

ALLIED HEALTH - STATING OUR INTENT

TO IMPROVE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Statement of Intent between Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA), Allied Health Professions Australia (AHPA) and its Member and Friend Organisations

Preamble

This Statement of Intent is between Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA), Allied Health Professions Australia (AHPA) and its Member Organisations to work together to achieve equality in health status and life expectancy between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians by year 2030. It is based upon the Close The Gap Statement of Intent and has been adapted to align with the core business of the signatories.

The goal of this partnership is closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians on life expectancy, educational achievement and employment opportunities.

IAHA, AHPA and its Member Organisations assert that in order to positively contribute to closing the above-mentioned gaps, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the right to equitably access allied health services that are available, affordable, acceptable and appropriate, provided by allied health professionals who are both culturally responsive and clinically competent.

Allied health professionals operate within widely diverse settings, from clinics, hospitals, rehabilitation centres, laboratories, schools, long-term care facilities, Aboriginal Medical/Health Services, community health centres to home healthcare agencies. Therefore a workforce mix that includes allied health professionals as key players across health, education and community sectors will be essential to address the social, historical, political and cultural determinants that negatively impact the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

IAHA, AHPA and its Member Organisations are committed to building and strengthening the allied health workforce to meet the complex healthcare needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This includes increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people participating in the allied health workforce and strengthening the cultural responsiveness of all allied health students and graduates.

IAHA, AHPA and its Member and Friend Organisations:

- share a determination to close the fundamental divide between the health outcomes and life expectancy of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia and non-Indigenous Australians.
- are committed to ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have equal life chances to all other Australians.
- are committed to working towards ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have access to health services that are equal in standard to those enjoyed by other Australians and enjoy living conditions that support their social, emotional and cultural well-being.
- recognise that specific measures are needed to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' access to health services. Crucial to ensuring equal access to health services is ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are actively involved in the design, delivery and control of these services.

IAHA, AHPA and its Member and Friend Organisations commit to:

- contributing to comprehensive, long-term plans of action, that are targeted to need, evidence-based and capable of addressing the existing inequities in health services, in order to achieve equality of health status and life expectancy between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-indigenous Australians by 2030.
- advocating for culturally responsive health care services and health infrastructure for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples which are capable of bridging the gaps in health standards by 2018.
- supporting the full participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their representatives in all aspects of addressing their health needs.
- working collectively to systematically address the social determinants that impact on achieving health equality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- building on the evidence base and supporting what works in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, especially in allied health services, and relevant international experience.
- encouraging improved access to, and outcomes from, allied health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in all settings.
- respecting and promoting the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including by advocating that health services are available, appropriate, accessible, affordable and good quality.
- articulating our shared ambitions and working collaboratively to ensure that we are progressively realising them.

Indigenous Allied Health Australia

Allied Health Professions Australia

Audiology Australia Ltd

The Australian Psychological Society Ltd

Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia

Australasian Podiatry Council

Australian Society of Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy

Speech Pathology Australia

Australasian Society of Genetic Counsellors

Chiropractors' Association of Australia

Australian Association of Practice Managers

Australasian Sonographers Association Ltd

Dietitians Association of Australia

Australian Diabetes Educators Association

Australian and New Zealand Arts Therapy Association

Exercise & Sports Science Australia

Australian Hand Therapy Association

Australian and New Zealand College of Perfusionists

Occupational Therapy Australia

Diversional Therapy Australia

Australian Association of Social Workers

Optometry Australia

Hearing Aid Audiometrist Society of Australia

Australian Music Therapy Association

Osteopathy Australia

Myotherapy Association Australia

Australian Orthotic Prosthetic Association

Orthoptics Australia

Pedorthic Association of Australia

Australian Physiotherapy Association

Rehabilitation Counselling Association of Australasia