

29 March 2019

Media Release

Film gets to the heart of Rheumatic Heart Disease in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

FREE Event: 'Take Heart' film, narrated by Stan Grant, Indigenous and International Affairs Analyst

When: Thursday 4 April, 2019

Time: 2pm-3.30pm

Where: Majura Theatre, 11 Lancaster Place, Majura Park, Canberra Airport

[Register here](#) – it's a free event

Despite Rheumatic Heart Disease (RHD) being eliminated in most parts of Australia since the 1960s, it's still highly prevalent in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and is a significant contributor to the health gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

To support this year's National Close the Gap Day, the [Australian Pharmacy Council](#) (APC) is hosting a screening of the multi-award winning film '[Take Heart](#)' to raise awareness of the disease in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Canberrans are being urged to watch *Take Heart* to support the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and to better understand the impact of RHD, through the stories told by those battling this condition and by those caring for RHD patients.

Stan Grant, ABC's Indigenous and International Affairs Analyst says this was a disease that was fairly widespread in the mainstream community, across most populations

"Now it is prevalent primarily amongst these small, minority, Indigenous populations. What does that tell you? It tells you that people haven't had the awareness or haven't had the education and they haven't had the access to healthcare, to prevent what are entirely preventable diseases," Mr Grant said.

[w pharmacycouncil.org.au](http://www.pharmacycouncil.org.au) | [e admin@pharmacycouncil.org.au](mailto:admin@pharmacycouncil.org.au) | [p + 61 2 6188 4288](tel:+61261884288)

Level 1, 15 Lancaster Place
Majura Park, Canberra Airport
ACT 2609
Australia

ABN 45 568 153 354

APC CEO Bronwyn Clark says two Australians die every week from RHD and it's primarily contributing to premature deaths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

"Healthcare is a fundamental right for all however, despite the 10-year commitment by each major political party to close the gap, the chasm still remains," Ms Clark said.

"Hosting this film is just one way we can show our support and open up the discussions about how our governments, health services, pharmacy sector and community-based services can work to help prevent RHD."

We hope you can join us and the journey to achieving health equity by 2031.

Media Contact

Bronwyn Clark
Chief Executive Officer
02 6188 4288

[w pharmacycouncil.org.au](http://www.pharmacycouncil.org.au) | [e admin@pharmacycouncil.org.au](mailto:admin@pharmacycouncil.org.au) | [p + 61 2 6188 4288](tel:+61261884288)

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