

MEDIA RELEASE

Free skin checks for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities a first for Gippsland

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In the first initiative of its kind in Gippsland, members of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities underwent free skin checks when a mobile skin check clinic visited five Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.

The organisations described the initiative as an overwhelming success with 154 community members seen in the first round of checks and 55 in the second round with some needing follow-up treatment.

Gippsland PHN Chief Executive Officer, Amanda Proposch, said the Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations had suggested the initiative and facilitated the appointments, even organising transport for those people who needed it.

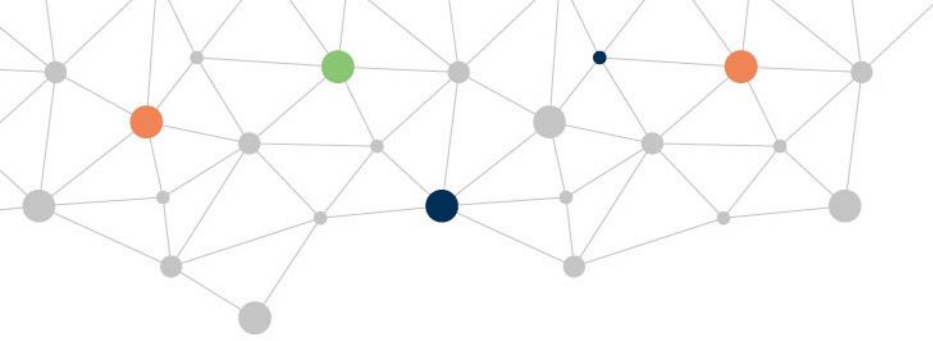
“Cancer screening saves lives and it helps to keep our communities strong, safe and healthy,” Ms Proposch said.

“Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians have a five-year survival rate of 59 per cent after being diagnosed with melanoma compared to 71 per cent for other Victorians. An earlier diagnosis means a greater ability to treat and a chance of survival.”

The mobile clinic was provided by Your Skin Scan, led by a qualified clinical nurse consultant and nurse practitioner with more than 10 years working in the field of melanoma and skin cancer. She leads the team who conduct melanoma surveillance and skin cancer detection procedures.

“One of our strategic objectives is to commission for service access,” Ms Proposch said. “We need to ensure people can access services at the right time and in the right place, especially where gaps exist and in hard to reach locations.”

The Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations who hosted the mobile skin checks visited were:



- Lakes Entrance Aboriginal Health Association
- Moogji Health Services
- Lake Tyers Health and Children's Service
- Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative
- Ramayhuck (Sale and Morwell).

The free skin checks were delivered under Gippsland PHN's Integrated Team Care (ITC), supplementary Services funding which contributes to improved health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with chronic health conditions through better access to coordinated and multidisciplinary care.

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