

Gippsland Aboriginal Services Plan 2008-09

Department of Human Services

September 2008



Working together to improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Gippsland.

Dhuna thoolo Gunnai-Kûrnai, woorcat il lidj 2008 - 2009
we are talking to men, women and children in 2008 - 2009.

From the regional director

The Gippsland Aboriginal Services Plan was developed in the broader context of the Victorian Government's policy framework for Indigenous Affairs.

The Victorian Indigenous Affairs Framework (1) aims to: *improve outcomes and help bridge the life expectancy gap between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal People and improve quality of life for Aboriginal people in Victoria.*

The Department of Human Services Aboriginal Services Plan 2008-2010 and the five strategic objectives for action identified provided guidance in the development of the Gippsland region's plan. The strategic objectives are:

- Reducing inequalities through improving health and wellbeing, particularly for disadvantaged people and communities,
- Improving outcomes in the early years and for Aboriginal youth,
- Promoting least intrusive and earliest effective care,
- Strengthening the capacity of individuals, families and communities,
- Building sustainable, well managed and efficient human services.

The Gippsland Aboriginal Services Plan for 2008-09 consolidates existing activities from last year as well as identifying new Department of Human Services' program area priorities to be implemented over the coming financial year. The objectives identify practical as well as visionary action plans which contribute to the achievement of the state-wide objectives as described above.

Some of the actions identified directly reflect the service delivery requirements of program areas; others reflect identified gaps or opportunities to strengthen our approach in order to achieve improved outcomes for Aboriginal children, young people, adults, families and communities in Gippsland.

In conclusion, Gippsland's Aboriginal Services Plan reinforces the commitment to developing and strengthening partnerships between the regional office, Aboriginal communities and other key stakeholders.

Together we can make a difference to Aboriginal health and wellbeing.

A full copy of the regional plan can be accessed at www.dhs.vic.gov.au/operations/regional/gippsland and more information about the Koori Human Services Unit is available at www.dhs.vic.gov.au/pdpd/koori



Valerie Callister
Regional Director

1. Victorian Government (2006), Victorian Indigenous Affairs Framework, available at www1.dvc.vic.gov.au/aav/docs/Vic_IndigenousAffairsFramework.pdf
2. Victorian Government Department of Human Services (2007), Aboriginal Services Plan, January 2008 - December 2010, available at www.dhs.vic.gov.au/pdpd/koori

Reducing inequalities through improving health and wellbeing, particularly for disadvantaged people and communities

What will we achieve?	How will we achieve it?	How will we know it's achieved?
Aboriginal people have access to primary health funded services.	Improved collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service utilisation data to inform service planning.	Analysis of primary health utilisation rates by Aboriginal clients over time.
Successful implementation of the Aboriginal Health Promotion and Chronic Care Partnership (AHPACC) project in East Gippsland.	Participation in the AHPACC Partnership Steering Committee.	Initiative delivered according to plan and key evaluation indicators are achieved.
Aboriginal communities in East Gippsland are better informed about sexual assault support services including the East Gippsland Crisis Care Unit provided by the Gippsland Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA).	In conjunction with the Gippsland CASA develop and implement a plan to raise awareness within Aboriginal communities in East Gippsland about the sexual assault support services available to them.	Community development plan finalised and implemented.

Improving outcomes in the early years and for Aboriginal youth

What do we want to achieve?	How will we achieve it?	How will we know it's achieved?
Enhance cultural planning processes for clients of Youth Justice.	Review program documentation and process of developing cultural plans. Consistent implementation and clear processes that link cultural plans to service delivery.	Cultural plans and client service plans are consistent, and have a positive impact on service delivery to Koori Clients; Indigenous clients have a cultural plan completed within six weeks.
In partnership with the Koori Justice funded sector, enhance role clarity and decision-making pathways regarding access to and from programs.	In partnership with the Koori Justice funded sector review and amend documentation to ensure smooth entry and exit processes.	Documentation reviewed, endorsed and operationalised by Youth Justice and Koori Justice funded sector.

Promoting least intrusive and earliest effective care

What do we want to achieve?	How will we achieve it?	How will we know it's achieved?
Delivery of culturally appropriate interventions for the support of Aboriginal children and young people involved with child protection services.	In partnership with Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Association (VACCA), review the progress of Aboriginal children and young people involved with Child Protection in Gippsland.	Child Protection and VACCA complete case reviews for the majority of Aboriginal children and young people who are clients of Child Protection.
Implementation of cultural plans for Aboriginal children and young people as required by legislation.	Ensure cultural plans are completed for Aboriginal children and young people and decision making processes reference cultural considerations as required by the <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005</i> .	Processes in place to monitor and review cultural plans and decision making processes.
Enhance Child Protection responses to children and young people from Aboriginal families.	Expand the referral criteria for the Aboriginal Family Decision Making Program to include referrals for Aboriginal children from point of Child Protection intake.	Increased percentage of referrals accepted by the Aboriginal Family Decision Making program for children referred through Child Protection intake.

Strengthening the capacity of individuals, families and communities

What do we want to achieve?	How will we achieve it?	How will we know it's achieved?
Improve access to Home and Community Care (HACC) services for Aboriginal communities.	Employment of a project worker to support and implement the Bridging HACC Services Program.	Improved uptake of HACC services by eligible Aboriginal residents.
Improved housing opportunities and services for Aboriginal people.	Improve linkages between Housing and Aboriginal service providers including Aboriginal Housing Victoria, Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Association, Ramahyuck District Aboriginal Cooperative (RDAC) and Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative.	Future priorities and strategies are adopted, and collaborative processes promoted through quarterly meetings between the Community Housing team and the sector.
Support the collaborative efforts of the Gippsland Palliative Care Consortia, Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation and Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative to present a forum in East Gippsland about Aboriginal palliative care.	Establish a working group to plan and arrange the forum.	Forum conducted and evaluation demonstrates attendees gained insight into service delivery considerations for Aboriginal clients.

Building sustainable, well managed and efficient human services

What do we want to achieve?	How will we achieve it?	How will we know it's achieved?
Better inform Aboriginal organisations about significant changes in government policy directions and the implications for departmental business.	Utilise existing Aboriginal reference groups and the role of the Aboriginal planning officer in the region to disseminate information and to provide advice.	Aboriginal organisations and the department implement changes contained in <i>Improving the way we work with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations</i> report.
Continued partnerships with organisations and communities to foster, safe, healthy and supportive environments for Aboriginal families.	<p>Implement cultural awareness and child protection practice information sessions to enable ChildFirst and child protection staff to better meet the needs of Aboriginal children and families.</p> <p>Deliver information sessions to local communities and community service organisations in order to enhance understanding of Child Protection practice and Aboriginal family decision making.</p> <p>Conduct a formal evaluation of the Child Protection and Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative Capacity Building Project to determine project outcomes and options for project extension or expansion.</p>	<p>Minimum of two regional information sessions delivered.</p> <p>Information sessions delivered within each ChildFirst catchment area.</p> <p>Evaluation completed and recommendations considered.</p>
Improve Aboriginal Home and Community Care data collection to support better planning, service delivery, accountability and evaluation.	<p>Support and assist agencies to improve their understanding and consistency in meeting the requirements of the Minimum Data Set (MDS).</p> <p>Organise three Minimum Data Set and Funded Agency Channel training forums.</p>	<p>MDS reports indicate an improvement in the quality of recorded data.</p> <p>Training forums implemented.</p>
Build upon the capacity of agencies to deliver appropriate service to Aboriginal communities.	<p>Contribute to the statewide review of 'Improving Care for Aboriginal People' (ICAP).</p> <p>Establish and strengthen Koori Health Liaison Officers network forums.</p>	<p>ICAP review completed.</p> <p>Ongoing networks established.</p>