



CLOSE THE GAP

Media Statement

Friday 12 February 2021

We're waiting but we will not be left wanting

The **Close the Gap Campaign** looks forward to seeing a comprehensive report on the refreshed targets for *Closing the Gap* by July.

The campaign notes today's announcement that the release of the Closing the Gap data has been pushed back to July in order to allow a full reporting year since the signing of the new National Agreement with the Coalition of Peaks on Closing the Gap.

The **Close the Gap Campaign** expects to see the Prime Minister and Minister Wyatt release the data in July, including a full analysis of what governments plan to do to reform and address the ongoing inequality.

"While we understand the need for a change in timeframe to allow a year since the signing of the new National Agreement on Closing the Gap, this cannot be used as an excuse to kick the can down the road," said **Close the Gap Campaign** Co-Chairs, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner June Oscar AO and National Association of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners CEO Karl Briscoe.

"By July, we expect to see a comprehensive report outlining not only the data, but the governments' understanding of that data. Most importantly, we expect to hear what governments plan to do about addressing those targets.

"First Nations people have waited many years for governments to give us a seat at the decision-making table, and many years for something to be done to address the egregious health inequities our people suffer in our own country. We will wait another five months."

In July 2020, a new National Agreement on Closing the Gap was signed between COAG and the Coalition of Peaks. The **Close the Gap Campaign** welcomes this important step forwards.

However, now that partnership is in place, Australian governments must commit to urgent funding of Indigenous healthcare and the critical and overdue systemic reform.

The Close the Gap Campaign will release its own report on time on National Close the Gap Day – Thursday 18 March 2021.

For more information on the Close the Gap Campaign, and to register your own Covid-Safe event for Close the Gap Day, visit <https://antar.org.au/close-gap>

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Notes for editors:

The Close the Gap campaign is an independent, Indigenous-led campaign that calls on political leaders from all levels of government to take action on health and education equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

It is separate to *Closing the Gap*, which is a government strategy.

The Close the Gap (CTG) Campaign was launched in 2006 to address the unacceptable gap in life expectancy and other health indicators between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians.

The Campaign is made up of 52 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous health and advocacy organisations.

More than 200,000 Australians have signed a pledge supporting the Campaign.