

# CLOSING THE GAP: NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT ON INDIGENOUS EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Council of  
Australian  
Governments

An agreement between

- the **Commonwealth of Australia** and
- the **States and Territories**, being:
  - ◆ The State of New South Wales
  - ◆ The State of Victoria
  - ◆ The State of Queensland
  - ◆ The State of Western Australia
  - ◆ The State of South Australia
  - ◆ The State of Tasmania
  - ◆ The Australian Capital Territory
  - ◆ The Northern Territory of Australia

# Closing the Gap: National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development

## PRELIMINARIES

1. This Agreement is created subject to the provisions of the *Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations* and should be read in conjunction with that Agreement and subsidiary schedules. In particular, the schedules include direction in respect of performance reporting and payment arrangements.
2. The Parties are committed to addressing the issue of social inclusion, including responding to Indigenous disadvantage. That commitment is embodied in the objectives and outcomes of this agreement. However, the Parties have also agreed other objectives and outcomes - for example, in the National Indigenous Reform Agreement - which the Parties will pursue through the broadest possible spectrum of government action. Consequently, this Agreement will be implemented consistently with the objectives and outcomes of all National Agreements and National Partnerships entered into by the Parties
3. This Agreement has been developed within the context of the broader COAG Reform Agenda, which includes actions across the domains of health, early childhood development, schooling, and housing.
4. This National Partnership Agreement has been established to improve outcomes for Indigenous children in their early years and to contribute to COAG Closing the Gap targets for Indigenous Australians.
5. Indigenous children are the most vulnerable group of children in Australia and disparities with non-Indigenous children in some outcomes have widened in recent years. To reduce the gap in developmental outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children, COAG has set targets to:
  - a) halve the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five within a decade;
  - b) halve the gap for Indigenous students in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade; and
  - c) to ensure all Indigenous four years olds in remote communities have access to early childhood education within five years.

6. On 3 July 2008, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to sustained engagement and effort by all governments over the next decade and beyond to achieve the Closing the Gap targets for Indigenous people. As a first step, COAG agreed in principle to this Agreement with joint funding of around \$547.2 million over six years to address the needs of Indigenous children in their early years. This funding builds on the \$16.8 million committed over five years for the Indigenous Child Care Hubs, which takes the total amount of funding under this Agreement to \$564 million over six years.
7. Through this Agreement, the Commonwealth and the States and Territories will work together to improve the early childhood outcomes of Indigenous children by addressing the high levels of disadvantage they currently experience to give them the best start in life.
8. In entering this Agreement, the Commonwealth and the States and Territories recognise that a shared commitment to improvements in Indigenous child mortality require better access to antenatal care, teenage reproductive and sexual health services, child and maternal health services and integrated child and family services which focus on quality early learning, child care and parent and family support.
9. The Commonwealth, States and Territories already contribute significant funding for Indigenous early childhood development, including through the broader work being pursued by COAG. Many of the Commonwealth Government's election commitments, along with existing measures, will improve services for Indigenous children, including funding for maternal and child health and parenting support services, early childhood education, child care and the early years of schooling.
10. States and Territories also invest heavily in the area of Indigenous early childhood, including through their provision of the universal platforms of preschool and maternal and child health services.
11. To achieve the COAG targets, Australian governments have committed to a reform program for Indigenous early childhood development that will be delivered in stages to achieve tangible improvements in outcomes for Indigenous children and generational change over the longer term.
12. This Agreement represents the first stage of the reform program and builds on current activity; with a focus on Indigenous children aged 0-3 years. The evidence shows that substantial benefits accrue from investments made in the first few years of life and this is even more so for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. A greater focus on interventions in the early years will also contribute significantly to the achievement of COAG targets relating to later life outcomes.

## **PART 1 – FORMALITIES**

### **Parties to this Agreement**

13. In entering this Agreement, the Commonwealth and the States and Territories recognise they have a mutual interest in improving outcomes in the area of Indigenous early childhood development and need to work together to achieve those outcomes.
14. This Agreement supersedes the previous version of the National Partnership agreement regarding Indigenous early childhood development, agreed by COAG on 2 October 2008. Parties will be required to continue to meet their obligations under the previous version until they become a signatory to this Agreement.

## Term of the Agreement

15. This Agreement will commence as soon as the Commonwealth and one other Party signs the Agreement and will expire on 30 June 2014, or earlier termination as agreed in writing by the Parties.

## Delegations

16. The Minister for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations is authorised on behalf of the Commonwealth to revise the Implementation Plan and certify that payments may be made to the States and Territories on the achievement of milestones specified in Element One of the Implementation Plan.
17. The Minister for Health and Ageing is authorised on behalf of the Commonwealth to revise Elements Two and Three of the Implementation Plan and certify that payments may be made to the States and Territories on the achievement of milestones specified in Element Two of the Implementation Plan.
18. The Minister nominated in writing by each jurisdiction as having lead responsibility for this Agreement, or part thereof, is authorised to revise the Implementation Plan, or relevant part of the Implementation Plan, on behalf of their State or Territory.

## Interpretation

19. Unless otherwise specified, the following terms and definitions are used throughout this Agreement:
  - a) **Agreement:** this Agreement and any attached bilateral Implementation Plans, action plans, workplans, schedules or annexure.
  - b) **COAG:** the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) or any body delegated by COAG to operate on its behalf within the context of this Agreement.
  - c) **Early Childhood:** the period from 0 to 8 years of age, encompassing the transition to school.
  - d) **Implementation Plan:** Workplans for each jurisdiction were agreed by COAG when COAG endorsed the Indigenous Early Childhood Development National Partnership on 2 October 2008. These workplans are now being referred to as Implementation Plans in line with other National Partnerships.
  - e) **In-kind Contribution:** a contribution to the achievement of this Agreement's objectives in the form of services rather than in funding and in the context of the Agreement includes integration of existing resources and/or services into implementation of the measures in this Agreement.
  - f) **Indigenous:** people who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
  - g) **Milestone:** a significant event or point in time within the delivery of the objectives of this Agreement.
  - h) **Performance Indicators:** the indicators used to monitor the progress towards achievement of the activities as specified in the relevant Implementation Plan/s.
  - i) **Regional, remote and urban locations:** for the Children and Family Centres remote, regional and urban is based on an aggregation of ABS Remoteness Areas:
    - Remote – combines remote and very remote Australia
    - Regional – combines inner and outer regional Australia

### Urban – major centres

However, there is flexibility in the categorisation of locations. For example, given the limited number of urban centres across the country it may make sense to consider large regional cities as part of the urban allocation. This will be agreed bilaterally on a jurisdiction by jurisdiction basis between states and territories and the Commonwealth.

- j) **Remote Indigenous Community:** a community that is classified as either 'remote' or 'very remote' according to the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) remoteness structure, and also classified as an 'Indigenous Location' by the ABS.
- k) **Remote Indigenous Strategy:** a plan for implementing the commitment to provide universal access to all four year olds living in remote Indigenous communities.

## PART 2 – OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS

### Objectives

20. Through this Agreement, the Parties are committed to:

- a) improving developmental outcomes for Indigenous children and achieving key targets as agreed by COAG;
- b) achieving sustained improvements in pregnancy and birth outcomes for Indigenous women and infants;
- c) improving Indigenous families' use of the early childhood development services they need to optimise the development of their children; and
- d) implementing this National Partnership in a way that also contributes to COAG's social inclusion, early childhood development, education, health, housing, and safety agendas, by identifying reforms and models of service delivery that will improve outcomes for Indigenous children.

The attached integrated policy framework is a basis for developing future reforms by all governments in Indigenous early childhood development (see Schedule A).

### Outcomes

- 21. This Agreement concentrates on priority areas where the evidence shows a high level of impact can be achieved to improve the outcomes for Indigenous children.
- 22. This Agreement will contribute to the following **overarching** outcomes:
  - a) Indigenous children are born and remain healthy;
  - b) Indigenous children have the same health outcomes as non-Indigenous children;
  - c) Indigenous children acquire the basic skills for life and learning; and
  - d) Indigenous families have ready access to suitable and culturally inclusive early childhood and family support services.
- 23. This Agreement will contribute to the following **specific** outcomes in each jurisdiction:

- a) increased proportion of Indigenous children participating in quality early childhood education and development and child care services;
- b) increased proportion of Indigenous people using parent and family support services;
- c) increased proportion of Indigenous children's child health checks completed each year;
- d) increased proportion of Indigenous children who are fully vaccinated each year;
- e) increased proportion of pregnant Indigenous women aged under 20 years with an antenatal contact in the first trimester of pregnancy each year; and
- f) increased proportion of Indigenous teenagers accessing sexual and reproductive health programs each year.

## Outputs

24. This Agreement will deliver the following outputs:

- a) establishment of a minimum of 35 Children and Family Centres established in urban, regional and remote areas with high Indigenous populations and disadvantage, commencing operations progressively from June 2010;
- b) provision of early learning, child care and parent and family support services to Indigenous families at or through each of the Children and Family Centres;
- c) increased provision of antenatal care services targeted at young Indigenous women, as agreed in the Implementation Plans;
- d) increased provision of sexual and reproductive health services to Indigenous teenagers, as agreed in the Implementation Plans; and
- e) increased provision of maternal and child health services for Indigenous children and their mothers, as agreed in Implementation Plans.

### Element One: Integration of Early Childhood Services through Children and Family Centres

- 25. Many Indigenous families miss out on early childhood services even though they stand to benefit most. Early childhood experts advocate integrated delivery of services, including antenatal services, child and maternal health services, parenting and family support services, and early learning and child care, as the best delivery platform to ensure families actually receive the support they need<sup>1</sup>.
- 26. It is important that action in this area includes provision of parent and family support services. Evidence shows that early childhood programs are most effective when they support parents' active participation in their children's development.
- 27. A minimum of 35 integrated Children and Family Centres will be established nationally in accordance with the allocation below. The Children and Family Centres will provide a dynamic mix of services, responsive to community needs, and include child care, early learning and parent and family support services. The operations of the Children and Family Centre will be underpinned by integration of their management, governance and service systems.
- 28. Community engagement with the Children and Family Centres is integral to their successful implementation.

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<sup>1</sup> Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (2004) Indigenous Parenting Project, P 13.

Table 1 – Allocation of Integrated Children and Family Centres across the Country.

Proposed Centres	NSW	QLD	VIC	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT	Total
regional/remote	4	5	1	2	4	0	4	0	20
urban	5	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>35</b>

Note: Where possible, through consideration of need, capacity of existing services and leveraging of other funding and programs States and Territories should look at ways of establishing more than their allocation of Children and Family Centres.

### Element Two: Increased Access to Antenatal Care, Pre-pregnancy and Teenage Sexual and Reproductive Health

29. While Indigenous women access antenatal care at comparable rates to non-Indigenous women, available data shows that they tend to leave their first antenatal visit until much later. In addition, studies have shown that teenage mothers, particularly Indigenous mothers, are more likely to experience poor pregnancy outcomes, including low birth weight.
30. The Commonwealth will provide funding to the States and Territories to improve access to, and use of, antenatal care by young Indigenous mothers, and support young Indigenous women to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health. Efforts will focus on areas with significant numbers of young Indigenous women and high numbers of births to teenagers.
31. States and Territories will reform existing services where necessary and implement new services to increase access to, and take-up of, first trimester antenatal visits, provide support to reduce risk factors such as smoking, and provide pathways to related services, with a particular focus on Indigenous women under the age of 20.
32. Encouraging the use of antenatal care (starting in the first trimester) would contribute to halving the gap in infant mortality rates, reducing the incidence of low birth weight (which is twice as common for babies born to Indigenous mothers), and improving early childhood and later life outcomes.
33. Complementary to this, States and Territories will implement strategies to reduce the high rate of early pregnancy in the Indigenous population and to educate young people on sexual and reproductive health issues. Action in this area would aim to deliver targeted sexual and reproductive health programs for Indigenous teenagers, including those who are disengaged from school. This would have the positive effect of increasing the age of first conception among young Indigenous women.

### Element Three: Increased Access to, and use of, Maternal and Child Health Services by Indigenous Families

34. The Commonwealth is investing \$90.3 million over five years for maternal and child health services under the existing *New Directions* measure (commenced 1 January 2008). This complements existing child and maternal health services to meet the Australian Government's commitment to halve the gap in infant and child mortality rates between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children within a decade. The Commonwealth will consult with States and Territories to determine priorities for investment under *New Directions*.

35. Under Element three of this Agreement, States and Territories will also invest \$75 million (including funds allocated since December 2007) to deliver antenatal, postnatal, child and maternal health services to Indigenous families. This could include, but is not limited to:
- a) improving data sharing between health services to improve continuity of care for Indigenous mothers and their babies;
  - b) increasing antenatal service provision to Indigenous women through hospital settings (in keeping with the principle of universal access);
  - c) increasing access to antenatal care for Indigenous women with an emphasis on early presentation, and regular visits throughout pregnancy (the minimum requirement is eight visits during pregnancy, with two in the first trimester);
  - d) promoting and increasing uptake of child health checks, including those with particular focus on mainstream health services; and
  - e) increasing accessibility and utilisation of maternal and child health services and programs aimed at promoting healthy lifestyles especially during pregnancy, for example, smoking, alcohol and nutrition.
36. The full and exact nature and range of services, undertaken to deliver these and other initiatives within each jurisdiction, will be agreed bilaterally in consultation with local communities.

## **PART 3 – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF EACH PARTY**

37. To realise the objectives and commitments in this Agreement, each Party has specific roles and responsibilities, as outlined below.

### **Role of the Commonwealth**

38. The Commonwealth will have responsibility for:
- a) providing a financial contribution (and any in-kind support identified within the respective Implementation Plan) to States and Territories as set out in this Agreement;
  - b) participating in consultations as appropriate regarding implementation of this Agreement, including mechanisms convened by States and Territories; and
  - c) participating in the planning of bilaterally agreed Implementation Plans as appropriate and where requested by the respective State or Territory.

### **Role of the States and Territories**

39. The States and Territories will have responsibility for:
- a) providing financial contributions (and any in-kind support identified within the respective Implementation Plan) as set out in this Agreement; and
  - b) planning and implementation of bilaterally agreed Implementation Plans attached to this Agreement, in consultation with Indigenous communities and other stakeholders.



## Shared

40. States, Territories and the Commonwealth share the following roles and responsibilities and will:
- a) work in partnership through COAG to ensure effective implementation of this Agreement and its associated Implementation Plans consistent with the parameters, goals and targets set by COAG;
  - b) work in partnership to evaluate outcomes of the Agreement at a national and local level;
  - c) work in partnership to review annually the bilaterally agreed Implementation Plans and re-align Implementation Plans with the COAG reform agenda where required;
  - d) work in partnership to identify and share best practice across all parties of this Agreement and to provide information and assistance with the overarching evaluation of this Agreement; and
  - e) to provide sufficient data (as specified later in this Agreement and in the Implementation Plans) to enable a thorough evaluation of outcomes of the Agreement at a national and local level.

## PART 4 – PERFORMANCE AND REPORTING

### Progress Measurement

41. While all Australian governments are committed fully to achieving genuine improvement for Indigenous children and families, a number of challenges to measuring progress are recognised. These include the relatively small size of the Indigenous population meaning that identifying trends may require aggregating several years of data. It is also recognised that the benefits of this program may not begin to be realised until after a period of years, towards the end of the agreement as programs are bedded down. These and other relevant factors will be considered when measuring progress.
42. Following the agreement of baseline data by the Commonwealth, States and Territories, all jurisdictions will use the following performance indicators for the duration of the Agreement to identify and measure progress towards the agreed outcomes:
- a) increased proportion of Indigenous children attending the Children and Family Centres who have had all age-appropriate health checks and vaccinations;
  - b) increased proportion of Indigenous three and four year olds participating in quality early childhood education and development and child care services;
  - c) increased proportion of Indigenous children attending the Children and Family Centres who go on to attend school regularly;
  - d) increased proportion of Indigenous children and families accessing a range of services offered at or *through* Children and Family Centres, including but not limited to childcare, early learning, child and maternal health, and parent and family support services;
  - e) increased proportion of pregnant Indigenous women with an antenatal contact in the first trimester of pregnancy in each year;

- f) increased proportion of Indigenous teenagers accessing sexual and reproductive health programs and services;
  - g) reduced proportion of Indigenous babies born with low birth weight each year;
  - h) reduced mortality rate of Indigenous infants each year;
  - i) reduced proportion of Indigenous women who use substances (tobacco, alcohol, illicit drugs) during pregnancy each year; and
  - j) reduced proportion of hospital admissions of Indigenous children 0-4 years
43. Review of the overall operation of the Agreement will be based on progress against the following agreed performance indicators:
- a) performance measures identified in clause 42 of this Agreement;
  - b) progressive achievement of the outputs, as specified in bilaterally agreed Implementation Plans;
  - c) satisfactory compliance by States and Territories with all financial and progress reporting requirements of this Agreement;
  - d) participation by States and Territories in annual bilateral discussions with the Commonwealth to review progress against bilaterally agreed Implementation Plans, and outcomes and outputs as set out in this Agreement; and
  - e) collection and reporting of data for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework, as it relates to this Agreement. Performance Indicators contained within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework of relevance to this Agreement:
 

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.10 Low birthweight infants</li> <li>1.11 HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C and sexually transmissible infections</li> <li>1.12 Children's hearing loss</li> <li>1.14 Life expectancy at birth</li> <li>1.18 Infant mortality rate</li> <li>1.19 Perinatal mortality</li> <li>1.20 Sudden infant death syndrome</li> <li>1.21 All causes age standardised death rates</li> <li>1.22 Leading causes of mortality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.24 Avoidable and preventable deaths</li> <li>2.18 Tobacco smoking during pregnancy</li> <li>2.23 Breastfeeding practices</li> <li>3.01 Antenatal care</li> <li>3.02 Immunisation (child and adult)</li> <li>3.09 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in the health workforce.</li> </ul>
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44. Measurement of Child and Family Centre performance will be made using the performance indicators identified in this Agreement at clause 42 and with reference to the performance indicators defined as part of the wider Early Childhood Education and Care Reform Agenda and Early Childhood Education National Partnership agreements.
45. In mid 2009, COAG will consider a report on progress and take advice surrounding this Agreement's contribution towards COAG's broader reform agenda to overcoming Indigenous children's disadvantage.

## Implementation Plans

46. The Parties have agreed Implementation Plans to deliver the outputs specified in this Agreement and to make a contribution to achieving the Agreement's objectives and outcomes. The Plan will be reviewed by the Parties on an annual basis following receipt of an annual report and acquittal for the preceding reporting period.
- a) The Commonwealth will maintain the Plans and provide updated Plans to the States and Territories following reviews.
  - b) The Plans will include the timelines for achieving the milestones, including phased achievement of performance indicators where appropriate.
  - c) Amendments to the Implementation Plans can be requested by a State or Territory at any time, to accommodate emerging issues. These amendments will be agreed with the Commonwealth.

## Reporting

47. The States and Territories will each provide a detailed annual report to the Commonwealth for the preceding financial year by 31 August of each year. The annual report will describe progress in achieving the performance indicators, outputs, outcomes and objectives in this Agreement and report achievements against the milestones financials, and timelines detailed in the Implementation Plan .
48. The States and Territories will provide a progress report by 31 January of each year. The progress report will provide an overview of progress against milestones since the last annual report and report other matters on an exceptions basis.
49. The Commonwealth will provide an annual report to Parties for the preceding financial year by 31 August of each year, with regard to annual expenditure under Element 3, including achievements against milestones. The report will indicate how the annual expenditure contributes to, and supports, the overarching outcomes of the Agreement and the outputs at sub-clauses 24 c, d and e, in particular.
50. Reporting requirements under this National Partnership should be read in conjunction with the provisions in Schedule C to the *Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations*.

## Consultation and Engagement

51. Consultations surrounding the delivery of this Agreement are fundamental to its success and the achievement of its objectives shown in clause 19. Extensive consultation across all key partners and stakeholders including but not limited to Indigenous communities, non-government organisations delivering the services and industry peak bodies et cetera will be initiated at the earliest opportunity by States and Territories.
52. The timing of such consultation and engagement will be guided by State and Territory Implementation Plans and will continue for the duration of this agreement. The outcomes will also be considered as part of the overarching evaluation of this Agreement.
53. The outcomes of these consultations should be documented and become a key component of the Implementation Plans and, wherever practicable, be shared to enable a strengthening of best practice by other State and Territory consultative exercises. Outcomes of consultation and engagement will be included in annual national reports to COAG.

## PART 5 – FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

### Funding

54. This Agreement is based on facilitation payments and joint investment approach between the Commonwealth and State and Territories.
55. The Commonwealth is providing a total of \$292.62 million funding to the States and Territories for Element One of this Agreement. The first facilitation payment for Element One was made in January 2009. The Commonwealth is providing a total of \$107 million funding to the States and Territories for Element Two of this Agreement. The first facilitation payment for Element Two will be made in July 2009.
56. Funding for Element Three of this Agreement is provided by jurisdictions as State/Territory own purpose expenditure.
57. The Commonwealth is also providing funding of \$90.3 million to complement Element Three as part of its *New Directions: Mothers and Babies* commitment.

### Payment Schedule

58. Payments to States and Territories will be provided consistent with Schedule D to the *Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations*. Funding will be provided to States and Territories on a six monthly payment cycle on the basis of achievement of agreed milestones.
59. Payments to States and Territories will be made providing that the jurisdiction demonstrates in its annual and progress reports that the agreed milestones have been achieved.
60. The maximum amount of funding to be provided by the Commonwealth to the States and Territories in total under Elements One and Two will be:
  - a) 2008-09 — \$17.47 million
  - b) 2009-10 — \$89.55 million
  - c) 2010-11 — \$87.80 million
  - d) 2011-12 — \$78.17 million
  - e) 2012-13 — \$62.82 million
  - f) 2013-14 — \$63.82 million
61. Phasing of funding over the life of the Agreement may vary as agreed by the relevant parties.
62. Commonwealth funding to States and Territories for Elements One and Two will be distributed according to the tables below, corresponding with the attached bilaterally agreed Implementation Plans.

## 63. Funding Allocation for Element One - Integrated Children and Family Centres:

In \$m	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	Total
NSW	4.46	19.03	17.31	14.08	9.91	9.91	74.70
QLD	4.49	19.15	17.42	14.17	9.97	9.97	75.18
SA	1.51	6.43	5.84	4.75	3.35	3.35	25.22
WA	2.53	10.79	9.81	7.98	5.62	5.62	42.35
VIC	0.99	4.24	3.86	3.14	2.21	2.21	16.65
TAS	0.48	2.06	1.87	1.52	1.07	1.07	8.09
ACT	0.48	2.06	1.87	1.52	1.07	1.07	8.09
NT	2.53	10.79	9.81	7.98	5.62	5.62	42.35
<b>Total</b>	<b>17.47</b>	<b>74.55</b>	<b>67.80</b>	<b>55.17</b>	<b>38.82</b>	<b>38.82</b>	<b>292.62</b>

\* The amounts in the above table reflect the agreed phasing of construction and operation of Children and Family Centres.

## 64. Funding Allocation for Element Two – Antenatal Care, Pre-pregnancy and Teenage Sexual and Reproductive Health:

In \$m	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	Total
NSW	3.75	5.00	5.75	6.00	6.25	26.75
QLD	4.20	5.60	6.44	6.72	7.00	29.96
SA	0.75	1.00	1.15	1.20	1.25	5.35
WA	2.40	3.20	3.68	3.84	4.00	17.12
VIC	0.75	1.00	1.15	1.20	1.25	5.35
TAS	0.45	0.60	0.69	0.72	0.75	3.21
ACT	0.15	0.20	0.23	0.24	0.25	1.07
NT	2.55	3.40	3.91	4.08	4.25	18.19
<b>Total</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>23.0</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>107.0</b>

65. The States and Territories will commit a total of \$75 million over five years for Element Three against the tables below.

66. State and Territory financial contributions towards Element Three, and an indicative breakdown of the New Directions investment of \$90 million by the Commonwealth across States and Territories, are as set out below.

67. Funding Allocation for Element Three – Increase Access to, and Use of, Maternal and Child Health Services by Indigenous Families:

Commonwealth own purpose expenditure	
	\$m
NSW	20.0
QLD	25.5
SA	4.0
WA	15.0
VIC	4.0
TAS	3.0
ACT	0.5
NT	18.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>90.0</b>

State and Territory own purpose expenditure	
	\$m
NSW	21.5
QLD	21.25
SA	3.75
WA	11.25
VIC	4.5
TAS	2.5
ACT	0.5
NT	9.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>75.0</b>

## PART 6 – GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

### Dispute Resolution

68. Any Party may give notice to other Parties of a dispute under this Agreement.
69. The relevant delegates will attempt to resolve any dispute in the first instance.
70. If a dispute cannot be resolved between the relevant delegates, it may be escalated to relevant Ministerial Council or COAG Working Group for consideration.
71. If a dispute cannot be resolved by the relevant Ministerial Council or COAG Working group, it may be referred by a Party to COAG for consideration.

### Evaluation of the Agreement

72. This Agreement's effectiveness in achieving its outcomes will be determined through a comprehensive national evaluation to be undertaken throughout the life of the Agreement. The evaluation strategy will be developed by the Commonwealth in partnership with the States and Territories by 30 June 2010. The evaluation strategy will be designed in light of the reporting requirements in this agreement. The evaluation strategy will be consistent with any future decisions made by COAG on this subject and will provide the framework for the final report to COAG in June 2014.
73. An initial baseline data study will provide a basis from which to monitor and evaluate progress over time. It will also include agreed data definitions and sources, base lines and reporting protocols.
74. Central to the evaluation will be the collection and analysis of data against the outputs and performance indicators identified in this Agreement, as well as the progress and performance against each of the Implementation Plans. To the greatest extent possible, this data collection and analysis will be based on the reporting requirements in this agreement. The evaluation will also consider a range of agreed outcomes and progress measures drawn from those set out in the attached Indigenous Early Childhood Development policy framework (Schedule A).

## Variation of the Agreement

75. The Agreement may be amended at any time by agreement in writing by all the Parties and under terms and conditions as agreed by all the Parties.
76. The Implementation Plans may be amended at any time by agreement in writing by the Commonwealth and relevant State/Territory and under the terms and conditions as agreed by all the Parties.
77. A Party to the Agreement may terminate their participation in the Agreement at any time by notifying all the other Parties in writing.

## Schedules

Schedule A – Indigenous Early Childhood Development Policy Framework

Schedules B – I - State and Territory Implementation Plans

The Parties have confirmed their commitment to this agreement as follows:

**Signed** *for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by*

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**The Honourable Kevin Rudd MP**  
Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia  
2 July 2009

**Signed** *for and on behalf of the State of New South Wales by*

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**The Honourable Nathan Rees MP**  
Premier of the State of New South Wales  
2 July 2009

**Signed** *for and on behalf of the State of Victoria by*

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**The Honourable John Brumby MP**  
Premier of the State of Victoria  
2 July 2009

**Signed** *for and on behalf of the State of Queensland by*

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**The Honourable Anna Bligh MP**  
Premier of the State of Queensland  
2 July 2009

**Signed** *for and on behalf of the State of Western Australia by*

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**The Honourable Colin Barnett MP**  
Premier of the State of Western Australia  
2 July 2009

**Signed** *for and on behalf of the State of South Australia by*

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**The Honourable Mike Rann MP**  
Premier of the State of South Australia  
2 July 2009

**Signed** *for and on behalf of the State of Tasmania by*

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**The Honourable David Bartlett MP**  
Premier of the State of Tasmania  
2 July 2009

**Signed** *for and on behalf of the Australian Capital Territory by*

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**Jon Stanhope MLA**  
Chief Minister of the Australian Capital Territory  
2 July 2009

**Signed** *for and on behalf of the Northern Territory by*

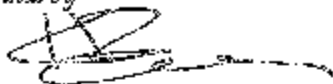
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**The Honourable Paul Henderson MLA**  
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory of Australia  
2 July 2009



The Parties have confirmed their commitment to this agreement as follows:

*Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by*



**The Honourable Kevin Rudd MP**  
Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia

2 July 2009

*Signed for and on behalf of the State of New South Wales by*



**The Honourable Nathan Rees MP**  
Premier of the State of New South Wales

2 July 2009


*Signed for and on behalf of the State of Victoria by*



**The Honourable John Brumby MP**  
Premier of the State of Victoria

2 July 2009

*Signed for and on behalf of the State of Queensland by*



**The Honourable Anns Bligh MP**  
Premier of the State of Queensland

2 July 2009

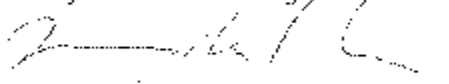
*Signed for and on behalf of the State of Western Australia by*



**The Honourable Colin Barnett MP**  
Premier of the State of Western Australia

2 July 2009

*Signed for and on behalf of the State of South Australia by*



**The Honourable Mike Rann MP**  
Premier of the State of South Australia

2 July 2009

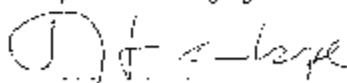
*Signed for and on behalf of the State of Tasmania by*



**The Honourable David Bartlett MP**  
Premier of the State of Tasmania

2 July 2009

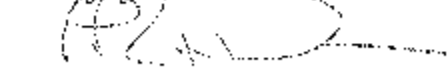
*Signed for and on behalf of the Australian Capital Territory by*



**Jon Stanhope MLA**  
Chief Minister of the Australian Capital Territory

2 July 2009

*Signed for and on behalf of the Northern Territory by*



**The Honourable Paul Henderson MLA**  
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory of Australia

2 July 2009

**Halve the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five within a decade**  
**Halve the gap for Indigenous students in reading, writing and numeracy within a decade**  
**All Indigenous four year olds have access to quality early childhood education within five years, including Indigenous children living in remote areas**

**1. Indigenous children are born healthy (PAWG)**

**2. Indigenous children have the same health outcomes as other Australian children (HAWG)**

**3. Indigenous children's living environments are healthy and safe (WGIR)**

**4. Indigenous children and families are safe and protected from violence and neglect in their homes and communities (WGIR)**

**5. Indigenous children acquire the basic skills for life and learning (PAWG)**

**6. Indigenous children have access to affordable, quality early childhood education in the year before formal schooling as a minimum (PAWG)**

**7. Indigenous children meet basic literacy and numeracy standards, and overall levels of literacy and numeracy standards are improving (PAWG)**

**8. All Indigenous children are engaged in and benefiting from schooling (PAWG)**

**Performance indicators**

1. Mortality rate of 0-4 year olds
2. **Proportion of Indigenous pregnancies with an antenatal contact in the first trimester**
3. Proportion of children born of low birth weight
4. **Extent of substance use during pregnancy**
5. Proportion of hospital admissions of Indigenous children 0-4 years

Black indicators: Existing evidence base  
 Red indicators: Pending development of evidence base

**Performance indicators**

1. Number of children who were the subject of notifications, investigations and substantiations
2. **Proportion of Indigenous children living in overcrowded houses**
3. Proportion of Indigenous children with hearing loss i.e. otitis media
4. Proportion of hospitalisation of Indigenous children 0-4 years for injury and poisoning
5. Proportion of dwellings not connected to a)water, b)sewerage and c) electricity that meet appropriate regulatory standards

**Performance indicators**

1. Proportion of Indigenous 3 year olds participating in quality early childhood education
2. Proportion of Indigenous 4 year olds participating in quality early childhood education
3. **Proportion of Indigenous children who have received all developmental checks**
4. Proportion of Indigenous children participating in formal early childhood education and care services

**Performance indicators**

1. Proportion of Indigenous children enrolled in and attending school
2. **Proportion of Indigenous children with basic skills for life and learning, as identified by the Australian Early Development Index**
3. Literacy and numeracy achievement of Year 3 Indigenous students in national testing

**Possible policy directions**

- Improve the sexual and reproductive health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, particularly young women
- Increase access to antenatal care
- Reduce major risk factors such nutrition, smoking, alcohol, substance misuse
- Increase access to universal early childhood health and development services
- Build the evidence base for effective interventions to reduce risk factors for children and mothers eg smoking, alcohol and substance use
- Develop a culturally competent Indigenous and non-Indigenous workforce to support all COAG Reform Options
- Ensure all services are delivered in an integrated, culturally competent way

**Possible policy directions**

- Improve health and safety aspects of home environments
- Build the capacity of Indigenous parents and families to provide a safe nurturing home and community environment
- Improve the effectiveness of child protection arrangements across jurisdictions
- Increase the supply of rental housing and increase Indigenous home ownership
- Develop a culturally competent Indigenous and non-Indigenous workforce to support all COAG Reform Options
- Ensure all services are delivered in an integrated, culturally competent way

**Possible policy directions**

- Increase access to and use of culturally competent universal early childhood care and education services
- Increase levels of family literacy and numeracy
- Develop a culturally competent Indigenous and non-Indigenous workforce to support all COAG Reform Options
- Ensure all services are delivered in an integrated, culturally competent way

**Possible policy directions**

- Increase levels of family literacy and numeracy
- Foster family participation in children's early learning and development
- Develop a culturally competent Indigenous and non-Indigenous workforce to support all COAG Reform Options
- Ensure all services are delivered in an integrated, culturally competent way

**Priority Reform Areas**

1. Pre-pregnancy and teenage sexual health
2. Antenatal, Child and Maternal Health
3. Parent and family support and engagement
5. Integrated, sustainable universal and targeted services
6. Development of a sustainable Indigenous workforce and a culturally competent non-Indigenous workforce

**Priority Reform Areas**

2. Antenatal, Child and Maternal Health
3. Parent and family support and engagement
5. Integrated, sustainable universal and targeted services
6. Development of a sustainable Indigenous and non-Indigenous workforce that is culturally competent

**Priority Reform Areas**

3. Parent and family support and engagement
4. Quality early learning and childcare
5. Integrated, sustainable universal and targeted services
6. Development of a sustainable Indigenous workforce and a culturally competent non-Indigenous workforce

**Priority Reform Areas**

3. Parent and family support and engagement (*including literacy and numeracy*)
5. Integrated, sustainable universal and targeted services
6. Development of a sustainable Indigenous workforce and a culturally competent non-Indigenous workforce

COAG TARGETS

OUTCOMES

PRIORITY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

POSSIBLE POLICY DIRECTIONS

PRIORITY REFORM AREAS