

MEDIA RELEASE

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Apology Anniversary: Great challenges remain but some signs of progress among Aboriginal communities

“While progress in Closing the Gap has been stubbornly slow, we are seeing many Aboriginal communities initiating and leading efforts to overcome disadvantage. They offer us hope for a better future” says Jesuit Social Services CEO Julie Edwards on the sixth anniversary of Apology to the Stolen Generations.

A recently completed report by Ernst and Young into community led renal services based in remote Aboriginal communities where Jesuit Social Services works, found that the Western Desert Nganampa Walytja Palyantjaku The Tjutaku Aboriginal Corporation (WDNWPT) was delivering culturally appropriate renal treatment and support services that improved patient outcomes for Aboriginal people. Significantly, these services were less expensive than hospital based treatment.

Ms Edwards noted, “In the remote communities where we work we are seeing many instances of local people developing solutions to the issues that they face. The renal services delivered by WDNWPT is one great example of this, another is the community leadership work of the Atyenhenge-atherre Aboriginal Corporation in Santa Teresa.”

“These community led initiatives should be built upon as they can make an important contribution to realising our collective vision of Closing the Gap.”

Ms Edwards said, “The mixed news in yesterday’s Closing the Gap Report Card shows us that progress is going to take time. All Australians must continue to stand in solidarity with Aboriginal people and their communities and support their efforts to realise their hopes and aspirations.”

Jesuit Social Services is a not-for-profit organisation which works to build a just society by advocating for social change and promoting the health and wellbeing of disadvantaged young people, families and communities.

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