



Natasha Fyles
Minister for Health



Media Statement

Miwatj looking after the Health of North East Arnhem Land

1 July 2019

Local Decision Making has been put into the hands of an Aboriginal-controlled health service in North East Arnhem Land.

On July 1, 2019, Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation (Miwatj) will assume operations of the Primary Health Care (PHC) centres in Gapuwiyak and Ramingining.

The Territory Labor Government is determined to restore local decision making to communities.

Northern Territory Health has worked with Miwatj and the Commonwealth Government Department of Health to transition the operation of the Top End Health Service's (TEHS) Gapuwiyak and Ramingining Primary Health Care centres to Aboriginal community control.

Miwatj already manages health centres in Nhulunbuy, Gunyangara, Yirrkala, Milingimbi and Galiwin'ku.

Miwatj will receive \$3.3 million per annum from the Northern Territory Government and \$3.2 million per annum from the Commonwealth Government to provide PHC services in Gapuwiyak and Ramingining.

The majority of TEHS staff working at Gapuwiyak and Ramingining PHC Centres will transfer to Miwatj to maintain continuity of health services and local knowledge of the communities.

Increasing community involvement in the planning and delivery of local health services brings additional health benefits for the community.

Quotes from the Minister of Health, Natasha Fyles:

"Transitioning health services to community control is a key election commitment of the Territory Labor Government and I look forward to Miwatj's success with managing additional services in the year ahead."

"Miwatj Health should be recognised for their dedication to promoting health and wellness with the Aboriginal people of the Arnhem region."

Quotes from the Member for Arnhem, Selena Uibo:

"It's great to see this transition happening in Gapuwiyak."

"Recently, we held Community Cabinet in Gapuwiyak and my ministerial colleagues saw firsthand the strong emphasis on local decision making the community undertakes."

"It is a community full of strong leaders and decision makers and a community controlled clinic is the next step for this strong part of the Arnhem electorate."

Quotes from the Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation Chief Executive, Eddie Mulholland:

"Today is a landmark day for the NT, Miwatj Health and Yolngu. The transfer of the last two clinics in North East Arnhem Land to Aboriginal community control to the entire North East Arnhem communities is a big investment in empowering the local region. Miwatj Health believes that having control and choices for their communities' members will build capabilities. Hence, that is the best known health strategy."

"The underlying philosophy of Miwatj Health is the fundamental right of Aboriginal people to control their own health services."

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