

**SUNRISE HEALTH SERVICE  
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION**

ABN 26 778 213 582

Pandanus Plaza, 25 First Street, PO Box 1696, Katherine NT 0851  
Ph: 08 89711 120 Fax: 08 89 712 511 E-mail: [general@sunrise.org.au](mailto:general@sunrise.org.au)



## Media Statement

### Sunrise Aboriginal Male Health Summit (Blekbala Fathawan Helth Summit 2009)

#### Katherine East Region

Sunrise Health Service Aboriginal Corporation (Sunrise) is proud to announce the successful completion of the Sunrise Aboriginal Male Health Summit (Blekbala Fathawan Helth Summit).

Sunrise President, Mr. David Lane, said the Summit was held at Banatjarl over three days and three nights and provided an important opportunity for over 100 Aboriginal Males from the Katherine East Region to gather and examine issues of importance and significance that are impacting on their lives, and the future. Banatjarl is a proposed "healing place" for Indigenous people set aside by the Jawoyn traditional owners and open to groups of Aboriginal people to take time out and to reflect on their situation. "There is no better place to start the journey on the road to good health" said Mr. Lane.

Mr. Lane said "Key recommendations arising from the Summit reflect the wisdom of those involved". Mr. Lane went on to add that "the recommendations included a call for a Territory Wide Aboriginal Male Health Summit. Generally the recommendations are benchmarked around ways to improve and move forward" he said. Other key outcomes arising from the Summit include a call for constructed pathways into real jobs, real training, and real wages. Mr. Lane said "the recommendations will also be made available to the Northern Territory Government about their new Outstations Policy and 20/20 targets – *Working Future*". Irene Fisher, Chief Executive Office of Sunrise endorsed the commitment of Sunrise to take the recommendations forward.

Mr. Lane said "the voices of Aboriginal Males must be expressed, heard and listened to, to enable the steps to be taken, to move forward towards reconciliation, heal and build positive futures. Sunrise saw the need for the opportunity for men living in the Katherine East Region to be able to come together and discuss health issues; including physical, family, economic, community and cultural wellbeing, and future directions".

Principle outcomes from the Summit include the Banatjarl Statement – which amongst its recommendations, calls on the Australian and Northern Territory Governments to reform the intervention and immediately re-instate the Racial Discrimination Act with full integrity and to reduce the disempowering effects of the intervention resulting in "widening the gap".

One of the themes of the Summit – Prevention not Intervention is a statement in itself and reflects on some impacts of the intervention.

Mr. Lane acknowledged that the opportunity for the men to share experiences and ideas would not have occurred without the support of the Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, the Katherine Region Communities for Children Initiative facilitated by The Smith Family and Good Beginnings Australia and funded by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs along with the valuable cultural and camp sponsorship of Jawoyn Association. The Sunrise Aboriginal Male Health Summit – Katherine East Region marks a noteworthy event for Katherine and beyond – it also builds on a strong history and marks the twenty first anniversary of the Barunga Statement.