



*Vibrant, healthy,
self-determining
Aboriginal communities*



VACCHO

2013-17 Strategic Plan



Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation Inc.

Aboriginal cultural qualities

Quality workforce

Quality services

Quality infrastructure

Quality policy and advocacy

Quality partnership and networks

Sustainability

This Strategic Plan is the result of consultation from Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation's (VACCHO) members, board and staff.

The Plan establishes VACCHO's focus and direction for 2013-17 and outlines key performance indicators.

VACCHO is at heart and by constitution an Aboriginal community organisation. Our Aboriginality is intrinsic to our identity, essential to our communities and part of our world. Aboriginal culture is ancient and contemporary, dynamic, strong, vulnerable and valuable. Our Members' cultural identities are an important source of strength and this informs our ways of working and our integrity.

An understanding of Aboriginal culture is important to partners who wish to engage with us effectively and as equals. We view cultural identity as part of our strength as representatives of the Aboriginal community. Embracing our culture and our identity serves to strengthen inclusion, understanding and health.

Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) have a proud history as sustainable, grassroots organisations that assist in building community capacity for self-determination. ACCHOs are committed to assisting every Aboriginal person to realise their full potential as a human being and as a member of their community.

VACCHO believes that each Aboriginal community needs its own community based, locally owned, culturally appropriate and adequately resourced primary health care facility."

VACCHO is committed to providing the highest quality service to its members, partners and stakeholders and to continually review and improve its services.

In respect to the goals and principles of community control within the Victorian Aboriginal health sector, it is essential to ensure that the services VACCHO provides meet the needs of its Members, stakeholders and ultimately the community which it serves.

VACCHO systematically builds upon successful ventures and regularly assess internal systems to ensure continuous quality improvement. VACCHO has adopted the ISO 9001 quality improvement standard as its accreditation benchmark.



Our Vision

Vibrant, healthy, self determining Aboriginal communities.

Our Mission

Lead and advocate for the self determination, equality and holistic health for Aboriginal people in Victoria.

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Our values and principles

Empowerment

We ensure that lines of communication are established and maintained so that information, knowledge and practices are transferred effectively and capacity building of the workforce is improved and increased.

Respect

We treat each other fairly, value ideas and opinions and encourage grievances to be aired and mediated. We value our relationships, accept responsibility and fulfill any agreements we make.

Confidentiality

We build trust with our Members and stakeholders by respecting confidentiality.

Teamwork and collaboration

Our staff work co-operatively in teams and share knowledge and skills within and between work units. We work closely with our Members and other stakeholders to build strong, supportive and sustainable partnerships.

Integrity

We act ethically and professionally and in line with workplace policy and procedures. We imbed cultural integrity in our practices to demonstrate compassion and respect for our Aboriginal stakeholders. All meetings commence with a Welcome to Country / Acknowledgement of Country. We include our culture in everything we do.

Commitment

We continue to advocate for sustainability and enhancement of our Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services to ensure health equality for all Aboriginal peoples of Victoria.

Compassion

We acknowledge the role that past government policies played in creating injustice and wrongdoing against Aboriginal peoples. We help to set things right by assisting Aboriginal people to navigate the health system and so achieve a better quality of life.

Optimism

We endeavor to:

- speak good words
- hear good words
- see good things
- think good things
- achieve good things.

We believe that *The Apology* and the *Statement of Intent* are significant steps on a journey of collaboration between non-Aboriginal people and Aboriginal people working together to achieve health equality.



Aboriginal community controlled health care

Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) have a proud history as sustainable, democratic, grassroots organisations that assist in building community capacity for self-determination and direct provision of community services. ACCHOs are committed to assisting every Aboriginal person to realise their full potential as a human being and as a member of their community.

The imposition of structures without community control as a central tenet has been shown to fail. As Aboriginal Australians we are best placed to decide and implement the programs and services that work for us.

VACCHO believes that each Aboriginal community needs its own community based, locally owned, culturally appropriate and adequately resourced primary health care facility.

We view cultural identity as part of our strength as representatives of the Aboriginal community. Embracing Aboriginal cultural elements as part of our identity serves to strengthen inclusion, understanding and health.

Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service' means an Incorporated Aboriginal organisation which has been initiated by a local Aboriginal community and based in that local Aboriginal community. The Service is governed by an Aboriginal body which is elected by the local Aboriginal community and it delivers a holistic and culturally appropriate health service to the community which controls it.

VACCHO is committed to maximising the capacity of Victoria's Aboriginal community to participate in decision-making that affect improvements in Aboriginal health and wellbeing.



What we do

VACCHO is Victoria's peak representative Aboriginal health body and champions community control and health equality for Aboriginal communities. We are a centre of expertise, policy advice, training, innovation and leadership in Aboriginal health. VACCHO advocates for the health equality and optimum health of all Aboriginal people in Victoria.

VACCHO was established in 1996 and represents 27 Members. VACCHO is accountable to the Aboriginal community through our Membership. The majority of ACCHOs are multi-functional services with health as a key component of their role, although some solely specialise in health service delivery. By joining together under VACCHO's umbrella, ACCHOs gain strength, share knowledge and speak with a united voice.

VACCHO builds upon the capacity of Members and advocates on their behalf to ensure the sustainability of Aboriginal community controlled health services. Membership capacity is built through strengthening support networks and partnerships, increasing professional development opportunities and developing leadership capability and good governance. Advocacy is carried out at state and national levels within the public, private and community sectors, on all issues relating to Aboriginal health, with the aim of improving services to Aboriginal people and achieving health equality.

VACCHO is governed by a Board of Directors elected from the Membership to represent ACCHOs across Victoria.

Nationally, VACCHO represents the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health sector through shared membership of the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO).

VACCHO advocates for the health and well-being of all Aboriginal people in Victoria according to the Aboriginal definition of health. 'Aboriginal health' means not just the physical well-being of an individual but refers to the social, emotional and cultural wellbeing of the whole community, in which each individual is able to achieve his or her full potential as a human being, thereby bringing about the total wellbeing of their community. It is a whole-of-life view that includes the cyclical concept of life-death-life .

VACCHO's role as Victoria's peak agency includes:

- identifying the Aboriginal communities' health needs and priorities through consultation and evidence-based research and taking steps to address them
- promoting and developing comprehensive and culturally appropriate primary health care services for our Aboriginal communities and capacity building for Community Controlled Health Services to assist service delivery
- linking the community controlled health sector with government and non-government health agencies
- advocating for the health of every Aboriginal person in Victoria
- the inclusion of Aboriginal culture in elements affecting our community and our services.

VACCHO will explore every opportunity to develop ways to ensure it continues as a sustainable organisation.



Our Membership

- Aboriginal Community Elders Service
- Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service
- Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-operative
- Bendigo and District Aboriginal Co-operative
- Cummeragunja Housing and Development Aboriginal Corporation
- Dandenong and District Aborigines Co-operative Ltd
- Budja Budja Aboriginal Co-operative
- Dhuawurd Wurrung Elderly and Community Health Service
- Njernda Aboriginal Corporation
- Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-operative
- Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative
- Gunditjmara Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd
- Healesville Indigenous Community Service Association
- Kirrae Health Services Inc.
- Lakes Entrance Aboriginal Health Association
- Lake Tyers Health and Children's Services
- Melbourne Aboriginal Youth, Sports and Recreation Co-operative
- Mallee District Aboriginal Services
- Moogji Aboriginal Council East Gippsland Inc.
- Mungabareena Aboriginal Co-operative
- Murray Valley Aboriginal Co-operative
- Ngwala Willumbong Co-operative
- Ramahyuck and District Aboriginal Corporation
- Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd
- Victorian Aboriginal Health Service
- Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative
- Winda Mara Aboriginal Corporation



Our Board of Directors 2014



Jason B. King

Chairperson

Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Co-operative

Jason has extensive experience in Aboriginal Health and joined the Board in 2009. Jason was elected Chairperson in 2011.

Aboriginal Affairs for over 40 years and brings with her extensive knowledge of community and Government sectors. She became a VACCHO Board Member in 2014.



Kevin Williams

Board Member

Njernda Aboriginal Corporation

Kevin Williams is a Waradjuri man and has been an active member and worker in the Echuca Aboriginal community for many years. Kevin is also the Chairperson of Njernda Aboriginal Corporation and was elected onto the VACCHO Board in 2013.



Andrew Gardiner

Board Member

Dandenong and District Aborigines Co-operative Ltd. (DDACL)

Andrew has over six years experience in Aboriginal Health and is currently the CEO of DDACL. Andrew joined the VACCHO Board in

2008. Andrew was elected Vice Chairperson in 2009 and then Chairperson in 2010.



Daphne Yarram

Board Member

Ramahyuck and District Aboriginal Corporation

Daphne has 25 years experience working in the Victorian Aboriginal Community in various positions. Daphne joined the Board in 2012.



Suzie Squires

Board Member

Lake Tyers Health and Children's Service

Suzie has worked in partnership with a consultant on the Koolin Balit Governance and Youth Leadership Project which will provide the community of East Gippsland with access to Governance training (Workshop and certificate level) as well as implementing a leadership project for youth and Indigenous staff.



Marcus Clarke

Board Member

Gunditjmara Aboriginal Co-operative Ltd.

Marcus is the CEO of Gunditjmara Aboriginal Co-operative and has been a Board Member of Gunditjmara for eight years and Chairperson for two of those. He joined the VACCHO Board in 2012.



Hillary Saunders

Board Member

Hillary has been working in



Our strategic priorities

VACCHO is committed to providing the highest quality service to its Members, partners and stakeholders through the continuous review and improvement of services. In respect to the goals and principles of community control within the Victorian Aboriginal health sector, it is essential to ensure that the services VACCHO provides meets the needs of its Members, stakeholders and ultimately the community which it serves.

This five year strategic plan outlines VACCHO's strategic priorities for achieving improved health and life expectancy

Our strategic objectives

outcomes for Aboriginal Victorians.

The sustainability of VACCHO is underpinned by the strategic objectives, with a commitment to:

- retain and grow the level of commitment from Government
- explore business opportunities for the future growth of VACCHO.



Our strategic objectives

Aboriginal cultural qualities

Goal 1

To identify and implement in the daily operations of VACCHO a range of activities which express the diverse cultures of Victoria's Aboriginal communities.

Rationale

We are at heart and by constitution an Aboriginal community organisation. Our Aboriginality is intrinsic to our identity, essential to our communities and part of our world. Aboriginal culture is ancient and contemporary, dynamic, strong, vulnerable and valuable. Our Members' cultural identities are an important source of strength and this informs our ways of working and our integrity.

An understanding of Aboriginal culture is important to partners who wish to engage with us effectively and as equals. We view cultural identity as part of our strength as representatives of the Aboriginal community. Embracing our culture and our identity serves to strengthen inclusion, understanding and health.

Quality workforce

Goal 2

To assist the development of a creative, knowledgeable, skilled, experienced and committed workforce of employees and voluntary governing bodies in Aboriginal community controlled and mainstream organisations including the public service, non-government organisations and private enterprise.

Rationale

Delivering quality health outcomes for Aboriginal people requires a quality workforce. A quality workforce demonstrates creativity, knowledge, experience, skills,

cultural sensitivity and commitment. The Aboriginal community controlled health sector has extensive knowledge and experience in service development and delivery. However, a quality workforce needs the latest information and the best resourcing and support. As the peak body for the Aboriginal health sector, VACCHO advocates for and provides culturally appropriate education, training and professional development opportunities for Members and mainstream service providers.

Quality services

Goal 3

To ensure that VACCHO's services meet the needs of Members, stakeholders and communities, VACCHO seeks to sustain and build upon the capacity of Members to achieve their potential in the business of delivering services to the Aboriginal community. We seek to influence all providers of programs designed to address health needs and the social determinants of health to effectively deliver services to Aboriginal people in a manner which is culturally appropriate.

Rationale

VACCHO is committed to providing our Members, partners and stakeholders with the highest quality, culturally appropriate services. Given the goals and principles of community control in Aboriginal health, it is essential that VACCHO's activities are initiated in consultation with the Aboriginal stakeholders and communities we serve and that feedback mechanisms are in place to inform service development and improvements.

VACCHO supports a range of professional networks operating within our Membership to ensure they have the latest information and can contribute in a strategic and coordinated way to achieving Aboriginal health equality. Membership networks include: Koori



Maternity Services, Social and Emotional Wellbeing workers, Practice Managers, CEOs and Hospital Liaison Officers. VACCHO is committed to self-reflective practice which engages with our Members and ensures quality results.

Quality infrastructure

Goal 4

To secure the human and capital resources necessary to maintain and enhance the activities of VACCHO and our Member organisations.

Rationale

The best capital and human resources enables VACCHO and our Members to build those quality relationships and activities within communities and with partners which are vital for improving Aboriginal health and achieving health equality.

VACCHO advocates for appropriate infrastructure and professional development and works with our Members to further develop their capacity in the business of delivering services to the Aboriginal community.

VACCHO also works with and advocates to mainstream services to focus their efforts and attention and to improve their capacity to partner with, and deliver services to, Aboriginal people.

Quality advocacy and policy

Goal 5

To influence government policy and stakeholders to effectively address the health needs of Aboriginal people in Victoria.

Rationale

Self-determination demands that Aboriginal people and their representative bodies are able to participate fully in making decisions which affect them. VACCHO is uniquely placed to engage, advise and influence government policy makers, funding bodies and other stakeholders and partners to consider how health services are developed and provided to the Aboriginal community. We remain alert to current and emerging priorities, ensuring we are positioned to provide considered leadership and response. We support Member involvement in the process of policy development by provision to Members of information and advice fostering the development of Member consensus.

Quality partnerships and networks

Goal 6

To develop and enhance partnerships and networks with key organisations to improve the accessibility and quality of health services and programs for Aboriginal people.

Rationale

Health sector action alone will not close the health gap as health outcomes for Aboriginal people in Victoria are significantly affected by socio-economic, environmental, cultural, behavioural and political determinants. A coordinated response across sectors is needed to address the social determinants that impact on health. These include health, disability, justice, education, employment, business, housing, environment, family, and services for children, youth and elders.

Building productive relationships and partnerships with communities and within the public and private sectors is vital for closing the gap in health equality and progressing reform.



Strengthening and extending partnerships, coalitions, collaborations and internal and external networks will build VACCHO's influence and our leadership of the multi-sector response needed to maximise health outcomes for our people, our communities and our Members.

VACCHO manages an array of partnerships both with Members and with the mainstream. VACCHO's partners rely on us for advice and expertise, to represent the voice of the Victorian Aboriginal community and to network with our Members. Our partnerships include formal agreements such as the Partnership Agreement on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health with the Commonwealth and Victorian governments and Memoranda of Understanding with key organisations, as well as informal coalitions such as the Coalition for Aboriginal Health Equality Victoria, a group of civil society signatory organisations to the *Statement of Intent to Close the Gap on Indigenous Health Inequality*.

Sustainability

Goal 7

The key performance indicators of VACCHO's strategic sustainability goal is to monitor, implement and diversify our opportunities to increase income from sources other than traditional government grant funding sources. The income will be reinvested in the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled sector to facilitate long term sustainability of the Membership.

RATIONALE



VACCHO's strategic objectives

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Quality infrastructure

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Quality policy development and advocacy

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