



Health matters – an update from your Community Advisory Committee

The Indian Ocean Territories Health Service (IOTHS) Community Advisory Committee (CAC) met on the 2nd of June for its second meeting of 2026.

Community consultation on the next IOT Five-Year Health and Wellbeing Strategy is currently underway. Drop-in sessions were held recently on CKI and CI though regrettably the schedule had to be amended at the last minute due to flight interruptions. Residents are still able to contribute their thoughts and feedback through written surveys which will be distributed. Residents are also able to provide feedback directly to CAC members or to the Administrator's office. A list of CAC members is available at the bottom of this communique.

The consultation sessions identified a number of recurring themes, including:

- access to essential health services, particularly maternity, dental, physiotherapy, audiology and aged care
- the need for culturally appropriate and accessible services, including interpreters and translated information
- the cost and reliability of essential goods, particularly fresh food
- insufficient support for seniors and vulnerable residents
- broader concerns relating to health infrastructure, emergency response capacity, recreation facilities, housing pressures and community safety.

The community is able to provide input into the IOT Five-Year Strategy via a survey (available in English, Bahasa Malay and Chinese) or by speaking to the Community Advisory Committee members. A Cocos Malay version is being prepared and will also be available soon. The Cocos community will be informed separately once it is released.

Access the survey here: <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/territories/indian-ocean-territories/health-service>

The Committee noted recent IOTHS updates, including new clinical equipment, recruitment progress across a number of roles, and ongoing work to improve service delivery across Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

Committee members were also advised that 4G emergency alert devices are now available for elderly and vulnerable residents on Christmas Island. Residents who may benefit are encouraged to contact Community Health Nurse Stevhnle Nel at Christmas Island Hospital. The

committee was also pleased to hear that the Australian Government has funded the repair works for the Territory Day Park to Smith Point walking trail, and works are well underway.

The Committee discussed community concerns including the confidentiality of patient records, waste and abandoned vehicles, local footpaths, aged care support, and the waiting area at Cocos (Keeling) Islands Airport.

Residents with concerns about the conduct of a registered health practitioner may raise these with the [Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency](#).

These meetings are vital for the successful design and delivery of community-driven and fit-for-purpose health services, and I am pleased to have representatives from Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands involved in advocating for the best outcomes for our communities. The CAC meets every quarter and if you have any health-related issues you would like raised, please contact a CAC Committee member or alternatively, email my office at iotadministrator@infrastructure.gov.au. The planned meeting dates can be found below.

The health services on Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands are delivered by the Indian Ocean Territories Health Service (IOTHS) through the Australian Government and include inpatient and emergency care, home and community health care, pathology and radiology services, oral health care, visiting specialist medical and allied health services and telehealth.

Community Advisory Committee Members:

Christmas Island

Paul Maberly
Tanja Schonewald
Swee Lin (Mel) Tung
Regine Andersen
Stephanie Lai

Cocos (Keeling) Islands

Jan (Ayesha) Young
Ibrahim Macrae

Planned 2026 meeting dates for the IOTHS Community Advisory Committee:

- Monday 24th August 2026
- Wednesday 25th November 2026