

Reform or Reframe ?

***Indigenous Health Equality is
central to a future Australia***

**Australian Health Care Reform Alliance Summit
Melbourne
3 March 2009**

Romlie Mokak

Appetite for Reform

- Protection, assimilation, self determination, mutual obligation
- COAG Reform – Agreements, Partnerships
- National Health Reviews – Health and Hospitals Reform, Primary Care, Prevention etc..
- Indigenous Affairs
 - Constitutional Reform
 - National Indigenous Representative Body
 - COAG Closing the Gap
 - Indigenous Health Equality Campaign
- Menu, ingredients, kitchen, cook

Indigenous Health Equality

- 2007

- Indigenous Health Equality Campaign – April 2007

- COAG Closing the Gap – December 2007

- 2008

- National Apology – February 2008

- National Indigenous Health Equality Summit – March 2008

- Close the Gap Statement of Intent – March 2008

- National Indigenous Health Equality Targets Report – July 2008

- Close the Gap Workshop – November 2008

- COAG Meeting – November 2008

- 2009

- Prime Ministers Report Card – February 2009

- National Healing Foundation – February 2009

- Indigenous COAG – mid year?

COAG

- COAG agreed the 17 year gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians must be closed
- **COAG agreed to a partnership between all levels of government to work with Indigenous communities** to achieve the target of closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage
- COAG targets:
 - close the life expectancy gap within a generation
 - halve the mortality gap for children under five within a decade
 - access to early childhood education for all Indigenous four year olds in remote communities within five years
 - halve the gap in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade
 - halve the gap for Indigenous year 12 retention rates by 2020
 - halve the gap in employment within a decade

Partnership – Prime Minister

- Central to the Governments strategy is a **new partnership** with Indigenous Australians, based on mutual respect, mutual resolve and mutual responsibility.
Feb 2009
- Today's apology, however inadequate, is aimed at **righting past wrongs**.
- It is also aimed at **building a bridge** between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians—a bridge **based on a real respect** rather than a thinly veiled contempt.
- Our challenge for the future is to now cross that bridge and, in so doing, to **embrace a new partnership between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians...**
Feb 2008

Partnership – Statement of Intent

- This is a statement of intent – between the Government of Australia and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of Australia, supported by non-Indigenous Australians and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous health organisations – to **work together** to achieve equality in health status and life expectancy between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians by the year 2030.
- Crucial to ensuring equal access to health services is ensuring that **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are actively involved in the design, delivery, and control of these services.**
- To ensuring the **full participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their representative bodies** in all aspects of addressing their health needs.
- To **respect and promote the rights** of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including by ensuring that health services are available, appropriate, accessible, affordable, and of good quality.
- To measure, monitor, and report on **our joint efforts**, in accordance with benchmarks and targets, to ensure that we are progressively realising our shared ambitions.

Act Now

I don't hold the present generation responsible for the past, but I will hold it responsible for the present and the future because it is its responsibility and mine to change things for the better.

Oodgeroo Noonuccal

- **Achieving health equity within a generation is achievable, it is the right thing to do, and now is the right time to do it.**
- **Three principles of action:**
 - Improve the **conditions of daily life** – the circumstances in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age.
 - Tackle the **inequitable distribution** of power, money, and resources – the structural drivers of those conditions of daily life...
 - **Measure** the problem, **evaluate** action, expand the **knowledge** base, develop a **workforce** that is trained in the social determinants of health, and raise public awareness about the social determinants of health.

WHO Commission on Social Determinants

Engaging with Indigenous communities

- **A Human Rights-Based Approach** to Development
- Mechanisms for **representation and engagement**
- **Design, negotiation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation**
- **Capacity-building**

HREOC

National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission Interim Report

- Going beyond (again) just reporting what's already well known
- Reform agenda must have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as central, not peripheral
- Business as usual will not deliver – must have greater effort and investment to close the gap
- Capacity development must be a given
- Must measure progress (or lack thereof)
- Workforce development and distribution
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Authority – clarify roles/functions
- Accountability at all levels/across the system
- A long term National Plan

Black from the Edge

International Year of the Child

Australians just **love** breaking records

Maybe that's why we've got the highest

Aboriginal infant mortality rate in the world.

Wouldn't it be great if

Australians held the record for **love**.

Kevin Gilbert