

MEDIA RELEASE – 23 May 2022

Lowitja Institute welcomes new Federal Government and commitment to Uluru Statement from the Heart

The Lowitja Institute welcomes the election of the Labor Federal Government and, in particular, its commitment to the full implementation of the Uluru Statement from the Heart, which is foundational for change in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing.

Lowitja Institute CEO Adjunct Professor Janine Mohamed congratulated the Hon. Linda Burney, a member of the Wiradjuri Nation, on her forthcoming appointment as Minister for Indigenous Affairs.

“Linda is an outstanding leader: the first Aboriginal woman ever elected to the House of Representatives and now the first Aboriginal woman to hold this critical Ministerial office. As an inspiring role model for all women, Linda is a strong advocate for our people and has dedicated her life to her community.”

Adjunct Professor Mohamed also welcomed the growing number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander MPs who have now been elected to the national Parliament, as it sets course for a new relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with the promise of a referendum on a Voice to Parliament.

Lowitja Institute Chair Mr Selwyn Button also welcomed Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's commitment to the Uluru Statement from the Heart at the start of his victory speech.

“This acknowledgement was an honourable way for Mr Albanese to start his term in office and sets the stage for race relations in this country. The Uluru Statement from the Heart is a gift to the nation, and the Labor Government's commitment upholds the respect it deserves,” said Mr Button.

“The full implementation of the Uluru Statement, and its call for Voice, Treaty and Truth is not only foundational to address the health inequity between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous Australians, but the blueprint for the political transformation this nation requires.”

The Lowitja Institute also welcomed the growing demand from Australian voters for climate action.

“Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a huge stake in the climate crisis, not only because it is already disproportionately affecting the health and wellbeing of our peoples, but also because our knowledges and cultural practices hold solutions to the climate crisis,” said Adjunct Professor Mohamed.

“We are intimately connected to Country. Our local knowledges are precious, and we must be part of the conversation when it comes to climate adaptation and mitigation planning.”

Ahead of the election, the Lowitja Institute identified [five key priorities](#), including action to address [climate change](#).

Adjunct Professor Mohamed also paid tribute to the former Minister for Indigenous Affairs Ken Wyatt, the first Aboriginal person to hold the office, for his tireless work to improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

For more information or to arrange an interview with Lowitja Chair Selwyn Button, please contact Jo Cackett on 0474 727506.

ABOUT THE LOWIJA INSTITUTE

The Lowitja Institute is Australia's national institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research, named in honour of its Patron, Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue AC CBE DSG. It is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation working for the health and wellbeing of Australia's First Peoples through high impact quality research, knowledge exchange, and by supporting a new generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health researchers.

Established in January 2010, the Lowitja Institute operates on key principles of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership, a broader understanding of health that incorporates wellbeing, and the need for the work to have a clear and positive impact.

The history of the Lowitja Institute dates back to 1997 when the first Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal and Tropical Health was established. Since then, the Institute and the CRC organisations have led a substantial reform agenda in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research by working with communities, researchers and policymakers, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people setting the agenda and driving the outcomes.