



## ONE CHARGE DROPPED, 23 UPHeld— OUTCOME OF APPEAL BY FORMER CEO

A judgment against a former chief executive officer of Riverina Medical and Dental Aboriginal Corporation (RivMed) has been largely upheld in the court of appeal.

In February 2018, Ms Selena Joan Lyons was found guilty of continually exploiting her position to authorise payments to herself to which she was not entitled. Shortly after she was sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment—nine of which were to be served in custody—and ordered to repay \$24,187.25, Ms Lyons lodged an appeal.

Between 22 and 24 January 2019, the appeal was heard by Judge N Norman in the Downing Centre Local Court in Sydney, who upheld the conviction in relation to 23 of the 24 charges and ordered reparations of \$22,339.

In handing down the sentence, the judge took into account Ms Lyons' health issues and noted that though her offences were serious, her gains were relatively modest. The judge also noted that Ms Lyons showed no remorse and accepted no responsibility for the offences, blaming staff over whom she had authority.

Ms Lyons will be subject to an intensive corrections order (ICO) for 18 months, to be served in the community. Should Ms Lyons breach any of its 17 conditions—or fail to comply with the reparation order—the ICO will be revoked and she will be taken into custody.

The Registrar of Indigenous Corporations, Mr Selwyn Button, was circumspect in his comments: 'I'm satisfied with the outcome but disappointed that Ms Lyons continues to shirk responsibility for her actions and blame others for her misappropriations. Aboriginal medical services play a vital role and we need to ensure they maintain their integrity, strength and transparency in operating services for their clients. The health of local communities is at stake.'

Having been convicted of dishonesty, Ms Lyons has been automatically disqualified from managing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporation for five years.

### Background

See previous media releases:

- [Former CEO of Aboriginal medical service sentenced to jail](#), 12 February 2018—MR1718-19
- [Former CEO of Wagga medical service found guilty and convicted](#), 22 November 2017—MR1718-14
- [Registrar lays charges against former CEO of Wagga medical service](#), 8 August 2016—MR1617-04

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