



Traineeship programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in health care and community services

Information for Providers

September 2025

About the Artwork: David Williams, proud Wakka Wakka artist at Gilimbaa artwork depicts the 'Workforce' element from Tarni O'Shea and Gilimbaa's artwork ' We All Share The Night Sky'. The artwork, developed for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan highlights shared commitment to a culturally safe, representative Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce.

This information sheet provides details about the Indigenous Health Workforce Traineeship (IHWT) and the First Nations Health Worker Traineeship (FNHWT) programs for Grantees responsible for delivering the programs.

A strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce delivers better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

About the programs

The Australian government funds two programs that help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enter the primary health care workforce. The programs create viable career pathways and build the capacity of Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHS) and both programs align with the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

- Indigenous Health Workforce Traineeship (IHWT) program is for Certificate II to Diploma level qualifications.
- First Nations Health Worker Traineeship (FNHWT) program is for Certificate III and IV level qualifications to become Aboriginal Health Practitioners and Aboriginal Health Workers.

What are the differences between the programs?

Questions	IHWT Program	FNHWT Program
How many trainees does the program support?	The number of trainees that can be supported is determined by each state and territory IHWT program provider's overall budget. Funding is provided for trainee's course fees, wages, accommodation and travel allowance to attend training away from home.	The FNHWT Program supports up to 500 Aboriginal Health Practitioners and Aboriginal Health Workers.
What qualification is included?	Trainees are supported to complete Certificate II through to Diploma-level health and community service and some retail qualifications. The ACCHO and trainee together identify skills requirements and	Cultural and clinical wrap around supports to complete the Certificate III or Certificate IV qualifications in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care training package.

Questions	IHWT Program	FNHWT Program
	<p>select an IHWT Program approved course under the Health Training Package (HLT) and selected courses under the Community Services Training Package (CHC). More information on these courses can be found at: (https://training.gov.au).</p> <p>A list of approved IHWT Program qualifications is provided below at Appendix 1.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate III in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care • Certificate IV in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care • Certificate IV in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care (Practice) <p>For more information, refer to the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) website: https://www.naccho.org.au/fnhwtp/</p>
<p>Will the trainee be paid a wage?</p>	<p>Trainees are paid a wage throughout their traineeship in accordance with the <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services Award 2020</i> (Commonwealth); or as required under the employing ACCHO's Employee Agreement.</p>	<p>Trainees may be able to apply for financial support with Government funding and subsidies such as Australian Apprentice Training Support Payment, Living Away From Home Allowance or ABSTUDY Living Allowance.</p> <p>Funding is provided to ACCHOs to support the hosting of the trainees including clinical supervision and wrap around supports and may be used to partially subsidise the wages of the trainee.</p>
<p>What support is provided to the trainee?</p>	<p>Trainees will be able to access travel and accommodation if needing to leave home to attend their course. Trainees will also have access to mentors and supervisors.</p> <p>IHWT funding is split into 2 Grant Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration – to meet costs for IHWT program coordination, supervisor and mentoring training and to support the delivery of the program • Traineeship - to meet traineeship wages, travel and accommodation costs, and for Registered Training Organisations course fees. 	<p>Provides supervision and workplace support to trainees through their Trainee Supervisor and Trainee Support Officer throughout their Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Registered Training Organisation (ACCHRTO) for traineeship.</p> <p>Jurisdictional Trainee Coordinator (JTC) are employed by peak bodies in each state and territory to work with ACCHOs and ACCHRTOs across the jurisdiction to promote the FNHWT Program. JTCs will also facilitate ACCHO and ACCHRTO access to jurisdictional funding and support services. While JTCs may check on the progress of trainees, they are not employed to provide intensive wrap around support to each trainee. This is the role of the Trainee Support Officer in each ACCHRTO or Student Support Manager in Queensland or the Northern Territory.</p>

Questions	IHWT Program	FNHWT Program
Where will the trainee study?	Qualifications can be completed through Registered Training Organisations (RTO), and ACCHRTOs, depending on availability of courses.	Trainees are encouraged to complete their training through an ACCHRTO (where possible), in the Northern Territory and Queensland training will be provided by mainstream RTOs.

Frequently Asked Questions

How are courses selected to be part of the Health Training Package for the IHWT program?

Courses included in the IHWT program are based on community need as identified by state and territory peak Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Health Organisations. These include courses in the Health Training Package (HLT) and selected courses under the Community Services Training Package (CHC) and Retail Services Training Package (SIR).

Are IHWT traineeships restricted to the training included in the List of approved IHWT courses ([Appendix 1](#))?

No. The department will consider training that is not included in current List of approved IHWT courses (Appendix 1) where that training aligns with the IHWT program objectives.

You will need to contact the Department if you would like to offer training to your trainees that is are not included in the list of approved IHWT qualifications (Appendix 1)

Examples of additional training that has been approved for inclusion in the IHWT program are:

- CHC43215 Certificate IV in Alcohol and Other Drugs
- CHC43315 Certificate IV in Mental Health
- CHC51015 Diploma of Counselling
- CHC53315 Diploma of Mental Health

I have an employee/trainee that wants to do a Certificate IV in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care Practice, what program would suit them best?

Your organisations eligibility process will help guide you based on what the trainee needs e.g. what support is needed, are trainee wages required and what is their intended outcome for their qualification?

The table above that outlines the differences between the two programs may offer guidance in determining which program is most appropriate for the trainee.

For Certificate III or IV in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care or Primary Health Care (Practice), please contact traineeship@naccho.org to enquire about the First Nations Health Worker Traineeship program in the first instance. If you are unable to secure a place through the FNHWT program, the IHWT program can be used to fund these traineeships.

Where will my trainees undertake their training/placement?

IHWT program trainees will undertake training at an available Registered Training Organisation (RTO) or Aboriginal Community Controlled Health RTOs (ACCHRTO) depending on the availability of IHWT eligible courses. Traineeships should fill the requirements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHS) in your state or territory.

All trainees in the FNHWT Program are encouraged to train through an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Registered Training Organisations (ACCHRTO) (where possible). Where there are no ACCHRTOs, training is provided by TAFE or mainstream RTOs.

All work placements are provided in an ACCHO or AMS workplace, where possible, and trainees will have structured learning which links to their coursework.

What funding and support will my organisation be provided and what is the benefit?

Indigenous Health Workforce Traineeship program

The ACCHO as grantee can recruit a IHWT coordinator or similar administration position to work with the ACCHS or AMS to recruit and place trainees within their services.

Each IHWT program trainee will receive wages, on-the-job training, formal course work, and they will have access to a qualified mentor or supervisor throughout the traineeship.

IHWT program grant agreements split funding into two activities:

1. Activity 1 (approximately 25% of total funding)

These funds cover IHWT program administrative costs and may be used to employ a project coordinator to administer the program, along with other costs associated with promoting and running the IHWT program.

2. Activity 2 (approximately 75% of total funding)

These funds cover IHWT program traineeship costs and may be used to pay trainee wages, course costs, and contribute to travel and accommodation costs. These funds can also be used to provide formal training to mentors or supervisors to support trainees. Funding for wages is only available whilst a trainee is studying and will cease once their qualifications are complete.

IHWT program funding can be used to offer a traineeship to a current ACCHS or AMS employee to upskill, or if that person has moved into a new role that is aligned to their traineeship.

First Nations Health Worker Traineeship program

FNHWT program funding supports ACCHOs to provide supervision and workplace supports. It also supports ACCHRTOs to deliver wrap-around cultural and educational supports to trainees, pay for clinical supervision for trainees, backfill trainees whilst on block training and partially subsidise the wages of the trainee. For more information about the support provided through the FNHWT program please refer to <https://www.naccho.org.au/fnhwtp/>

The program's funding is split into three milestone payments:

- Milestone 1 – Commencement and Completion of Block 1 (25% of total funding)
- Milestone 2 – 50% completion of qualification (50% of total funding)
- Milestone 3 – 100% completion of qualification (25% of total funding)

What support will I provide to trainees?

Indigenous Health Workforce Traineeship program

A dedicated IHWT program coordinator is employed to support the IHWT program at the state or territory level, providing support to ACCHs to recruit trainees, and assist with identifying courses for trainees offered through ACCHRTOs or other RTOs.

The IHWT program allows for wrap around support to ACCHs with training offered to mentors and supervisors to support trainees.

First Nations Health Worker Traineeship program

As the employer, you will identify a supervisor who will support the trainee through their qualification and clinical placement requirements.

You will also establish a relationship with the training providers to ensure that you are across any issues facing the trainee and are able to broker a solution in partnership with the trainee.

This program requires a Training Support Officer (TSO) to be employed in your ACCHRTO who ensures trainees receive cultural and other wrap around supports to complete their training and clinical placements.

TSOs establish relationships with trainees during program orientation and provide various support services for students such as:

- social and emotional wellbeing support
- cultural support and mentoring
- attendance support
- administrative support to help organise and coordinate student travel, accommodation and allowances.

Can IHWT and FNHWT trainees receive training funded from other sources?

The IHWT Grant Opportunity Guidelines provides information on what the money can and cannot be used for. In particular, Section **5.3 What the grant money cannot be used for** activities for which other Commonwealth, state, territory or local government bodies have primary responsibility.

IHWT trainees are ineligible from being enrolled in the FNHWT Program for the same qualification they are undertaking.

Can we work with other Providers funded under the IHWT program to access training?

Yes. IHWT program funded organisations can work together to support trainees where access to courses is not available in their state or territory.

Providers will need to agree on the split in costs and management of trainee data and inform the Department of the training arrangements through periodic performance and financial reporting.

How do I manage funding sources?

IHWT program funding is administered by ACCHOs as the IHWT Program Providers in each state and territory. The IHWT Program is to be used as a supplementary funding source where the FNHWT Program allocation is fully committed. The list of approved IHWT Program qualifications is at [Appendix 1](#).

FNHWT program funding is administered through the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) for the following qualifications:

- HLT30121 – Certificate III in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care
- HLT40121 – Certificate IV in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care
- HLT40221 – Certificate IV in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care Practice

IHWT Program Trainee Data Collection template

The IHWT Program provider records trainee data with their Activity Work Plan and Performance Report each financial year.

The department will have informal quarterly meetings with IHWT Program providers where providers will send a copy of their aggregated trainee data in January, April, July and October of each year. This enables the department to have point in time, aggregate data to inform government and for internal reporting.

Milestone Reporting

IHWT Program providers submit two reports each year:

- Activity Work Plans including annual Trainee Data Collection report – Due 1 August
- Performance and Financial Report – Due 31 July

Indigenous Health Worker Traineeship (IHWT) Program Contacts and links

Location	Organisation
Northern Territory	Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory https://www.amsant.org.au/ Phone: (08) 8944 6666 Email: reception@amsant.org.au
Western Australia	Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia https://www.ahcwa.org.au/ Phone: (08) 9227 1631; (08) 9228 1099 Email: reception@ahcwa.org

Location	Organisation
South Australia	Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia https://ahcsa.org.au/ Phone: (08) 8273 7200 Email: ahcsa@ahcsa.org.au
New South Wales	Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW https://www.ahmrc.org.au/ Phone: (02) 9212 4777 Email: ahmrc@ahmrc.org.au
Queensland	Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council https://www.qaihc.com.au/ Phone: (07) 3328 8500 Email: communications@qaihc.com.au
Tasmania	Karadi Aboriginal Corporation http://www.karadi.org.au/ Phone: (03) 6272 3511 Email: info@karadi.org.au
Victoria	Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations https://www.vaccho.org.au/ Phone: (03) 9411 9411 Email: communications@vaccho.org.au
National	IHWT: https://www.health.gov.au/our-work/indigenous-health-workforce-traineeships-program

First Nations Health Worker Traineeship (FNHWT) Program Contacts and links

National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation	Email: traineeship@naccho.org.au Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Health and Care Traineeship Framework Webpage: www.naccho.org.au/fnhwtp/
Department of Health, Disability and Ageing	FNHWT Program: https://www.health.gov.au/our-work/first-nations-health-worker-traineeship-program First Nations Health Workforce Mailbox: FirstNationsHealthWorkforce@health.gov.au

Appendix 1 – Indigenous Health Workforce Traineeship (IHWT)

Approved IHWT Qualifications – as of May 2025

*This is not an exhaustive list. The department will consider training that is not included in the below list where that training aligns with the IHWT program objectives and will provide updates when new qualifications are approved.

As of March 2026, the below qualifications are eligible for inclusion in the IHWT program:

HLT – Health (Release 9.2, last updated July 2023)	
Certificate II	
HLT20121	Certificate II in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care
HLT21020	Certificate II in Medical Service First Response
HLT23221	Certificate II in Health Support Services
HLT26015	Certificate II in Population Health
HLT26120	Certificate II in Indigenous Environmental Health
Certificate III	
HLT30121	Certificate III in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care
HLT31020	Certificate III in Ambulance Communications (Call-taking)
HLT31120	Certificate III in Non-Emergency Patient Transport
HLT31220	Certificate III in Basic Health Care
HLT33021	Certificate III in Allied Health Assistance
HLT33115	Certificate III in Health Services Assistance
HLT35021	Certificate III in Dental Assisting
HLT35115	Certificate III in Dental Laboratory Assisting
HLT36015	Certificate III in Population Health
HLT36115	Certificate III in Indigenous Environmental Health
HLT37015	Certificate III in Sterilisation Services
HLT37121	Certificate III in Hospital or Health Services Pharmacy Support
HLT37215	Certificate III in Pathology Collection
HLT37315	Certificate III in Health Administration
HLT37415	Certificate III in Pathology Assistance
Certificate IV	
HLT40121	Certificate IV in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care
HLT40221	Certificate IV in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care Practice
HLT41020	Certificate IV in Ambulance Communications (Dispatch)
HLT41120	Certificate IV in Health Care

HLT – Health (Release 9.2, last updated July 2023)	
HLT42021	Certificate IV in Massage Therapy
HLT43021	Certificate IV in Allied Health Assistance
HLT45021	Certificate IV in Dental Assisting
HLT46015	Certificate IV in Population Health
HLT46115	Certificate IV in Indigenous Environmental Health
HLT47015	Certificate IV in Sterilisation Services
HLT47121	Certificate IV in Hospital or Health Services Pharmacy Support
HLT47321	Certificate IV in Health Administration
HLT47415	Certificate IV in Audiometry
HLT47515	Certificate IV in Operating Theatre Technical Support
HLT47715	Certificate IV in Medical Practice Assisting
HLT47815	Certificate IV in Optical Dispensing
Diploma	
HLT50121	Diploma of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care Practice
HLT50221	Diploma of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care Management
HLT50321	Diploma of Clinical Coding
HLT51020	Diploma of Emergency Health Care
HLT52021	Diploma of Remedial Massage
HLT52115	Diploma of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) Remedial Massage
HLT52215	Diploma of Shiatsu and Oriental Therapies
HLT52315	Diploma of Clinical Aromatherapy
HLT52415	Diploma of Kinesiology
HLT52515	Diploma of Reflexology
HLT52615	Diploma of Ayurvedic Lifestyle Consultation
HLT54121	Diploma of Nursing
HLT55118	Diploma of Dental Technology
HLT57415	Diploma of Audiometry
HLT57715	Diploma of Practice Management
HLT57821	Diploma of Orthopaedic Technology
HLT57921	Diploma of Anaesthetic Technology and Practice

Units of competency	
HLTAMAT001	Provide antenatal health care

Units of competency	
HLTAMAT002	Assist with childbirth
HLTAMAT003	Provide postnatal health care for mothers and babies
HLTAMAT004	Assess children's health
HLTAMAT005	Provide healthcare for children
HLTASXH002	Promote women's sexual health
HLTSS00079	Allied Health Assistance – Podiatry Skill Set

CHC – Community Services (Release 9.3, last updated July 2023)	
Certificate II	
CHC22015	Certificate II in Community Services
Certificate III	
CHC33021	Certificate III in Individual Support
CHC32015	Certificate III in Community Services
Certificate IV	
CHC43015	Certificate IV in Ageing Support
CHC40321	Certificate IV in Child, Youth and Family Intervention
CHC42021	Certificate IV in Community Services
CHC43121	Certificate IV in Disability Support
CHC40421	Certificate IV in Youth Work
CHC43215	Certificate IV in Alcohol and Other Drugs
CHC43315	Certificate IV in Mental Health
CHC43515	Certificate IV in Mental Health Peer Work
CHC43415	Certificate IV in Leisure and Health
Diploma	
CHC51015	Diploma of Counselling
CHC52021	Diploma of Community Services
CHC53315	Diploma of Mental Health
CHC50421	Diploma of Youth Work
CHC53215	Diploma of Alcohol and Other Drugs
CHC50321	Diploma of Child, Youth and Family Intervention

SIR - Retail services training package
Certificate II

SIR - Retail services training package	
SIR20116	Certificate II in Community Pharmacy
Certificate III	
SIR30116	Certificate III in Community Pharmacy
Certificate IV	
SIR40116	Certificate IV in Community Pharmacy
SIR40216	Certificate IV in Community Pharmacy (Dispensary)

Certificate IV	
11037NAT	Certificate IV in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Theory and Practice

BSB (TAFE) - Certificate III in Business	
BSB30120	Certificate III in Business (Medical Administration)

WA TAC	
52890WA	Certificate II in Community Health and Wellbeing