

DRAFT

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A REGIONAL HEALTH FORUM

This Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Regional Health Agreement governs the Regional Health Forum and is designed to promote community control of primary health care services and enable joint planning and collaboration between health stakeholders in the planning, development, design, and provision of health services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

BACKGROUND

The Agreement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health in Queensland (2002) aims to improve the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Queensland and requires the establishment of Regional Health Forums, underpinned by Regional Agreements (Clause 3.6e).

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Partnership oversees the implementation of the Agreement in Queensland and comprises the signatories – the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Forum, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, Queensland Health, and the Department of Health and Ageing. The Queensland Partnership is committed to community control of primary health care services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Community controlled health services are primary health care services which are initiated, planned and managed by local communities and deliver high quality, holistic, and culturally appropriate health care. Improved health outcomes are realised when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have full and formal engagement and participation in the delivery, planning, design, and management of health services within their communities and where health outcomes and health services are recorded and monitored.

The establishment of this Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Regional Health Agreement provides a basis for ongoing cooperation and collaboration to realise the statewide aims of the Queensland Partnership at the regional level. The Queensland Partnership oversees and monitors the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Regional Health Agreement.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Regional Health Forum adopts the principles of the Queensland Partnership:

- Cultural respect
- A holistic approach to health service provision
- Health sector responsibility for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health
- Community control of primary health care services

- Working together in a partnership approach
- Localised decision making
- Promoting good health
- Building the capacity of health services and communities
- Accountability to government and communities

OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK

This Regional Agreement developed by the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Partnership sets the Terms of Reference for the establishment of Regional Health Forums. The Regional Health Forum will, through the development of a twelve (12) month Regional Workplan, action the commitments of the Agreement on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health in Queensland at the regional level.

The development of the Regional Health Forum Annual Workplan will be based on the Annual Workplan of the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Partnership. The Regional Health Forum will report to the Queensland Partnership on a biannual basis. The Regional Health Forum Annual Workplan is subject to twelve (12) monthly review.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

- Implement, based on the Queensland Partnerships Annual Workplan, the commitments under the Agreement on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health in Queensland at the regional level.
- Monitor and report on progress of the implementation to the Queensland Partnership.
- Oversight the development, and monitor the implementation, of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Regional Health Plan, consistent with community planning and, in accordance with the Statewide planning process developed by the Queensland Partnership.
- Establish linkages with existing local health forums and local advisory groups and/or other relevant planning processes. This to include the development of protocols for communication and consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Act as a clearinghouse for sharing information, documentation of good practice models.
- Establish processes to ensure that quantitative and qualitative data collection is sufficiently consistent to support the agreed needs, services, and outcome indicators. This work will be in accordance with the priorities of the Queensland Partnership and include evaluation of the effectiveness of all services, both existing and proposed.
- Provide advice on regional priorities, needs and strategies to inform the investment decisions of funding agencies.

NB. The Regional Health Forums do not have a role in determining individual agency funding for addressing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes at the regional level.

CONDUCT OF PROCEEDINGS

The following terms will guide the conduct of a Regional Health Forum:

MEMBERSHIP

At a minimum, the Regional Health Forums will consist of the four signatories to the Queensland Agreement on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health. It is however recognised that, at the regional level, there are a number of other key health stakeholders which need to be involved.

Membership of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Regional Health Forum will comprise:

- QLD Health
- Community Controlled Health Service
- Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council
- Department of Health and Ageing
- Divisions of General Practice

The Chairperson of the Regional Health Forum will be the Community Controlled Sector representative, in accordance with the aim of the Queensland Framework Agreement to ensure full and formal participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in decision making and determination of priorities. The four signatory agencies to the Queensland Framework Agreement will hold final decision making power where there is conflict in reaching a consensus decision.

NOTES:

Ex-officio membership

Other health service providers and stakeholders can have membership of the Regional Health Forum. This can include Queensland Health District Health Council representatives, other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled organisations, and mainstream health service providers (such as the Royal Flying Doctors Service, and the Department of Emergency Services). These providers and stakeholders have ex-officio membership status.

Invitees

Other persons may attend the Regional Health Forums, by invitation, and could include (but not limited to) other health service providers, other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

Acting Chairperson

In the absence of the Chairperson, the Regional Health Forum will nominate an Acting Chairperson.

Travel and Associated Costs

Note – the Queensland Partnership is required to agree on the resource requirements for the Regional Health Forums.

At a minimum, the Queensland Partnership will provide the travel and associated costs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members to participate on Regional Health Forums.

RULES OF MEETING

Quorum

A Quorum will constitute half of the membership plus one. Where a quorum is not raised, the meeting may continue with discussion and recommendations noted in the Minutes and ratified at the next subsequent meeting of the Regional Health Forum.

Meeting Schedule

Meetings will be organised on a quarterly basis and agreed to at the inaugural meeting.

Setting the Agenda

Agenda's and any relevant business papers will be sent out (where possible) to be received in five (5) days prior to the next meeting.

Secretariat Arrangements

Note – the Queensland Partnership is required to determine the resource requirements for the Regional Health Forums.

Secretariat arrangements will be met by and will include the development of agenda's; distribution of agenda's and associated papers; minute taking; and organising venues.

Code of Conduct

Members will behave in a spirit of mutual respect for each other. The Chairperson has the authority to ask members to leave a meeting if the Code of Conduct is breached.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Regional Health Forum will:

- Review the Annual Workplan on an annual basis.
- Report on a biannual basis to the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Partnership.