

Indigenous MAKE ^ POVERTY HISTORY.

COMBAT CHRONIC AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

He lifted up his hands and eyes in silent agony for some time; at last he exclaimed "All dead"! "All dead"! And then hung his head in mournful silence.'

- so wrote British Judge-Advocate David Collins of the reaction of Arabanoo, a Cadigal man captured by the British, on finding bodies of his people killed by disease at Sydney Harbour. In 1789 a form of smallpox killed two-thirds of the Aboriginal people around Sydney, devastating the community.

How have things changed?

Today Indigenous Australians tragically continue to die at outrageous rates due to diseases unknown before 1788.

Life not Death for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

.....
 • *As you go, proclaim the good news,*
 • *'The kingdom of heaven has come near'*
 • *Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse*
 • *the lepers, cast out demons. You re-*
 • *ceived without payment; give without*
 • *payment. Matthew 10:7-8*

Australia has fallen behind in Indigenous life expectancy—even compared to other Indigenous Peoples. Taking into account discrepancies in the ways in which countries estimate life expectancy, according to HREOC ,data suggests that Indigenous males in Australia live between 8.8 and 13.5 years less than Indigenous males in Canada, New Zealand, and the USA. For women, it is 10.9 and 12. 6 years less respectively.

Food for thought, prayer and action:

- Life expectancy for Indigenous men is 59.4 years and for Indigenous women it is 64.8 years: approximately 17 years less than their non-Indigenous counterparts.
- 65% of Indigenous people have at least one long term health problem.
- Hospitalization rates for potentially preventable chronic conditions are 8 times the rate for non-Indigenous people.
- In 2004/2005 26,500 Indigenous people who needed to go to hospital did not go because of cost, personal reasons, logistics or other barriers.
- Indigenous men suicide at 2.6 times the rate in the non-Indigenous population.
- Indigenous women suicide at twice the rate of the non-Indigenous population.

.....
 • ***It is not credible to suggest***
 • ***that one of the wealthiest na-***
 • ***tions of the world cannot***
 • ***solve a health crisis affecting***
 • ***less than 3% of its citizens***

• Tom Calma, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner



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MIPH Prayer Sheet 6

ACTIVITY

In April 2007, 40 of Australia's leading Indigenous and non-Indigenous health peak bodies and human rights organisations (including the Make Indigenous Poverty History Campaign) joined forces to launch a campaign to 'Close the Gap' on health inequality. The campaign comes in response to a call from the Social Justice Commissioner to achieve health equality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within 25 years.

'Close the Gap' calls on all levels of Australian government to put in place firm targets, funding and timeframes to address health inequalities, including providing equal access to primary health care for Indigenous Australians within 10 years.

Find out more about the campaign and show your support at www.hreoc.gov.au/social_justice/

BIBLE REFLECTION

READ Matthew ch.8 vv.14-17

Christians affirm Jesus as the Great Physician who sought to heal the whole person, not just their physical ailments. Just as grace is freely given to all, the Gospels attest that Jesus healed whoever came to him, including many considered unclean and outside the bounds of his own community (such as the Roman centurion's servant (Mt. 8:5-13)). His healing compassion extends to the powerless and most vulnerable, to those who hurt most.

Prayer Petitions

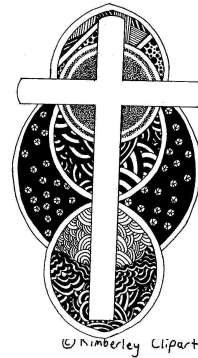
Please Pray

- For a reduction in the incidence among Indigenous Australians of cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, diabetes, tuberculosis, hepatitis A and B, and other ravaging illnesses.
- For those at risk of suicide and all who work to support them and build up self-esteem.

PRAYERS

God of wholeness

In Jesus Christ you come amongst us to deliver your people from disease and all that hinders the fullness of life. Hear the cries of all Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people who suffer from diabetes, depression, and other debilitating disease, who struggle with the thought or reality of suicide, or from any other chronic illness. Enable them to find fresh strength and healing, in the power of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.



Jesus, bearer of our infirmities,
You are found amongst us in the sorrows
of our communities:

in the young children afflicted with disease;

in the young men and women dying before their time;

in the young and old struggling for breath, blighted by diabetes, or struck down by strokes or heart complaints;

in all those struggling for fullness of life. Grant us compassion to share your healing love, and courage and determination to renew the will to health for all, that all may share resurrection and shalom.

Amen.

Acknowledgement: This prayer sheet was originally created by Revd. Dr. Jonathan Inkpin and Revd. Penny Jones



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