



## MEDIA RELEASE

### GP shortage on the Tablelands

Wuchopperen, one of Queensland's oldest Aboriginal community-controlled health services with more than 25 years experience providing primary health care services, established an outreach in Atherton, the Midin Clinic more than five years ago.

Wuchopperen Chairperson, Rachael Wargent, said that she understood the difficulty for Queensland Health, as it is the same challenge we face: a general shortage of Australian trained GPs.

It is very unfortunate for the local residents that Queensland Health GP type services have been suspended, as this will have an impact. Despite community expectations, it is not always possible for the remaining private and community based general practice services to pick up the slack either.

There is only a small number of health services that bulk-bill and the Midin Clinic is one of those. Wuchopperen refutes the claim that a medical appointment was refused on the basis of ethnicity. This is simply not true.

Midin Clinic has been set up to primarily meet the health needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Atherton/Croydon community of interest and does see non-Aboriginal patients. Given the length of time the Midin clinic has been open we have simply reached a patient capacity threshold.

The Chairperson said 'the fact is that we employ only one GP and the small clinic does not have capacity to extend its patient care further.

There are many GP's working on the Tablelands. Rachael said, 'in the face of diminished services it was important for responsible service providers to put in place practical measures to ensure ongoing care of the elderly, disabled and other disadvantaged members of the community'.

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