

SEWB Policy Partnership Meeting 7 Communiqué

5 December 2025

The Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) Policy Partnership met virtually on 5 December 2025 to progress national priorities for reducing suicides and improving social and emotional wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

Members reaffirmed the importance of working together to strengthen social and emotional wellbeing, mental health, suicide prevention, postvention, and healing, with cultural safety embedded throughout. The Partnership discussed key areas of focus and reiterated its commitment to collaboration across governments, communities, and the sector.

The Partnership considered an updated Agreement to Implement to support its role in guiding national reforms. Members also agreed to progress a refreshed Strategic Plan structured around a six-pillar reform agenda that reflects the breadth of social and emotional wellbeing and aligns with the changing policy landscape, with initiatives under the National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement.

The Department of Health, Disability, and Ageing provided an update on the National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement and the recommendations of the Productivity Commission's Inquiry Report. Members noted opportunities to contribute to ongoing reform and agreed to a dedicated workshop in early 2026 to inform the development of priorities under a SEWB Schedule.

Members discussed the development of the Mental Health Declaration and future national governance arrangements. The Partnership emphasised the importance of ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social and emotional wellbeing is embedded across the entire national agreement rather than siloed, and that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander principles guide both the overarching reform directions and implementation actions. Members noted that the Mental Health Declaration should operate as a cross-cutting component informed by existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander strategies and frameworks, including the Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Declaration, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Strategy, and the refreshed National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Mental Health and Social and Emotional Wellbeing. The Partnership also highlighted the importance of clear accountability and meaningful Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement in future governance arrangements.

The SEWB Policy Partnership has supported the development and further consideration of a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander SEWB Schedule under the next National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement and will continue to progress this work and provide advice to Joint Council for consideration at future meetings.

The Partnership also discussed the importance of improving outcomes for young people and contributing to efforts to reduce youth incarceration (Target 11 of the National Agreement on



SEWB Policy Partnership

Closing the Gap

Closing the Gap). Members highlighted the need for a strengthened and coordinated approach across three key domains: addressing the underlying determinants and intergenerational factors that contribute to youth offending; improving social and emotional wellbeing supports that strengthen young people's connection to culture, family, community, and country; and ensuring culturally safe, therapeutic social and emotional wellbeing supports are available for young people in custodial settings. Members also noted the importance of closer collaboration between health and justice systems, elevating evidence on effective community-based supports, and recognising the intersecting needs of children and young people with disability.

The Partnership will continue to progress this work and is scheduled to meet again in early 2026.