



Aboriginal and Torres Strait  
Islander Health Practice  
Chinese Medicine  
Chiropractic  
Dental  
Medical  
Medical Radiation Practice  
Nursing and Midwifery  
Occupational Therapy  
Optometry  
Osteopathy  
Pharmacy  
Physiotherapy  
Podiatry  
Psychology

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

## Communique

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14 February 2017

### First workshop on developing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Strategy for the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme

#### A workshop to begin the work across the National Scheme

At their combined meeting in September 2016, National Boards, AHPRA and accreditation authorities discussed how to best work together to support better health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

On Tuesday 14 February 2017, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sector leaders and representatives from accreditation entities, National Boards, AHPRA and the Chair of AHPRA's Agency Management Committee, got together to discuss how best to start this important work. The session was facilitated by Associate Professor Gregory Phillips.

The goal of the workshop was to identify the National Registration Accreditation Scheme's (National Scheme) strategy and role in ensuring patient safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia's health system.

The group agreed on the vision: *Patient safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia's health system is the norm, as defined by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.*

#### Decisions

1. This first workshop was an initial discussion to identify the goals and possibilities of action in a strategy. It is expected that a further, larger summit will be convened to ensure engagement and alignment with other efforts.
2. The group agreed that a strategy should ensure patient safety and focus on these streams:
  - building a culturally safe registered health workforce and be leaders in achieving workforce outcomes to improve the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
  - increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in the registered health workforce
  - support greater Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's access to the National Scheme by:
    - understanding how Indigenous communities access the scheme, and
    - coordinating a consistent approach across the scheme in building access and participation.
8. AHPRA will continue to coordinate the development of a strategy in partnership with the workshop group; in particular with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health leaders.
9. An area of strength for the National Scheme is the unique data set that it holds through registration data, including demographics, as well as the National Workforce Survey, which has a very high

participation rate. There is a genuine opportunity to identify barriers and opportunities through further scrutiny of this data.

10. The best outcomes will be achieved by information-sharing, partnership and collaboration across the National Scheme and within this group.
11. This group will adhere to the values of:
  - commitment
  - accountability
  - collaboration
  - leadership
  - high level participation
  - shared priorities, and
  - reciprocity (including self-determination, i.e. always seeking input from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people when considering these issues).
19. The group noted that there are 5,006 registered health practitioners who are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, which is 0.8% of the total registered health workforce.
20. The strategy that gets developed must include measurable objectives.

### Next steps

AHPRA will develop a draft plan outlining future work for the National Scheme, to be presented for input to the group at its next meeting. There will also be discussion with the Forum of NRAS Chairs and the Agency Management Committee.

The plan will include:

- recommended amendments to the National Law to recognise cultural safety and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health
- investigating what baseline statistics and information is already available on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners, patients and registered health workforce, and what can be further investigated to provide a solid baseline
- measurable objectives
- engagement with National Boards, Board chairs and accreditation authorities
- supporting greater Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on National Boards
- looking at ways in which cultural safety capability can be developed within the National Scheme including future reviews in areas such as health professions' codes of conduct
- developing a Reconciliation Action Plan for AHPRA, and
- defining the partnership and ongoing role of the group.

### Attendees

#### Facilitator

Associate Professor Gregory Phillips, PhD, CEO ABSTARR Consulting

#### External participants

- Ms Anna Leditschke, Policy and Workforce Manager, Indigenous Allied Health Australia
- Ms Janine Mohamed, CEO, Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives (CATSINaM)
- Ms Colleen Gibbs, Senior Policy & Research Officer, CATSINaM
- Ms Bronwyn Vincent, Senior Policy Officer, National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation

- Dr Sabine Hammond, Executive Manager, Science, Education and Membership, Australian Psychology Society
- Professor Sandra Eades, Head of Aboriginal Health, Baker Heart & Diabetes Institute
- Ms Tammy Chatfield, Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
- Ms Theanne Walters, Deputy CEO, AMC & Deputy Chair, Health Professions Accreditation Council's Forum
- Professor Roianne West, Griffith University
- Tania Dalton, Chair, Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association

The following invitees were unable to attend this time, but will remain in the loop.

- Ms Nicole Turner, President, Indigenous Allied Health Australia
- Dr Kalie Hayward, President, Australian Indigenous Doctor's Association (AIDA)
- Mr Craig Dukes, CEO, AIDA
- A/Prof Mark Wenitong, Apunipima Cape York Health Council
- A/Prof Noel Hayman, Inala Aboriginal Health Centre of Excellence
- Professor Ngiare Brown, Ngaoara Consulting
- Mr Romlie Mokak, CEO, The Lowitja Institute
- Mr Karl Briscoe, CEO, NATSIHWA (National Aboriginal and TI Health Workers Association)
- Dr Sean White, President, Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association
- Professor Alex Brown, Director, Director Aboriginal Health, SA Health and Medical Research Institute
- Ms Donna Ah Chee, CEO, Central Australia Aboriginal Congress
- Ms Donna Murray, IAHA
- Ms Jill Gallagher, CEO, Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
- Ms Pat Turner, CEO, National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation

#### **AHPRA National Board and Committee representatives**

- Mr Michael Gorton AM, Chair, AHPRA Agency Management Committee and Co-chair, Forum of NRAS Chairs
- Dr Joanna Flynn AM, Chair, Medical Board of Australia and Co-chair, Forum of NRAS Chairs
- Ms Renee Owen, Presiding Member, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Board of Australia
- Ms Jacqui Gibson Member, Community Reference Group
- Ms Marion Hale Member, Psychology Board of Australia

#### **AHPRA staff**

- Mr Martin Fletcher, Chief Executive Officer
- Mr Chris Robertson, Executive Director Strategy and Policy
- Ms Kym Ayscough, Executive Director Regulatory Operations
- Ms Eliza Collier, Northern Territory Manager
- Ms Anita Rivera, National Director Communications
- Mr Jit Patel, National Director People and Culture
- Mr Nick Lord, Executive Officer NRAS Review
- Ms Jill Humphreys, Executive Officer, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Board of Australia

#### **Next meeting**

The next meeting will be held in mid-2017.