



**Two Ways Together
Regional Action Plan
Central Coast Region
July 2007 – June 2009**



1 May 2007

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1 Purpose of the Plan

This Regional Action Plan focuses on actions to improve the well being of Aboriginal people; the identified actions are cross-agency (i.e. require the participation of more than one agency) or are genuinely new.

The Plan has been developed by the *Two Ways Together* Regional Engagement Group, co-chaired by the Regional Manager of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Chair of the Central Coast Aboriginal Community Services Action Committee (CCACSAC). The Plan is a joint agreement between the key parties in the region who are members of the Regional Engagement Group.

The Plan identifies:

- a small number of significant goals for the region over a rolling two-year cycle, commencing 1 July, 2007 (to be reviewed and updated annually);
- the lead agency to lead the work against each goal, in collaboration with other agencies and local Aboriginal peak bodies;
- priority actions and responsible agencies to achieve progress towards the goals within the timeframe of the plan;
- the barriers to success where interagency projects or existing initiatives are not progressing as intended against the goals in the plan
- the need for new resources where there are gaps in service delivery; and
- monitoring and reporting progress of implementation of the priority actions and performance against the goals. Monitoring and reporting arrangements are included in Section 7.

The Plan is flexible enabling it to be adapted to the changing needs and circumstances of the region.

2 Goals

The Regional Engagement Group has identified three immediate goals for the next two years (July 2007 to June 2009):

- Community needs are accurately assessed
- Successful and meaningful education for Aboriginal children, and
- Improved prevention and access to treatment for chronic diseases.

Community forums have also identified employment as a priority for action, particularly in regards to employment for young people. The REG will develop a goal and actions around employment as part of its ongoing work.

There are two targets specifically for Aboriginal people in the NSW State Plan which must be addressed in this Regional Plan:

- *Close the gap between Aboriginal and all students in primary school numeracy and literacy rates by 2016*
- *Over 5 years, reduce by 15 per cent hospital admissions for Aboriginal people who have conditions that can be appropriately treated in the home*

These two targets are largely within the core business of the Department of Education and Training and the Northern Sydney-Central Coast Area Health Service respectively. The Regional Engagement Group will be a forum for monitoring and reporting progress against these two goals and will develop any supplementary programs to support the core business activities of DET and the Area Health Service as required. Table 1 shows which goals in this Regional Action Plan link to the State Plan targets.

The State Plan goal for Aboriginal Health is to be amended to better reflect the health issues that relate to Aboriginal communities and discussions are currently underway between NSW Health the NSW Department of

Aboriginal Affairs. The REG will be notified when the new goal is resolved (expected to be finalised in the second half of 2007) and will be asked to review the health goals in this plan at that time.

Table 1 – Link between the State Plan targets and the Regional Plan goals

State Plan targets	Relevant goals in this Plan	Comment
Close the gap between Aboriginal and all students in primary school numeracy and literacy rates by 2016	Successful and meaningful education for Aboriginal children	This goal covers two aspects – ‘successful’ education relates to improved performance; ‘meaningful’ education means an education experience that engages Aboriginal children and also promotes Aboriginal culture and identity. The REG identified that both of these aspects are required to work together to improve the educational outcomes for Aboriginal children.
Over 5 years, reduce by 15 per cent hospital admissions for Aboriginal people who have conditions that can be appropriately treated in the home	Improved prevention and access to treatment for chronic diseases	The Regional Engagement Group identified that this target related to chronic health issues, such as cardiovascular and kidney diseases, diabetes and obesity. Action in this area will be in prevention programs to promote better nutrition, exercise and earlier access to treatment before illnesses lead to hospitalisation.

3 Context

The Central Coast region covers the Wyong and Gosford Local Government Areas. The region is bounded by the Hawkesbury River to the south, Mangrove Mountain and Yarramolong Valley to the west and Lake Macquarie to the north.

There are 4,748 Aboriginal people in the region (2001 Census – note potential underreporting), or approximately 1.7% of the total population. Traditional lands in the Central Coast Region fall within the Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council boundaries. The DAA Regional Office is in Sydney, located in Head Office, which also serves Greater Western Sydney and Coastal Sydney.

Partnership Communities

The NSW Government’s CEO’s Group on Aboriginal Affairs has committed their agencies to work closely with Aboriginal communities in a number of locations around NSW. These locations are called Partnership Communities and they are the local level of *Two Ways Together*.

Government agencies and the community will work closely, in partnership, to identify the community’s priorities, strengths and needs and jointly develop and implement an action plan. DAA will work closely with local community leadership groups and help establish groups where they don’t already exist. Community leadership groups will be key partners with government agencies and jointly drive this work as it progresses.

The Central Coast region is considered to be one partnership community and work will start early in 2007/08. Implementation planning will be driven by the REG in the last quarter of 2006/07.

4 Actions to achieve the goals

Goal 1: Community needs are accurately assessed Population: All Aboriginal people	
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs analysis complete Needs analysis accurately reflects community views
Baselines	<p>Needs analysis – no baseline</p> <p>Evaluation of needs analysis once it is complete – ask community members how accurate it is</p>
Background to the baselines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited structures in place to allow for representation of community views Concern that investment in governance and representative structures in Murdi Paaki as part of the COAG trial has not been replicated in this region (concerns arise from perceived inequity and lost opportunity to build relationships) Implications of changes over the last five years (dissolution of ATSIC; creation of ICCs; <i>Two Ways Together</i> commitments; amendments to Land Council legislation) are still being resolved within communities and Government agencies Some of the issues are beyond the scope of the REG (e.g. if there were consideration of new representative political structures for communities), and the role of the REG in both leading some initiatives and supporting others is still evolving
Lead	Central Coast Aboriginal Community Services Action Committee (CCACSAC)
Partners and roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All peak community groups in the region – AECG; AJAC; AbSec; AH&MRC; AHO Regional Advisory Committee; Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council Indigenous Coordination Centre – active role in engaging with communities; links to Australian Government agencies DAA – support in scoping needs analysis NSW Premier’s Department – links to NSW Government agencies NSW DoCS Communities Division (<i>Families First</i> and <i>Aboriginal Child, Youth and Family</i> strategies)
Possible actions	<p><i>1. Review community needs</i></p> <p>CCACSAC to work with DAA, ICC and Premier’s Department to scope out a project to analyse the needs for the region as expressed by the community. Steps after initial scoping:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis to be completed by September 2007, and report to the REG. REG to review outputs of the needs analysis and consider implications (may include new issues for this Plan) REG will continuously review its role to ensure it is effectively supporting existing systems and providing a lead role where appropriate <p>Budget: To be scoped Measures: Analysis completed REG identifies goals and actions based on information from the needs analysis</p>
Data development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey of sample of community people
Links	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Aboriginal Land Council Business Planning process (model may be suitable to needs analysis) COAG trials; ICC implementation; <i>Two Ways Together</i> consultation processes.

Goal 2: Successful and meaningful education

Population: School aged children

Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retention rates Yr 3 literacy/numeracy K-2 reading performance Degree of support for Aboriginal culture by Principals Community connection to schools (parents/carers)
Baselines	DET to provide updated data for the Central Coast
Background to the baseline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct cost to families limits attendance (although DET is providing some free pre-schools) Limited knowledge in communities of the availability of pre-schools and benefits of attending Limited range of services/options Early childhood development is an important contributor to overall development
Lead	NSW Department of Education & Training
Partners and roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICC – links to Australian Government agencies AECG – community input DEST – funding for school activities Secondary and Primary Principals Associations – links to school system ACYFS (NSW DoCS Communities Division) Area Health Service DAA Central Coast Aboriginal Community Services Action Committee
Options	<p><i>1. Develop a proposal for Aboriginal Learning Centres</i> Develop a proposal for 2-3 Aboriginal Learning Centres on the Central Coast which will be connection points within schools for Aboriginal people. Centres to include homework activities; links to parents/carers; cultural resource for teachers. CCACSAC to lead, supported by DET. Budget: None initially required – budget for centres to be scoped as part of the proposal Measures: Proposal to be scoped by end May for review by the REG in June Proposal to be finalised by March 2008 Centres established by 2009</p> <p><i>2. Improve connection of pre-school aged children to school</i> ACYFS has established a Community Health Day which provides health checks for children starting school (dental, otitis media, general health). The Community Health Day allows for the families to be provided with a link to the local school. The health check means that any medical issues can be identified and the children can be referred for treatment before school starts. The REG will explore options for rolling out the health checks across the region. Budget: None initially – scoping to identify budget Measures: Scoping paper to be complete by the end of May for review by the REG in June Number of children checked before starting school Number and percentage of schools with health check programs</p> <p><i>3. Improve level of otitis media screening</i> Area Health Service, DET and AMS otitis media coordinators to share information (non-personal) to ensure all Aboriginal children are identified for otitis media screening Budget: None in addition to existing resources Measures: # and % of Aboriginal preschool aged children who are screened each year</p> <p><i>4. Address education issues identified through community forums</i> Community forums have identified the need for: an agreement on the implementation of the recommendations of the Aboriginal Education Review; greater participation by Aboriginal people in decision-making and recruitment and in schools; and a gifted and talented program for Aboriginal students. REG to provide a forum for initial scoping of responses to these concerns.</p>

Budget: None in addition to existing resources
Measures: Action Plan developed by the REG by June

Data development – Review DET data
– ACYFS to report attendance and outcome data from Community Health days

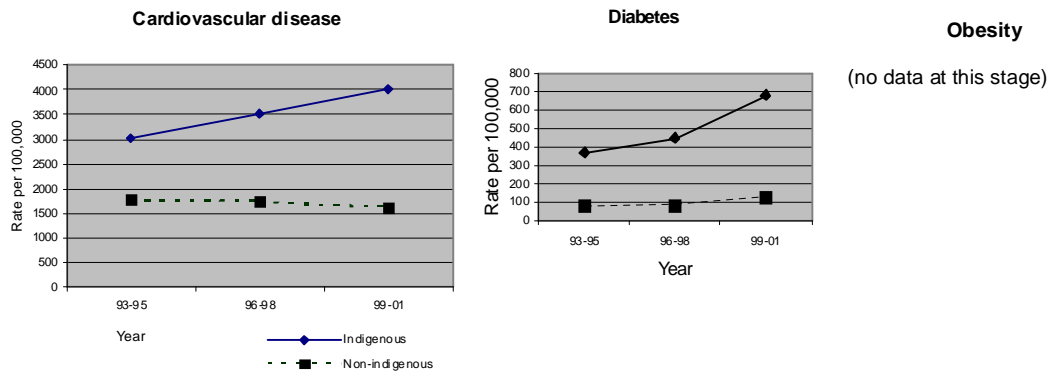
Links *Families First Strategy; Aboriginal Education Strategy; Aboriginal Child, Youth and Family Strategy; Eleanor Duncan AMS - Wyong*

Goal 3: Improved prevention and access to treatment of chronic diseases

Population: Aboriginal people at risk

Indicators — Rates of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and obesity

Baselines



Background to the baselines

- Lifestyle factors are impacting on individual health – inadequate diet and exercise are generating population level results, expressed as higher rates of heart disease, diabetes, obesity and kidney disease
- High rates of smoking in the Aboriginal population compared to the non-Aboriginal population
- Current health check processes are including only a sub-set of the possible population
- Community has identified a lack of strategies to address health issues, particularly drug and alcohol abuse

Lead

Northern Sydney/Central Coast Area Health Service

Partners and roles

- ICC Manager – link to Australian Government agencies
- Australian Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA) – funding for prevention programs
- Department of Sport & Recreation – activity programs
- AMS – medical services – promotion of prevention activities
- Division of GPs – promotion of prevention activities

Options

1. Improve referral processes, particularly by linking to community representatives

Area Health Service has health check systems in place to promote prevention and early treatment. However, these tend to be attended by the same small group of people. AHS to expand its promotion activities, particularly to use the REG as a point of contact to promote health programs

Budget: None required initially

Measures: Number of events and programs promoted through the REG
Number of attendees at health events and programs

2. Scope a prevention program promoting diet and exercise

Scope a broad prevention program for Aboriginal people in the region, particularly the capacity to deliver joint programs across key agencies (AHS with DoHA, Sport and Recreation, AMS) and address any gaps

Budget: None required initially

Measures: Initial report to REG meeting in June
Number of events and programs in the region

3. Develop a proposal for a men's health centre

Scope the options for a centre on the Central Coast dedicated to men's health and possibly accommodation (include a specific component on drug and alcohol services and support) (CCACSAC to lead, in consultation with AHS, ICC, AMS)

Budget: None required initially
Measures: Proposal scoped by June 2007
Proposal developed by March 2008, with key milestones

Data development – Significant lag in data (current to 2001 only) – needs updating
– Data is for an area larger than this region and needs to be broken down to this region.

Links Regional Aboriginal Health Strategy (still being developed); AMS service agreement; *Families First*

5 Monitoring and Reporting

- The Regional Engagement Group (REG) Chairs will maintain ongoing contact with the project manager in each lead agency to informally monitor progress and provide support
- The lead agency will provide informal progress reports to the quarterly meetings of the REG
- The lead agency will provide formal progress reports to the REG each six months (30 June and 15 December), which will form part of the overall progress report to DAA Secretariat
- The REG Chair will provide an overall formal progress report to the Regional Coordination Management Group and the DAA Secretariat each six months (mid July and mid January).

6 The Regional Engagement Group and its role

The Regional Engagement Group (REG) is co-chaired by the Regional Manager of the NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs and the Chair of the Central Coast Aboriginal Community Services Advisory Committee, and comprises:

- Manager of the Australian Government Indigenous Coordination Centre;
- NSW Premier's Department Regional Coordinator;
- Peak community groups:
 - AbSec (Aboriginal Child, Family and Community Care Secretariat – peak community organisation which advises the NSW Government on child protection and out-of-home care issues);
 - Aboriginal Education Consultative Group;
 - Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee;
 - Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council;
 - Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council; and the
 - Regional Aboriginal Housing Committee of the Aboriginal Housing Office.

Other representatives will participate in the REG from time to time, particularly where an agency is leading a key issue, e.g. Department of Education and Training (literacy and numeracy) and Northern Sydney-Central Coast Area Health Service (reducing preventable hospital admissions) are currently participating in the REG.

The role of the Regional Engagement Group is to:

- improve government service provision across the region through the development of Regional Action Plans
- oversight Partnership Community work in the region, including the provision of advice on the location of Partnership Communities and oversight of the development and implementation of Partnership Community Action Plans
- respond to priorities identified by the CEO Group on Aboriginal Affairs
- provide advice on regional service delivery and policy issues to the CEO Group on Aboriginal Affairs
- consolidate six monthly reports from NSW and Australian Government agencies and report to the TWTCC and CEO Group on Aboriginal Affairs.

The REG may also act as an 'expert adviser' to the Regional Coordination Management Group in scoping culturally appropriate approaches to consulting with Aboriginal communities in the region.

7 Contacts

Agency/ address	Contact person
NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs	Kristy Masella Regional Manager kristy.masella@daa.nsw.gov.au 02 9219 0734 Nola Williams Project Officer Nola.Williams@daa.nsw.gov.au 02 9219 0735
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Central Coast Aboriginal Community Services Advisory Committee (CCACSAC)	Mick Pittman Chair mpittman@exemail.com.au 02 4321 5052 Bob Morgan Deputy Chair murri@bigpond.net.au 02 4388 9040
GOAL 2: Successful and meaningful education	
NSW Department of Education & Training	David Cullen Director David.cullen@det.nsw.edu.au 02 4348 9100 Kelly Godden ACLO Kelly.godden@det.nsw.gov.au 02 4348 9123
GOAL 3: Improved prevention and access to treatment of chronic diseases	
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