



Australian Government
Indigenous Business Australia



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MEDIA RELEASE

Health service secured for West Sydney Indigenous Community

A partnership between Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) the Department of Health and WentWest, the Western Sydney Primary Health Network has secured vital health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the western suburbs of Sydney.

Following the decision of creditors to wind-up the former Aboriginal health service provider in western Sydney, IBA stepped in to purchase the former provider's medical centre building at Mt Druitt to ensure it continued to be available for the long-term provision of health services to the Aboriginal community.

The property that housed the centre was purchased by IBA's *Indigenous Economic Development Trust* which has allowed the retention of a building which is held in high regard by the Aboriginal people of western Sydney and provision of health services without any break.

The Department of Health stated that the key concern for all parties involved was to ensure continuity of front-line services for vulnerable clients, including patients with mental health issues.

'A range of services are being provided from the medical centre including comprehensive primary health care, child and maternal health and dental services.

'It remains a key objective that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in western Sydney to have access to high quality culturally appropriate health services.'

WentWest is responsible for the day to day operation of the Sydney West Aboriginal Health Service and has taken on this role during a period of transition for Aboriginal health in western Sydney following the cessation of business by the former Aboriginal Medical Service Western Sydney in August 2015.

WentWest's responsibilities will extend to the end of 2016 during which time, the Commonwealth will undertake a process to appoint a permanent provider of Aboriginal health services in the area.

Mr Kmet, CEO of WentWest said it has been critically important to ensure a strong level of continuity in service to Aboriginal people during a time of change and that has been our focus.

'In this regard both continuity of staff and partnership with a number of organisations including IBA has been quite critical.

'We have found IBA to be professional, flexible and responsive and look forward to continuing to work with them so Aboriginal people in western Sydney have access to world class health facilities', Mr Kmet said.

IBA CEO Chris Fry said that it is fantastic to be able to work together with both organisations to achieve such an important outcome in securing health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in western Sydney.

Images can be made available on request.

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