

# Service helps close the gap

New Penrith centre set to address health needs of the local Aboriginal population

LAUREN SUTTIE

Penrith is set to become the home of a new primary health care service that will help to address the health needs of the local Aboriginal community.

Wellington Aboriginal Corporation Health Service (WACHS) recently announced the opening of the new Penrith Aboriginal Medical Service clinic, which is set to help fill the gap in the health needs of Aboriginal locals.

WACHS' Executive Manager of Business Services, Adam Stuart, said the clinic will deliver a comprehensive primary health care service, similar to the services offered at their Greater Western Aboriginal Health Service centre in Mt Drutt.

"We look forward to establishing a new service to really address something that is probably a gap in the health needs of the Aboriginal population in that area," he said.

"There is a whole range of access barriers sometimes to the hospital system, so this is about a service that provides a culturally safe service for that area and that community."

The new clinic will create six positions with a GP, nurses, Aboriginal health workers and transportation aids set to

help make up the service. Mr Stuart said these services were a recognition of the Aboriginal population's health needs in the Nepean Blue Mountains region.

"We know that the Aboriginal population in the Nepean and western Sydney area is one of the largest numbers in the country and the demographics of that population show they are a lot younger community," he said.

"The other thing is that we know that the disparities in health outcomes is well documented, so we want to look at a primary health care service that can assist in going some way in addressing that need."

Mr Stuart said it was important to provide better access to care for the Aboriginal community.

"We are trying to address those access barriers and what we would consider our preventable hospital admissions that can be prevented by timely access to appropriate primary health care," he said.

Located in Lawson Street, Penrith, the establishment of the clinic was a result of funding provided by the Department of Health and the Ministry of Health in 2017.

"We want to acknowledge the support of NSW Ministry of Health and the local health district for providing \$1.5 million in capital works funding," Mr Stuart said.



Adam Stuart at the new Aboriginal Medical Service in Penrith. Photo: Melinda Jane

## Award-winning showroom!

Get the full experience.

Call Paul today on 0403 723 486

Penrith: 125 Batt Street, Jamisontown



Your ultimate  
**\$10,000**  
decision

Hotondo Homes is giving you the opportunity to make the 'ultimate decision' with a choice of upgrade packages worth over \$10,000\*. Dream even larger and spoil yourself with indulgent extras across the complete range of Hotondo Homes' stunning designs. But you have to decide now, this ultimate offer ends August 31, 2018.



\*Terms & conditions apply.

WWW34515