

MEDIA RELEASE

14 February 2025

WIIMPATJA HEALING CENTRE

During the course of last year, we reflected on the quality of care provided at our Wiimpatja Healing Centre. As a result of this review, we made the decision to temporarily pause referrals while we seek funding to implement essential improvements to both the model of care and the facility. This process includes refining the residential program to adopt a more holistic approach—one that strengthens our cultural healing framework and enhances outcomes for our clients.

Mallee District Aboriginal Services (MDAS) Chief Executive, Ms. Perlin Simon, acknowledges that while this temporary closure is challenging, it is a necessary step forward.

“Our number one priority is to deliver a culturally safe and holistic model of care to our community. To do this effectively, we must ensure our program is sustainable and able to provide 24/7 support for our clients' healing journey and provide a safe environment for our staff” Ms. Simon said.

“Successful rehabilitation requires a strong, well-supported foundation. By taking this time to strengthen our program, we are reinforcing our ability to provide the best possible care.”

MDAS has been actively collaborating with key funding bodies to ensure there is sufficient funding to operate the facility which is safe for our clients, safe for our employees and provides a culturally appropriate environment. In the event that we are unsuccessful with our business case for further funding, we will review what other options there might be for the Centre.

Ms. Simon highlights the importance of having a culturally responsive residential program based on Country.

“It is vital that we provide a space where our Aboriginal men can receive rehabilitation that is culturally appropriate and comprehensive. This includes Health services, Alcohol and Other Drugs counselling and many other critical learning and development pathways.”

“Ultimately, our goal is to equip our men with the skills and confidence to reintegrate into society and move forward on a positive path.”

ENDS

*Self-determined, healthy, robust & culturally strong
Aboriginal communities, throughout the Mallee Region.*