1. Under the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), the Queensland Government has committed to closing the gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a generation, and to halving the Indigenous mortality gap for children under five within a decade. A “Statement of Intent” on closing the gap was signed between the Australian Government and Indigenous Australians in March 2008.
2. To effectively “make tracks” towards achieving these commitments and in an endeavour to prevent ongoing health issues experienced by Indigenous children in Cape York, a package of key new and enhanced maternal and child health services will be provided, including a Baby Basket initiative, child health checks, investigating changes to birth registration to include lands or kinship groups on the certificate, and better coordination of new and existing services.
3. The packaged initiatives are based on a three-tiered model that includes local health services supported by access to increased visiting specialist services which are sustained through workforce support and better coordination.
4. It is anticipated that service enhancement and improved coordination and integration will be realised from the beginning of 2009. Implementation of the package will include joint development of key milestones on a community-by-community basis, along with a risk management strategy to mitigate risks including the recruitment and retention of workforce.
5. An evaluation of the package will fall within the state-wide ‘Closing the Gap’ Annual and Quarterly Reports.
6. Cabinet approved that a trial of key maternal and child health service enhancements for Cape York be progressed as a priority in four communities (Kowanyama, Lockhart River, Pormpuraaw and Napranum) with service delivery elements of the package to be coordinated and integrated by Apunipima Cape York Health Council.
7. Cabinet endorsed that the key elements of the maternal and child health package underpinned by a three-tiered model will include comprehensive core local services supported by access to visiting specialist services, and sustained through workforce support and development and better coordination of new and existing services.
8. *Attachment*
* [Statement of Intent](Attachments/Statement%20of%20Intent.pdf)