

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience a significantly higher burden of disease and a reduced life expectancy in comparison to other Australians.

The concept of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health includes, as well as the individual, the health and well-being of the whole community.

Sustained comprehensive action is required to address inequities in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes.

Risk factors and the social determinants of health account for over half of the difference in health outcomes and require long-term comprehensive community level programs.

Racism, both interpersonal and institutional, and intergenerational trauma have a significant impact on disease levels and care outcomes.

The ability to address Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health issues is dependent on the availability of culturally safe health services.

Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) have an integral role in community-focused service provision.

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013-2023 has not been properly funded or effectively implemented.

Increasing the size of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce is fundamental to close the gap in life expectancy.

AHHA POSITION:

- ✧ COAG's commitment to prioritising improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander outcomes must be supported by appropriate funding for locally developed responses from Commonwealth, state and territory governments that complement the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013–2023.
- ✧ A holistic approach incorporating ACCHOs and culturally safe mainstream services is needed for effective service provision.
- ✧ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in the health workforce needs to be increased.
- ✧ A National Standard on Culturally Competent Health Care should be developed by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care and incorporated into the national accreditation program along with assessment and reporting on institutional racism.
- ✧ A Makarrata Commission to oversee treaty negotiations, and tell the truth about our history, plus constitutional change to establish a First Nations Voice to the Australian Parliament is required to improve health and well-being, and reduce health disadvantage and inequality.
- ✧ Research funding should be allocated to investigate community-identified service and policy issues.

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