

Carbal Medical Centre to tackle indigenous health issues

Samantha O'Neil | 30th Jan 2016 5:00 AM



Committee members Cr Bill Cahill and Dr Maree Toombs and CEO Brian Hewitt tour the facility.

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WITH the official opening of the Carbal Medical Centre yesterday, health care for the indigenous community took a turn for the better.

The centre also celebrated one year serving the Warwick community and surrounding districts.

The opening was attended by many health professionals, dignitaries, staff, clients and residents.

CEO Brian Hewitt spoke of the staggering statistics faced by the indigenous community.

"Half of all indigenous men and one third of the women will die before the age of 45," he said.

"When I saw these statistics I had to check the calendar, and yes, it is 2016."

Mr Hewitt said Aboriginal Medical Services (AMS) were essential to address the horrifying statistics.

"It is only since putting funding into AMS where culturally sensitive services are offered that indigenous people will attend," he said.

"90% of indigenous people live in cities and were not accessing the services because they don't feel comfortable there.

"It is far more effective to have a service based on consultation with the indigenous community.

"3% of the health budget nationally goes to indigenous health, which is sufficient is just wasn't well directed before."

Carbal representative and fellow artists Nicolette Dixon said artworks had been donated by community artists.

"In doing so, they are helping to create an inclusive centre for community healing, contributing to the cultural vibrancy and welcoming visitors to the centre," she said.

The new centre boasts full general practitioner services as well as allied health services, a dietician and a triage which can be used as a day surgery clinic in the future.

The centre also includes facilities for a future dental clinic.

"I am confident that we will be able to commence dental services before the middle of the year," Mr Hewitt said.