

**Yoorrook Justice Commission**  
**Submission of Sissy Pettit Havea**

My name is Sissy Pettit Havea. My mob is Wemba Wemba. The diseases I have and am suffering from are as follows: Rhematic Heart Fever and Chronic Heart Disease, I had undergone major bypass surgery at the age of 35, I actually turned 35 in hospital.

Some of my family suffer from Chronic Heart Disease and Rhematic Heart Fever, and I am certain it all stems from change of diet from bush tucker to mass produced foods.

Whilst suffering over several months and presenting at the Robinvale and District Base Hospital I was turned away on every occasion except for one time when at last a angel indisguise as a nurse said "Sissy you know what's going on with your body, you have been here now numerous times, I'm going to perform a test that should show whether you are having a heart attack.

The test was a troponin test, it tests the levels of oxygen in your blood. I was sent in an ambulance vehicle to Mildura Base Hospital then flown to Adelaide Royal Hospital by Air Ambulance for triple bypass surgery. I consider myself lucky to have celebrated my 35th birthday as I did not know whether I was going to see a day more than have celebrated my 34th.

Elders travelled at their own expense to visit me in Soth Australia from NSW and Victoria. This strengthened my spirit and saw me walking around the biggest floor level where I could only see extremely old patients, not a good feeling I tell yah, it did make me feel sorry that no family members were there visiting them though.

During my times of visiting the Robinvale hospital I was treated like I knew nothing, was uneducated in these matters and felt ostracised for being black and unwell. Drs dont like being called after hours for us black fullas, hence why our death rates are higher ay then others, could be! I been turned away many times when facing death, if it wasn't for my strong spirit and free will I'd be dead long time ago. Waiting for a nurse to open a locked entrance door to the hospital whilst gasping for air and holding on for dear life is not something I want our beautiful babies and Elders to experience, I have had to call an ambulance from the door step looking in at the nurse shrugging her shoulders. Calling an ambulance outside the steps of the hospital has left me with ambulance bills. I now feel and tell others in my community not to go to our towns hospital but instead drive an hour away to Mildura for culturally safer treatment and to be seen to. There is no trust that the hospital staff at home cares for your life, or see your life as valuable and worth saving. I now use bush medicines instead of the big pharma company medicines, they not getting a red cent out of me for them pills to make me sicker under their will.

Examples of good practice programs happening at ACCHOS include bush medicines, our creator made the plants specifically for its peoples. ACCHOs need to give up the ghost thinking western medical practices and approaches work, it works in keeping the government funding rolling in, it works for keeping the elite in employment in the city but not out in rural country landscapes where my peoples and I are refused access to the ACCHO Health Service at MVAC.

Some changes to the health system that I would like to see include, to stop funding approaches and systems that continue to benefit mob health and mob concerns for wellbeing. Fund what works for mob, on mob country, run by mob, benefited by mob.

Mob controlled and operated doesn't mean we govern at our will, we are led up the golden path by white CEOs who are in real control.

**END OF STATEMENT**