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MEDIA RELEASE

Coalition of Peaks to hold six Closing the Gap engagement in Western Australia this month

Broome will today host the first of six face-to-face meetings in Western Australia on the development of a new National Agreement on Closing the Gap. The meetings provide an opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to tell the Coalition of Peaks and governments what changes are needed to improve their lives.

Aboriginal Health Council Western Australia Chair, Vicki O'Donnell said it was critical to engage with communities across Western Australia as part of the policy development process.

"We're kicking off a series of community engagements today in Broome and will be holding five more face-to-face meetings across the state throughout October," O'Donnell said.

"Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities must be at the centre of decision-making on policies that will affect our lives. We know better than anyone what will work for us so listening to communities makes for better policy. We want to make sure governments hear directly from our communities.

"The historic partnership between the Coalition of Peaks and governments represents the best chance we've got to ensure the expertise and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is embedded in government policies to help make improvements in our lives.

"This is the first time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, through the Coalition of Peaks, have had a formal partnership with governments on such significant policy reform. As part of that process, the Coalition of Peaks is determined to give communities across Australia the opportunity to have a say about what is needed to help close the gap.

Following today's engagement in Broome, the Coalition of Peaks will hold meetings in, October 21 in Kalgoorlie, October 23 on Port Headland, October 28 in Perth and dates yet to be finalised in October and November for Geraldton and Katanning. The face-to-face discussions are part of a comprehensive set of community engagements, which also include Peak consultations with its own membership and an [online survey](#), open until October 25.

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For media enquiries contact Andrew Blyberg on 0401 691 666 or andrew@fiftyacres.com

More on the Coalition of Peaks:

The Coalition of Peaks is a representative body comprised of around forty Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak organisations that have come together to have their collective voice heard. The Coalition of Peaks is working with the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) to refresh the Closing the Gap framework for the next ten years.

For more information on The Coalition of Peaks, The Joint Council, The Partnership Agreement and to sign up for our mailing list, go to: <https://www.naccho.org.au/programmes/coalition-of-peaks/>