

HEALTH PLAN VISION

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy long, healthy lives that are centred in culture, with access to services that are prevention-focused, culturally safe and responsive, equitable and free of racism.

FOUNDATIONS FOR A HEALTHY LIFE

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health is viewed in a holistic context that recognises not only physical health and wellbeing but also the social, emotional and cultural wellbeing of individuals, families and communities throughout the entire life course.

The cultural determinants of health



The social determinants of health

Culture is a foundation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing. It is a protective factor across the life course, and has a direct influence on broader social determinants outcomes. Gains across these broader determinants, in turn, reinforce cultural connectedness, maintenance, resurgence, nation building and pride in cultural identity.

Life Course

Healthy babies
and children
(Ages 0 – 12)

Healthy youth
and adolescents
(Ages 12 – 24)

Healthy adults
(Ages 25 – 49)

Healthy ageing
(Ages 50+)

Enablers for Change



Genuine shared
decision making and
partnerships



Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander
community controlled
comprehensive primary
health care



Workforce

Focusing on Prevention



Health promotion



Early intervention



Social and emotional wellbeing
and trauma-aware, healing-
informed approaches



Healthy environments,
sustainability and preparedness

Improving the Health System



Identify and
eliminate racism



Access to
person-centred and
family-centred care



Mental health and
suicide prevention

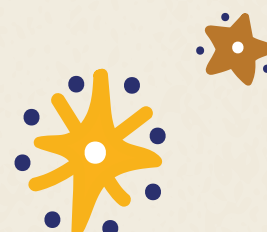
Culturally Informed Evidence Base



Culturally informed and
evidence-based evaluation,
research and practice



Shared access to
data and information
at a regional level



Purpose

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2021-2031 (Health Plan) has been developed in full and genuine partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health leaders and experts. It establishes a new nationally agreed policy framework to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over the next ten years.

The priorities and objectives of the Health Plan will work towards achieving a vision that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enjoy long, healthy lives that are centred in culture, with access to services that are prevention-focused, culturally safe and responsive, equitable and free of racism.

In order to achieve this, the Health Plan takes a holistic and strengths-based approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing, reinforcing the importance of the cultural determinants and social determinants of health across the life course.

The Health Plan demonstrates commitment to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, with a focus on the four Priority Reforms. This includes prioritising the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled health sector, outlining actions to address racism and making sure that mainstream health services are responsive and accountable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.

Accountability and implementation

Accountability framework

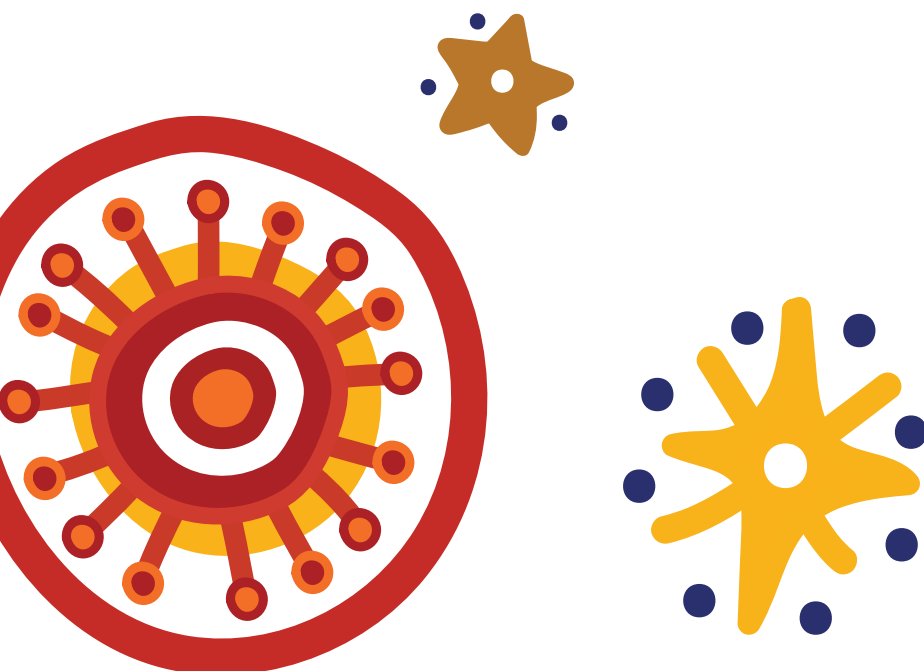
A robust accountability framework will be developed in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health leaders and experts. The framework will include annual reporting against key performance indicators to demonstrate progress. It will complement other accountability mechanisms already in place at the national, state and territory level.

Independent reviews

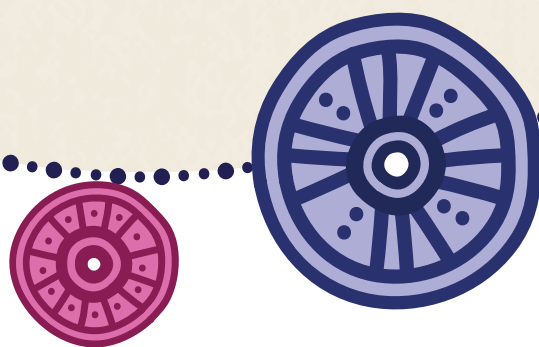
Independent reviews will be conducted in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to track the achievements of the Health Plan. A mid-cycle review will occur in 2026 to evaluate progress, and to respond to emerging trends and changing priorities. An end-of-cycle review will be conducted in 2031 to evaluate progress over the duration over the Health Plan and identify emerging priorities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.

Implementation

The Health Plan recognises that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are best placed to determine and deliver the solutions that are best for their communities. Implementation of the Health Plan will be done in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and include the flexibility to be adapted to the differing needs and priorities of each jurisdiction, as well as across urban, regional, rural and remote settings.



Priorities



	Priorities	Objectives
Enablers of change	1. Genuine shared decision making and partnerships	1.1 Embed partnerships and shared decision making across the whole health, disability and aged care systems 1.2 Embed mechanisms to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nation building to self-determine health and wellbeing 1.3 Embed the leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak organisations in policymaking across jurisdictions 1.4 Embed regional and local partnerships and interlinkages with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations across broader sectors that impact health
	2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled comprehensive primary health care	2.1 Prioritise the community controlled health sector for the delivery of healthcare programs and services targeted at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 2.2 Extend the reach of ACCHS into areas of unmet need 2.3 Expand primary health care and service delivery models of care to ensure ACCHS can deliver innovative services into the future
	3. Workforce	3.1 Implement strategies to grow the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce across health, mental health, disability and aged care 3.2 Improve cultural safety in workplaces across the health, mental health, disability and aged care systems 3.3 Continue to support the leadership role of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled health workforce organisations
Focusing on prevention	4. Health promotion	4.1 Enhance health literacy to support integrated health promotion 4.2 Deliver targeted, needs-based and community-driven activities to support healthy babies 4.3 Deliver targeted, needs-based and community-driven activities to support healthy children 4.4 Deliver of culturally safe and responsive immunisation responses 4.5 Implement culturally safe and responsive solutions to prevent the uptake of tobacco use 4.6 Deliver targeted, needs-based and community-driven actions to prevent alcohol and other drug related harm 4.7 Deliver targeted, culturally safe and responsive injury prevention activities
	5. Early intervention	5.1 Increase the quality and uptake of health checks 5.2 Deliver activities to improve oral health, particularly for children 5.3 Enhance access to early intervention for chronic disease 5.4 Target early interventions to support cessation of tobacco use 5.5 Enhance the delivery of evidence-based sexual health screening activities at the community level, particularly for adolescents and young adults 5.6 Deliver targeted action to improve cancer screening rates and care pathways for treatment
	6. Social and emotional wellbeing and trauma-aware, healing informed approaches	6.1 Update and implement a strategic approach for social and emotional wellbeing 6.2 Support ACCHS to deliver social and emotional wellbeing services 6.3 Support the work of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to provide leadership on healing and social and emotional wellbeing 6.4 Implement training and other support across the whole health system to better understand and respond to social and emotional wellbeing in all aspects of life
	7. Healthy environments, sustainability and preparedness	7.1 Support and grow the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander environmental health workforce 7.2 Support community driven housing and infrastructure solutions 7.3 Take action to improve food security 7.4 Support disaster and pandemic planning, preparedness and recovery at the national and community level

Priorities contd.

	Priorities	Objectives
Improving the health system	8. Identify and eliminate racism	8.1 Institutional racism across the health, disability and aged care systems is acknowledged, addressed, measured, and reported 8.2 Improve cultural safety training across mainstream health services and settings 8.3 Ensure racism complaints procedures are available and accessible 8.4 Enhance data collection to improve measurement of racism and cultural safety across the health system
	9. Access to person-centred and family-centred care	9.1 Deliver flexible, culturally safe, place-based and person-centred healthcare across allied health, community health and primary care settings 9.2 Ensure access to person-centred, culturally safe and responsive acute care 9.3 Ensure access to telehealth, digital health and other technologies to enable better healthcare access and connection to services 9.4 Enhance service linkages and integration for continuity and coordination of holistic care, including follow-up care and support services 9.5 Continue to support improved access to subsidised medicines and the quality use of medicines 9.6 Enhance access to aged care services that integrate place-based, culturally safe, trauma-aware and healing-informed care 9.7 Improve access to responsive healthcare for people with disability 9.8 Enhance access to place-based, culturally safe and responsive palliative care services
	10. Mental health and suicide prevention	10.1 Implement key reforms to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health and suicide prevention policy 10.2 Strengthen the role of ACCHS to deliver and coordinate culturally safe and responsive mental health and suicide prevention services 10.3 Embed integrated models of suicide prevention and mental health for continuity of care 10.4 Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with lived experience are at the centre of the development and delivery of mental health and suicide prevention services
Culturally informed evidence base	11. Culturally informed and evidence-based evaluation, research and practice	11.1 Ensure research and evaluation are based on priorities identified by, and led by, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers 11.2 Research and evaluation are conducted ethically in partnership with, and for the benefit of, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, organisations, communities and Nations 11.3 Harness emerging medical technology innovations, including genomics
	12. Shared access to data and information at a regional level	12.1 Establish governance structures and partnerships to guide how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health data is collected, shared and used, including at the regional level 12.2 Develop culturally relevant metrics to track health and wellbeing

