



MEDIA RELEASE

MINISTER PROVIDES BREATHING SPACE FOR REMOTE ASTHMA SERVICES

The Minister for Health, the Hon Mark Butler, has guaranteed an additional \$240,000 over the next two years for the Asthma Foundation of the Northern Territory (AFNT) to reinvigorate its service delivery to regional and remote parts of the Territory. The money will enable up-skilling and additional on-site support for community-based Aboriginal Health Workers and Practitioners. It will expand community education, clinical assessments and emergency training sessions.

“This is a welcome relief, in light of Asthma Australia saying there was no more money in the Asthma Management Program for the Northern Territory. We are very grateful to the Minister for his intervention.”
Dr Crundall, Chair of AFNT.

“AFNT is acutely aware this funding is only for two years and that resourcing pressures still need long term commitment. The positive reaction received from Territorians and others in the face of AFNT’s 78% funding cut has been heartening and a testament to the value of what we have been doing for 40 years. Hopefully that goodwill and support can deliver some ongoing funds down the track. Until then AFNT will have to keep streamlining programs and revising its cost structures.”

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, asthma is the most common respiratory condition reported by Aboriginal people. It is 1.6 times more common among Indigenous people compared to non-Indigenous. Aboriginal people are also 2.4 times more likely to be hospitalised for respiratory diseases and the rate of hospitalisations is highest among Aboriginal people living in remote areas.

“This Commonwealth funding will allow us to deliver a full program that has been in planning and development for several years. We are confident in the approach we are taking. It builds the skills and knowledge of community members so they can take greater control. It fits the critical Territory needs for face-to-face service delivery and cultural safety for Aboriginal people.” Leanne Elliott-Holmes, CEO of AFNT.

“We are excited to be given this period of funding security and trust that the benefits of the program will be hard evidence for AFNT continuing to work in this area for a long time to come. And what works for remote communities in the Territory will surely help similar communities elsewhere.”

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Helping Territorians Breathe Better



*AFNT acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we meet and conduct our services,
respecting language and culture and Elders past and present.*