildings is only part of what is needed. Culturally safe care also requires a supported workforce, sustainable operational funding and care models that recognise the importance of family, kinship, language, culture and community.

"This investment presents an opportunity to demonstrate what can be achieved when governments back Aboriginal community-controlled organisations to deliver Aged Care in ways that reflect the priorities of their Elders, Older People and communities.

"The real measure of success will not simply be the number of beds built, but whether Elders and Older People experience better care, greater choice and stronger connections to the people, places and cultures that matter to them."

NATSIAACC's position statement, *New Culturally Safe Aged Care Home Design Guidelines for First Nations Only First Step for Improved Lived Experience*, reinforces the need for Elders and Older People to shape Aged Care design and delivery, supported by the funding and systems necessary to translate cultural safety into everyday care.

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