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Title:

Press release from the Minister of Health, Mr. Shard :
Aboriginal health services

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PRESS RELEASE FROM THE MINISTER OF HEALTH, MR. SHARD.

ABORIGINAL HEALTH SERVICES

10/11/72

DETAILS OF A NEW SCHEME TO TRANSFORM AND INTEGRATE ABORIGINAL HEALTH SERVICES IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA WERE RELEASED TODAY BY THE MINISTER OF HEALTH, MR. SHARD.

MR. SHARD SAID THE SCHEME WAS A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH IN PROVIDING IMPROVED HEALTH SERVICES FOR ABORIGINES IN LINE WITH STATE GOVERNMENT POLICY.

THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT WILL ASSUME COMPLETE RESPONSIBILITY FOR HEALTH OF ABORIGINES IN RESERVES AND MISSIONS, EXCLUDING HOSPITAL AND SOME MEDICAL SERVICES. ABORIGINAL HEALTH SERVICES WERE PREVIOUSLY ADMINISTERED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY WELFARE.

"THERE IS A GRAVE NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT IN CLINICAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES FOR ABORIGINES, AND WE WILL BE CONCENTRATING IN THESE AREAS" THE MINISTER SAID.

"NEW STAFF ARE NOW BEING SOUGHT AND EXISTING NURSING STAFF IN THE ABORIGINAL RESOURCES SECTION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY WELFARE ARE BEING TRANSFERRED TO THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

"SPECIAL COURSES WILL BE CONDUCTED TO ENSURE THAT ALL STAFF ARE AWARE OF LATEST MEDICAL AND NURSING TECHNIQUES, PREVENTATIVE CARE, HEALTH EDUCATION METHODS AND THAT THEY APPRECIATE ABORIGINAL CULTURE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS IN THEIR WORK.

"NINETEEN ABORIGINAL ASSISTANTS ARE NOW EMPLOYED BY THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT AND PLANS ARE UNDERWAY TO CREATE NEW NURSING AIDE POSITIONS ON THE RESERVES. THESE WILL BE HELD BY ABORIGINAL WOMEN WHO WILL WORK CLOSELY WITH NURSES.

"IN ADDITION WE ARE CONTINUING TO RECRUIT ABORIGINAL HOME VISITORS AND MALE HYGIENE ASSISTANTS" MR. SHARD SAID.

A MEDICAL OFFICER HAS ALREADY BEEN APPOINTED, AND APPLICATIONS ARE NOW BEING SOUGHT FOR THE POSITION OF SENIOR SISTER (ABORIGINAL HEALTH) AND TWENTY SIX NURSES.

MR. SHARD SAID THE TWO ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS HAD

BEEN CREATED TO PROVIDE EFFICIENT PLANNING, CO-ORDINATION
AND SUPERVISION OF THE TOTAL PROGRAMME.