

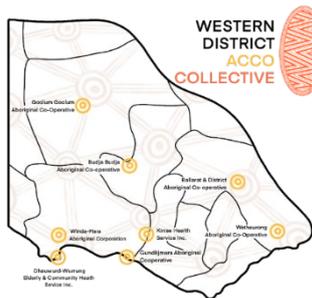
25<sup>th</sup> October 2024

## Western District ACCO Collective Submission to Our Ways – Strong Ways – Our Voices: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Safety Plan

### About the Western District ACCO Collective

*“WDAC is our western division’s self-determination in action, changing the way we do business. We will call others to us and work on our own terms.”*

WDAC are a strategic representative body of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) across the western districts of Victoria. WDAC are accountable to and prioritise the self-determined needs and aspirations of our western districts’ families, Communities and ACCOs. Our membership includes:



- Ballarat & District Aboriginal Co-operative
- Budja Budja Aboriginal Co-operative
- Dhauwurd Wurrung Elderly & Community Health Service
- Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative
- Gunditjmara Aboriginal Co-operative
- Kirrae Health Service
- Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative
- Winda-Mara Aboriginal Co-operative

Our ACCOs have been important places of health, wellbeing and family support, healing, identity, and connection over forty years. We continue to provide specialist wraparound health and wellbeing services for our families and Communities from pregnancy through to the Dreaming. Our services are run by Community, for Community and are wide reaching across

- Community strengthening and engagement
- Connection Country, strengthening Culture and Language
- Health promotion and prevention
- Early childhood playgroups and parenting programs
- Youth programs
- Justice programs including family violence, child protection, juvenile justice, and corrections
- Family Strengthening services including Out of Home Care, Kinship Care, Intensive Family Support
- Social and Emotional Wellbeing and recovery,
- Primary and Allied Health, including maternity services
- NDIS and Aged care services.
- Homelessness, social and public housing

The purposes of our ACCOs coming together as WDAC, are to

- Be a powerful voice advocating at regional, state, and national forums for our families, communities and ACCOs.
- Use Aboriginal ways of knowing, being and doing to lead, design and facilitate the solutions to achieve equity and beyond for our communities.
- Hold government and partners to account at local and regional levels, to ensure that all Aboriginal funding is self-determined and led by Aboriginal families, communities and ACCOs.
- Support whole-of-community approaches to address the ongoing harm of systemic racism that disproportionately impacts Aboriginal communities.
- Advocate for ongoing, equitable and significant funding for our ACCOs’ infrastructure, workforce, community strengthening, and services that we deliver ‘our way’.



L-R: Jason Walker (previous CEO of Winda-Mara Aboriginal Corporation), Karen Heap (*Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-operative*), Simon Flagg (*WDAC Chair, Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative*), Tony Craig (*Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative*), Tamika Holt (*Dhauwurd-Wurrung Elderly & Community Health Service*). Absent: Tim Chatfield (*Budja Budja Aboriginal Cooperative*), Danny Chatfield (*Gunditjmara Aboriginal Cooperative*), Nonnie Harradine (*Kirrae Health Service Inc*).

## WDAC's Advocacy Principles

*"WDAC will be a strong voice, advocating together for every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person in our region. We will test and push the government's obligation and agenda of self-determination."*

### 7j Regional.governance.and.accountability.to.Community

WDAC's advocacy is accountable to the self-determined needs and aspirations of our western districts' families, communities and ACCOs. Each of our Community Controlled organisations are governed by Community-elected Boards and have enduring and trusted relationships with our Communities that we serve. WDAC respects that each ACCO in our region is responsive to the different needs of their community and will apply different localised and community led solutions. WDAC continues the longstanding solidarity and advocacy of Communities across the western districts of Victoria.

### 8j Systemic.change.for.Self\_determination.and.sovereignty.

WDAC's advocacy aims to transform relationships in support of the western districts Communities' and ACCOs' sovereignty, self-determination, and rights as Aboriginal people. Self-determination is defined by *UN Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as our collective right to freely determine our political status and freely pursue our economic, social, and cultural development, including rights to

- Autonomy and self-government.
- Maintain and strengthen our distinct political, legal, economic, social, and cultural institutions.
- Participate in decision-making.
- Give free, prior, and informed consent to legislative and administrative measures that may affect us.
- Maintain and develop our political, economic, and social systems or institutions.

WDAC understand self-determination to be a dynamic practice of exercising First Peoples sovereignty (Jack Forbes, *Powhatan-Renapé / Delaware-Lenápe*, 1998).

### 9j Celebrating.and.honouring.our.Communities.and.ACCO.ways.of.working

WDAC's advocacy is centred in honouring our Communities' strengths and connections to Country, Community and Culture. WDAC honours the foundational vision and movement led by our Elders who established our Aboriginal Community Controlled Sector, to holistically serve and strengthen our families and communities. In recognition of ongoing colonisation, racism, and deficit discourse, WDAC upholds and celebrates our Communities and ACCO ways of working towards an equitable and aspirational present and future.

### 0j Culturally.centred

WDAC view our advocacy through our cultural lenses, centred in respect, collaboration, leadership, and accountability. WDAC advocates for the honouring of the ownership of materials, traditions and knowledges that originate from each community and culture. WDAC advocates for the recognition, protection and continued advancement of the inherent rights, and traditions of cultures across the Western districts.

## Submission on Our.Ways.-.Strong.Ways.-.Our.Voices;National.Aboriginal.and. Torres.Strait.Islander.Family.Safety.Plan

A.note.on.language.

In this report, the term ‘Aboriginal’ is used to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who make up our Western Victorian Communities.

Use of ‘people who use violence’ is preferred to ‘perpetrators.’ We are committed to supporting people to stop using violence in their relationships, to increase the safety of women and children in our Community.

‘FDSV’ is used as per the submission invitation to refer to Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence.

### **Systemic racism and Community over-representation and under-reporting across Victorian FDSV, Justice and Child Protection systems**

Our Victorian Western District Aboriginal Communities continues healing from the ongoing impacts of violent displacement, dispossession, and disconnection from culture, Country and family resulting from colonisation, including in the many Stolen Generations orphanages that were established in our region of Victoria. The intensification of intergenerational trauma, combined with ongoing touch points with current racist colonial systems, drive the overrepresentation of our community in the justice system involvement (9.5 times higher than non-Aboriginal Victorians), specifically through family violence (around 10% of Orange Door services) and child protection. Key drivers for over-representation include

#### *Impacts of ongoing colonisation and Stolen Generations experiences*

- Intergenerational trauma and associated health and wellbeing challenges
- Disruption of cultural connection and practice, including Community practices of raising children
- Fear of accessing mainstream services for treatment and healing, due to history of child removal
- Historic targeting of Aboriginal Community by Police and Justice systems
- Limited emotional regulation skills and subsequent normalised use of violence in families, including young people.
- Self-management of trauma and mental health challenges using alcohol and other drugs

“Our Community members’ parasympathetic systems are often in fight or flight mode...and as a result, they are heightened in their responses.”

#### *Victorian Service System responses drive our Community Members into the Justice System*

- Victoria Police application for Family Violence Intervention Orders (FVIOs) on behalf of victims, including those who do not want FVIOs. Lack of involvement in, and complex legal language, contribute to Community misunderstanding, resulting FVIO breaches and further incarceration.
- Co-location of Victoria’s Orange Door services with Child Protection services (CPS) places families who seek help for Family Violence in immediate contact with CPS.
- High rates of misidentification of women as aggressors rather than victims of family violence by Victoria Police.
- Lack of access to cognitive assessments impact sentencing and support (including Acquired Brain Injury and Intellectual Disability).
- Inadequate post-release planning and resourcing of stable housing and social supports for Community leaving prisons.

#### *Inadequate resourcing for ACCOs’ to support Community-led Healing and Cultural Strengthening*

- While our ACCOs are currently funded to provide health and wellbeing support services, many of our diversionary and Community strengthening prevention and early help programs are self-funded by our ACCOs. We are chronically under-resourced to meet our Community's needs and aspirations for Cultural Healing and Gathering.
- Many of our children in OOHC are case managed by mainstream organisations, where their cultural needs and supports are not met. Within the cohort of young Aboriginal people in care, many have experienced living with family violence, and too many are living in residential care settings. We see these young people's behaviours escalate, risk taking behaviours heighten and the level of care and support provided by agencies is reduced. *"To address the issues of Family Violence and work within the prevention space, our ACCOs work to intervene early and support young people to break the cycle for their future generations."*

### **Under-reporting and risks associated with disclosing FDSV**

Under-reporting on the rates and severity of family violence is a significant barrier to achieving a full understanding of the cohort of families who use and are victim/survivors of FDS violence. There is individual, interpersonal, Community and systemic reasons why Community members choose not to disclose, or disclose in full, their experiences of family violence.

#### *At the Individual and interpersonal level:*

- Orange Door and mainstream family violence practice settings, where the mainstream model is not otherwise culturally or trauma-informed to support engagement for disclosure with Aboriginal Community members. For example, ACCOs work without the mainstream Orange Door's time constraints to build relationship and trust with our Community members, leading to more comprehensive and holistic assessments, safety and support planning.
- Mistrust of mainstream services to ongoing colonisation and systemic racism.
- Fear of child removal and Child Protection involvement.
- Fear of escalation of violence.
- Lack of and/or misinformation in recognising and identify violence as it occurs in relationships.
- Lack of emotional regulation skills.

#### *At the Community level:*

- Lack of access to community-led prevention.
- Lack of access to community-led early help.
- Fear and distrust of Police, Child Protection and mainstream service systems.
- Lack of Community understanding of what behaviours constitute family violence.
- The context of intergenerational trauma can lead to normalisation of violence behaviours.

#### *At the Systemic level:*

- Lack of investment in Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to facilitate community-led prevention and early intervention.
- Lack of investment in Aboriginal-led
- Lack of investment in Community sector workforce and services for people who use violence. For example, Wathaurong funds a male case manager to support men who use violence. To end violence in our community it is critical to have equal numbers of workers to both people who use violence, and for victim-survivors.
- Lack of investment in the development of a specialist workforce for working with people who use violence, and victim-survivors in the Victorian Aboriginal Community context and culturally centred practice.
- Output, rather than needs-based funding, that limits workers' ability to invest in relationship building and establishing of trust when Community members access mainstream services.

- Racial profiling and systemic racism in mainstream service system towards Aboriginal people.
- Intergenerational histories of Stolen Generations, including the role of Police.
- Intergenerational trauma from ongoing colonisation.

## Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations' locally self-determined and culturally centred ways of working with families can create real and sustainable change for families experiencing violence

### ACCOs' Community controlled governance and accountability

Our Western District ACCOs each have up forty-five years' experience delivering Community-centred, complex and diverse innovation projects and services, with core accountability to our Community Controlled governance. Our ACCOs have robust governance and risk management practices and systems, to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and Community expectations.

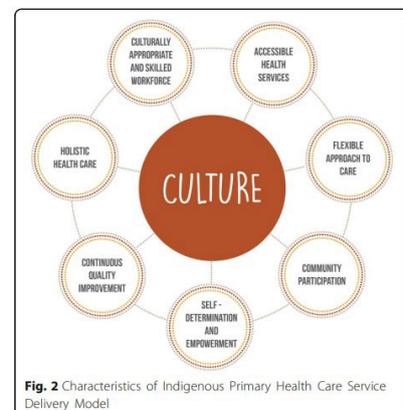
Our Western District ACCOs are accountable to our Community-elected Boards, and in turn to our Communities including our Elders, Respect Persons, families, women, men, young people and children. Our ACCOs are led and staffed by, predominantly Aboriginal people, with long and trusted relationships across our Community. We regularly and actively seek our Communities' guidance and direction through Community engagement and in the ongoing relationships we have in providing wraparound holistic health and wellbeing supports to our families and Community.

**ACCOs are best placed to lead local and regional whole of Community Family.Safety.Planning, that are centred in our ACCO's self-determined, culturally centred, integrated and holistic ways of working with our Communities.**

ACCOs are self-determined organisations that have been supporting our Community, including in experiences of family violence, for over four decades. With the ever-increasing rates of family violence in our Community, it is time for government investment in community-led prevention, early help and crisis services that meet the needs of our Communities. In the context of the shared commitment to self-determination and as we move towards Treaty in Victoria, we call on Government and the Family Violence sector to invest in ACCOs to self-determine their local and impactful ways of working to reduce and respond to FDSV.

Like Harfield et al's (2018) description of Indigenous Primary Health Care Services, our ACCOs' describe the key principles of their ways of working with our Community members as:

- *Community and Culturally Centred*
- *Going above and beyond for Community*
- *Wraparound, holistic, and integrated Community services*



In contrast to the mainstream carceral FDSV systems, that lead to further intergenerational trauma and over-representation in harmful systems, ACCO ways of working offer impactful Community-led healing, prevention and responses to FDSV.

*At the Individual and interpersonal level:*

- A culturally safe and trauma-informed Aboriginal-led alternative response that supports meaningful relationship and trust building with our Community members at the point of disclosure and throughout their healing journey. For example, our ACCOs' existing Community relationships supports comprehensive assessment and support planning for Community members at times of vulnerability.

- Resourcing of ACCO early help and response services for our Community members, including for work with those who use violence. Intergenerational healing for families and Community who are at-risk of contact with the Justice system, including Community-led referral processes into our ACCOs' wraparound support services. *"We need programs to redirect what is normal behaviour when arguing in relationships, other than violence... we want to support families to have healing journeys that means they can be back together if possible."*
- Continued progress towards self-determination and respectful partnership between ACCOs, and mainstream family violence service sector to achieve culturally safe and trauma-informed services that meet the needs of our Community.

*At the Community level:*

- Support in Community for spaces of intergenerational healing and community-led prevention, such as increasing understandings of family violence and skill building for respectful relationships and investing in the ACCOs' foundation model as Community Healing and Gathering spaces.
- Localised truth-telling to support the resetting of relationships between Community, Child Protection and Police.
- Accountable implementation of Aboriginal Community led protocols for engagement with Police, (such as the Yan-Yan Police and Aboriginal Community protocols against Family Violence)
- *Community education and data-driven systems change* in collaboration with Community, and local collaborating partners in the Justice and Legal, Family Violence and Child Protection systems.

*At the Systemic level:*

- Comprehensive needs-based investment in Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to provide intergenerational healing, prevention, early intervention and response to our Community.
- Comprehensive investment in ACCO-led workforce and services for people who use violence that centres Aboriginal ways of knowing, being and doing.
- Recognition and dismantling existing colonial service systems that uphold systemic racism.
- Needs (and not output-based) funding of mainstream service system.

**ACCO ways of working require a specialist and supported workforce**

For many years, our ACCOs have struggled to attract and retain staff across the Family Violence and Family Services sector. Some of the specific challenges in this space are:

- *Complexity of services:* As per the funding scope, purpose and deliverables, staff are required to deliver a range of services, including intensive case work, court support, and outreach, which demands a diverse skill set.
- *Cultural sensitivity and loads:* Staff require a deep understanding of the cultural needs of our Communities and families. This requires additional supports for our non-Aboriginal staff to deliver culturally appropriate services and supports. For our Aboriginal staff, the additional complexities of carrying a load outside of work, living and working in two worlds is sometimes a deterrent for working in the sector.
- *Emotional labour:* Working with victim-survivors of, and people who use, family violence can be emotionally taxing, leading to high burnout rates, additionally, with the cultural load complexities for our Aboriginal staff, our ACCOs need to provide additional supports for our staff to deliver effective services.

- *Community impact:* The legacy of colonisation and intergenerational trauma adds layers of complexity to the support needed, which can be challenging for staff to navigate.
- *Competitive wages:* ACCOs are in direct competition for workforce recruitment and retention with both government and mainstream agencies, and in relatively small Western District communities of Aboriginal people.

**To embed our ACCO ways of working with Community, we also need investments in competitive ACCO award rates, recruitment, retention and professional learning for cultural capability**

- *Competitive ACCO Award Rates:* Given the complex and specialist nature of this work with our Communities, and the additional loads described above, ACCOs need to be able to offer competitive salary and packing to attract and retain specialist staff, with a focus on recruiting Aboriginal people.
- *ACCO-specific recruitment and retention strategies* focus on promoting our Community and culturally centred ways of working and supporting our staff to thrive within the workplace, and within the challenges of the nature and sector of work. Retention includes the embedding of cultural and clinical supervision frameworks to further address the cultural load, burnout and vicarious trauma experienced by staff.
- *ACCOs require resourcing the deliver internal workforce Cultural Learning and Cultural Strengthening* to build cultural capability and supports. This aligns with Dhelk Dja identifying that “workforce training, cultural and clinical supervision, reflective practice and support will be strengthened for Aboriginal workers to build capacity and expertise, and to heal and address vicarious trauma”. Specifically noting that the “government will invest in strategies to grow and sustain the Aboriginal family violence workforce to meet current and future service demands.”

**Government systems and mainstream services systems changes required to support locally and regionally centred Aboriginal Family Safety Plans**

*“We want to lead the systems changes so that we can again be places of cultural and Community connection, with solutions that are led by us, for us.”*

**ACCOs have long advocated and actively partnered with Government services and mainstream providers to promote systems change**

Our ACCOs are leaders in collaborative, community-led change for Community justice outcomes through

- Local, Regional and statewide Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committees and Forum (AJF).
- Dhelk Dja Regional Action Groups.
- Victorian Aboriginal Children and Young People’s Alliance members (VACYPA).
- Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (LAECG) members.
- Working for Community outcomes with prisons, Courts, Victoria Police, and the Department of Justice and Community Safety. For example, leading the [Yan Yan Police and Aboriginal Community Protocols for Family Violence](#) (2022).
- Working with and sometimes within, the Victorian Orange Doors and very often provide Community referral pathways into FDSV supports by our ACCOs or other parts of the system
- On-call Aboriginal Justice Community Panel volunteers.

**Systemic barriers to strengthening of our Community-led solutions, facilitated by our ACCO sector include**

- Paternalistic imposition of mainstream understandings of FDSA that are founded in the gender-based drivers, crisis driven, risk and carceral systems responses.

- ACCOs are still underfunded in directive, inflexible, unstable, and inconsistent ways that fail to meet the needs of our Communities (see *Deep Dive* text boxes below related to funding and reporting models).
- Lack of transparency around Aboriginal funding, particularly that benefits mainstream services whilst ignoring and taking advantage of the invisible cultural load and costs carried by ACCOs. Western District ACCOs significantly self-fund Community members' culturally safe access of transport, system navigation and advocacy to tertiary and services.
- Misuse of power and control by FDSA Service funding bodies in their relationships with central prescribing of inflexible funding models and reporting which undermine self-determination and the effectiveness of ACCO ways of working based on culturally centred and Community ways of knowing, being and doing. ACCO ways of working do not fit the stock standard funding models, and this process of mainstream models of service assimilation must stop.
- Lack of cultural safety in mainstream service settings. For example, the Victorian Orange Door service system, that entwines ACCO services with mainstream services that are understandably mistrusted by Community, particularly for their driving of families into the Child Protection and Justice systems.
- Deficit framing of Communities and ACCOs requires a significant change in Government and mainstream services' mindset, to utilise Anti-Racism Praxis to genuinely be led by Community and ACCOs in their daily practice and strategic work.

### **Investing in and honouring local and regional self-determined, Community-led solutions to FDSV in Aboriginal Communities.**

Governments and mainstream services investing in and honouring self-determined and Community-led solutions aligns with

- The established evidence base for Community-led solutions, where proper investment of time, decision-making power and resources are committed.
- Definitions of Aboriginal family violence recognise ongoing violence of colonisation and colonial systems as key drivers of intergenerational trauma and violence in our Communities.
- Self-determination being centred in all government frameworks and the allyship work of mainstream partners.
- Strengths-based understanding of Aboriginal Communities and ACCOs' culturally centred ways of knowing, being and doing. ACCOs have a strong track record of delivering culturally appropriate, comprehensive, holistic, accessible, and community-controlled healthcare to our Communities.
- *Dhelk-Dja: Safe Our Way* Priority One - focusing on investing in Aboriginal Controlled structures, Aboriginal-led and determined measures and outcomes, and investing in local Aboriginal Communities and leaders to drive local solutions; and Priority Three - focusing on transferring decision-making for policy and program development and investing in Aboriginal-led and designed strategy, to provide culturally informed, therapeutic support and healing for Aboriginal children and their families.
- Increased funding to ACCOs is necessary to
  - Address the increasing population and changing demographics of Aboriginal Communities across Western Victoria.
  - Increase availability and access to Western District ACCOs culturally appropriate, comprehensive, holistic, accessible, and community-controlled care to meet the needs of our Communities.
  - Address rural and remote Aboriginal people's lack of access to culturally safe mainstream service experiences.

**WDAC welcome all further conversation in relation to our submission** in support of our Communities and ACCOs. Please reach out to us via our Strategic Policy Advisory and Secretariat team



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- Angela Walsh: [angela.walsh@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:angela.walsh@wathaurong.org.au), 0413 907 536

Nyatne, Gobota (thanks, Take Care),

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Simon Flagg".

**Simon Flagg**

Chair of Western District ACCO Collective and CEO, Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative Limited

Email: [CEO@wathaurong.org.au](mailto:CEO@wathaurong.org.au)



### Deep Dive on the need for Flexible and Self-Determined Funding Structures

The current funding structure of ACCOs is not sustainable, and has been an ongoing challenge and focus of ACCO advocacy for many years. Despite providing a more holistic and wraparound service model that better meets the needs of our Communities, we cannot capture and report the breadth of supports and services we provide to our families. The key challenges with the current funding structure are:

- *Limited Adaptability:* The rigid funding structure comes with predefined objectives and outcomes, which don't always align with the unique needs and goals of our Communities. This limits our ability to adapt the use of funds to specific circumstances.
- *Restricted Innovation:* Inflexible funding inhibits our ability to innovate and try new approaches or solutions for our Communities. Over time, the current funding structure has limited our service's ability to evolve and improve.
- *Inefficient Resource Allocation:* With rigid structures, ACCOs are at times forced to allocate resources in ways that are not the most efficient or effective for some of our Communities' needs. For example, Victorian DFFH continue to fund ACCOs without prior conversations or collaboration on expectations, service delivery targets or our capacity to deliver.
- *Reduced Ownership and Control:* Funding structure reduces our ability to exercise ownership and control and therefore undermines the principle of self-determination.
- *Short-Term Focus:* Program funding often focuses on short-term outcomes and deliverables which limits our ability to plan for the long term and invest in sustainable solutions that best meet the needs of our Communities.
- *Cultural Mismatch:* Inflexible funding structures do not consider the cultural values and practices of our ACCOs and Communities, therefore limiting our ability implement initiatives in a way that aligns with our cultural identity and ways of working.
- *Lack of governance funding:* With such growth in the Family Violence field, there has been an increase in demand for our ACCO time and attention from Departments and mainstream service systems, to partake in consultation on program development and policy direction as well as supporting with inter-agency connection and collaboration. ACCOs do and will provide as much time into these spaces as possible as we value self-determination and a Community-led focus, however without being able to leverage our funds to support our highly impactful ways of working with families, there is further burden put onto our organisation from the State Government.

#### Need for flexibility and self-determination in funding structures for our ACCO ways of working

ACCOs' role means re-modelling in a culturally safe, appropriate way – led by self-determination principles – for Community to decide how their needs are best met, with a range of supports “from birth to dreaming.”

We are dedicated to embedding our ways of working that brings Community together through sincere social and cultural connectedness. Connection to Culture, Country and Community builds, not only on stronger individual and collective identities, but also promotes self-esteem, social and emotional wellbeing, resilience and improved outcomes for Aboriginal Communities.

Our wraparound models are central in our self-determination, Community and cultural identity, as well as Community and individual wellbeing. This model provides operational and financial efficiencies that support improved services, inter-agency connectedness, and cultural education and support.

### Deep Dive on ACCO-led Measures of Change and Success

Mainstream evaluation, monitoring and reporting methods that prioritise quantitative and activity-based data do not tell the powerful story of these culturally and Community driven ways of working. In doing so, these current reporting measures minimise and make invisible the critical role of ACCOs in Communities

success. The impacts of this lack of understanding in funding and service design and contracting mean that

- ACCO leadership and workforces experience frustration and increased cultural load in continually explaining and justifying their impactful ways of working with Community whilst negotiating performance monitoring indicators, targets, and reporting that fail to represent the work that ACCO's do for their communities.
- True wraparound, whole of life, exemplary ACCO models of service are not funded in adequate and sustainable ways, which undermines ACCOs' capacity to meet Communities needs and aspirations to create true equity and ensure their Communities thrive,
- Mainstream systems fail to value and learn from exemplary Aboriginal ways of working and continue to undermine ACCO self-determination in service design and evaluation.

In contrast, Aboriginal-led and collaborative culture for measuring change and success is founded on

- *Aboriginal Community Controlled governance* centring of Aboriginal ways of knowing being and doing, self-determination, decision-making and data sovereignty.
- *Leadership commitment of resources to strengthen collaborative culture of measurement as part of our accountability to our Community;* particularly in the current funding context that does not support ACCOs to self-determine measures of change and success.
- *Staff collaboration, leadership, and implementation to build on the collective passion, expertise and commitment of our staff,* who bring a depth of relationship, knowledge and professional specialist expertise to measuring change and success in their practice with Community.
- *Understanding which tools for measuring change and success are meaningfully aligned with ACCO ways of working; including an ease of use following available training and reflection, Arts-based methods* that align with Aboriginal ways of knowing, being and doing (participatory and strengths-based); *Culturally centred* in Aboriginal ways of knowing, being and doing (including narrative, yarning, deep listening, build connection), and that *may require local adaptation* for the local Community context.

The significant benefits and future possibilities of Community and ACCO-led measurement include

- Accountability to our Community in understanding our relative success and areas for improvement to meet Community experience, expectation, and aspiration.
- Building a collaborative culture and confidence to undertake internal evaluation, with ongoing, hybrid, reflective and applied professional learning and reflective practice, including place-based adaptations of tools and methods.
- Enhancing WDAC's advocacy for self-determined outcomes-based funding and reporting based on Community-led measures of change and success.