



**PalliativeCare**  
AUSTRALIA

# Media Release

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## Continued investment is the only way to Close the Gap

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities continue to suffer from undetected treatable and preventable chronic conditions, according to the 2015 Close the Gap Progress and Priorities Report released today.

Palliative Care Australia (PCA) CEO Liz Callaghan welcomed the report, noting the prevalence of diabetes and kidney disease which can significantly reduce life expectancy.

“The highest incidence of chronic kidney disease and chronic end stage kidney disease in Australia occurs in remote, regional and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

“We need to ensure access to palliative care services for these groups which predominantly receive care from General Practitioners and community nurses, not palliative care specialists.

“PCA has called for better access to information and education for health professionals, patients, their family and carers on palliative care and kidney disease through a website developed with Kidney Health Australia.” She said.

The Close the Gap Campaign, of which PCA is a steering committee member, is urging the Federal Government to focus on greater access to primary health care services to detect, treat and manage chronic health conditions in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

“Today’s report shows, there is still a long way to go before we close the gap on health inequality. We need to build on the successes achieved through Close the Gap and continue the national effort to improve the health and well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

“Focusing on access to primary care services to diagnose, treat and manage chronic health conditions including access to palliative care will have an impact on the life expectancy and quality of life of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living with these conditions”, said Ms Callaghan.

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