

MEDIA RELEASE

26 October 2026

STATEMENT ON FOUR CORNERS PROGRAM

SNAICC's first concern is for the children that were assaulted and abused by Edwina Ling at Injinoo Childcare Centre, and their families. It is unacceptable that any child is abused in early childhood education and care and it should have never happened.

Some Aboriginal community controlled early education services sit outside the National Quality Framework. This does not mean they are not regulated to high standards of quality and safety, but that they are regulated by state and territory governments.

SNAICC welcomes the discussion about the application of the National Quality Framework as part of how children in early learning are kept safe. We have long advocated for nationally consistent standards of care that reflect the importance of culture.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, like all children, deserve the highest possible standards. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children this includes consideration of cultural safety and connection to Country.

The overwhelming majority of Aboriginal community controlled early childhood services are high quality. These services operate with the needs of children as their first priority, with strong and clear child safe policies and procedures in place.

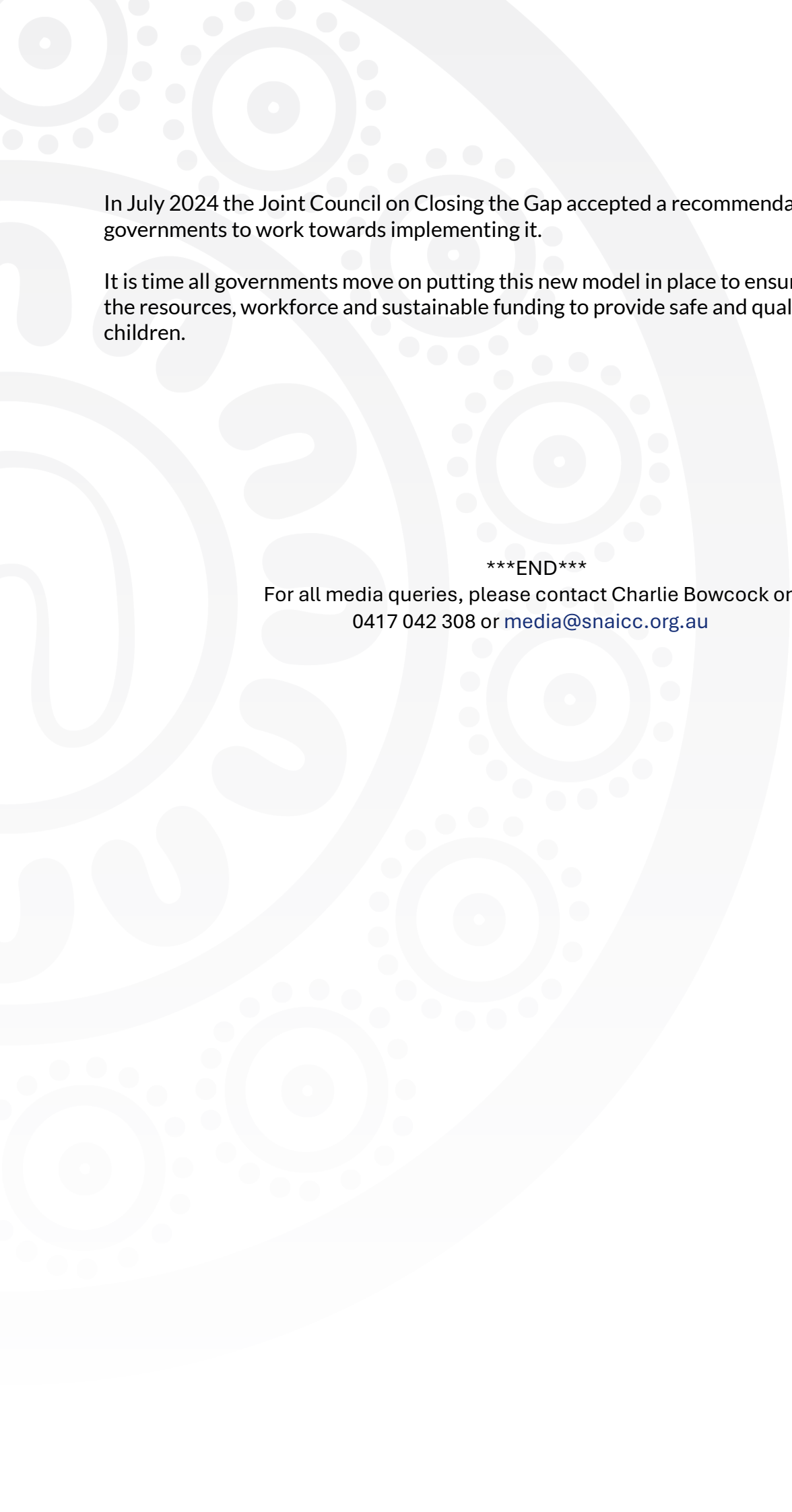
SNAICC has argued for many years that the current subsidy-based funding models are a safety issue, not just an administrative one. When funding can't be counted on, neither can the continuity of care children and families depend on. Reliability of funding is reliability of safety.

A model built for a different context can't be expected to hold the cultural and relational safety that community-controlled, holistic care provides. Trust and safety are built through relationships, by a workforce families recognise as their own.

Governments have the opportunity to implement a model that reflects the cultural and relational safety that community-controlled holistic care provides.

A national Early Education and Care Commission that is informed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander expertise presents an opportunity for this reform.

The need for a new model isn't a new ask. It draws on the voices of ACCOs, families, and government representatives from consultations nationwide, backed by evidence review and independent economic modelling.



In July 2024 the Joint Council on Closing the Gap accepted a recommendation for governments to work towards implementing it.

It is time all governments move on putting this new model in place to ensure services have the resources, workforce and sustainable funding to provide safe and quality care for children.

END

For all media queries, please contact Charlie Bowcock on
0417 042 308 or media@snaicc.org.au