

Media Release

The Hon Martin Foley MP
Minister for Health
Minister for Ambulance Services
Minister for Equality



Friday, 4 February 2022

CLOSING THE CANCER CARE GAP FOR ALL VICTORIANS

A new Aboriginal-led strategy to improve the experiences for Aboriginal Victorians who sadly may be affected by cancer will be developed to improve outcomes and ensure care is culturally sensitive.

Minister for Health Martin Foley today announced the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) will develop the strategy to help 'Close the Care Gap' - the theme of this year's World Cancer Day.

The Andrews Labor Government will invest more than \$1 million to provide extra staff, support and resources to VACCHO to develop the *Victorian Aboriginal Cancer Journey Strategy*.

The strategy will be developed in partnership with organisations, such as the Victorian Integrated Cancer Services, the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre, health services and Regional Cancer Centres.

VACCHO will work with Aboriginal Victorians who have lived cancer experience and their families, health professionals, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, the Department of Health and the cancer care system.

This important long-term planning will advance self-determination by developing local approaches which combine culturally appropriate ways to improve cancer outcomes with the best available evidence.

The new strategy will work in conjunction with the *Victorian cancer plan 2020-2024* which aims to achieve equitable and better cancer outcomes for all Victorians.

In Victoria, the five most common cancers are prostate, breast, bowel and lung cancer, and melanoma. Participating in cancer screening and finding cancer early, before any symptoms are noticed gives the best chance of survival.

Quote attributable to Minister for Health Martin Foley

"We're ensuring Victorians have access to high-quality cancer care regardless of who they are, where they live or what resources they have."

Quote attributable to Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Gabrielle Williams

"We're partnering with Victoria's peak body for Aboriginal health and wellbeing to ensure that Aboriginal Victorians can access culturally safe and appropriate cancer care across their whole cancer journey."

Quotes attributable to Jill Gallagher AO, CEO of the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation

"Community-led strategies are paramount to closing the cancer care gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples."

"VACCHO continues to work with community members with lived cancer experience and key stakeholders to lead sustainable, self-determined, culturally safe cancer efforts along the entire cancer journey."

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