



MEDIA STATEMENT

3 July 2020

**NACCHO says rescheduling of NAIDOC Week 2020
protects what is most precious**

The National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) Chair Donnella Mills says postponing [NAIDOC Week 2020](#) from July to November this year was a small price to pay for protecting our people and safeguarding our culture.

“What is happening in Brazil amongst their Indigenous populations is devastating to see and it could have happened to our people. Our COVID-19 sector response, ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are treated as a priority has resulted in remarkably low occurrences of COVID-19,” said Ms Mills.

“This year’s NAIDOC theme – ‘Always Was, Always Will Be’, is particularly apt and relevant in this unprecedented time and the rescheduling is aimed at protecting our Elders and those in our communities with chronic health issues from the disastrous impacts of COVID-19.

“We would like to recognise and acknowledge the work of our affiliates and our 143 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) have put in during this pandemic to protect our communities and ensure our culture will live on.”

NACCHO is insisting that we follow social distancing rules to reduce the chances of a ‘second wave’. “We are concerned about the increased COVID-19 infections numbers in Victoria and implore people to be sensible and follow the government’s health advice guidelines.

“We are not only protecting ourselves but are keeping our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture alive,” said Ms Mills.

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NACCHO is the national peak body representing 145 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations across the country on Aboriginal health and wellbeing issues. NACCHO represents over 6,000 ACCHO staff – of which 3,500 are Indigenous – and is the largest employer of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia.

Many NACCHO members have almost 50 years of experience in the delivery of comprehensive primary health care. Services are delivered through fixed, outreach and mobile clinics operating in urban, rural and remote settings across Australia.