

Statement of Action towards Closing the Gap in health outcomes

Preamble

The *Statement of Action towards Closing the Gap in health outcomes (the Statement)* aims to address systemic barriers in order to progress efforts to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing in Queensland.

Despite recent improvements, the gap in health outcomes is not closing rapidly enough and therefore renewed effort is required to increase health standards of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The statement requires tangible commitment and leadership from all areas of Queensland Health through:

- strengthening the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in governance arrangements and health service planning
- improving workforce participation and local engagement
- increasing input in decision making from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, organisations and the community.

Queensland Health recognises that closing the gap in health outcomes

is a long-term and challenging process. It involves addressing social, economic and political inequity and the inequality of health experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at multiple levels. A whole-of-government approach is essential to support Queensland Health efforts in addressing social determinants such as income, employment, education and cultural safety, all of which have substantial impacts on the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Closing the gap in health outcomes involves collective effort from the health system, workforce, and primary health care sector. We acknowledge the diversity of each HHS and recognise that the strategic actions and commitments made will reflect the needs of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community of which we serve.

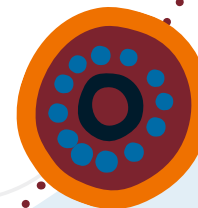
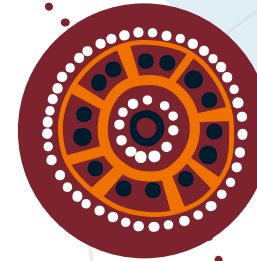


Diagram 1 summarises the key policies, plans and levers which underpin Queensland Health's agenda in relation to the Statement.

The Queensland Health system, comprising the Department of Health, Hospital and Health Services (HHSs) and their Health Boards, and Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) committed to the following three actions in order to further improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Queensland.



Queensland
Government

Action 1:
**Promote opportunities to embed
 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
 representation in Queensland Health
 leadership, governance and workforce.**

Delivering a system where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are valued, respected and encouraged to be involved in leading the design, development and delivery of health services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities in Queensland.

Action 1 might include:

- I. Actively target suitably skilled Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to apply for appointment to Hospital and Health Boards.
- II. Take steps to maximise employment opportunities across all streams and classifications for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including senior executive and/or senior management level positions in order to exceed the 3 per cent workforce target by 2022.
- III. Increase the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in incentivised employment programs, e.g. cadetships, scholarships and traineeships in order to grow our future workforce.
- IV. Mandate ongoing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability training for all Board members, Chief Executive Officers and senior and executive leadership staff. Consideration should also be given to mandating such training for all staff.

Action 2:
**Improve local engagement and partnerships
 between Queensland Health and Aboriginal and
 Torres Strait Islander people, communities and
 organisations.**

Health services that genuinely partner and engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, organisations and communities will strengthen and support Queensland Health's commitment to action by delivering culturally safe, responsive and capable health care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Action 2 might include:

- I. Increase formal partnerships and contractual arrangements between Queensland Health (the Department of Health, HHSs and QAS) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations.
- II. Formalised reconciliation action plans adopted in the Department of Health, each HHS and QAS.
- III. Specific Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health operational and work plans adopted in the Department of Health, each HHS and QAS to guide and support annual workforce targets and organisational and business planning.
- IV. Ongoing, proactive local engagement between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Hospital and Health Boards and senior and executive leaders to further coordinate Closing the Gap initiatives.

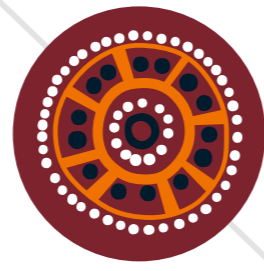
Action 3:
**Improve transparency, reporting and
 accountability in Closing the Gap progress.**

Embedding meaningful targets into Service Agreements will enhance visible and purposeful reporting of Closing the Gap targets to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Action 3 might include:

- I. In conjunction with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, develop and implement specific and measurable Closing the Gap projects or initiatives relevant to local service needs and responsibilities of individual HHSs and their regional partners.
- II. Performance agreements for senior and executive management to include key performance indicators relating to improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.
- III. Reporting on the implementation of the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards relating to improving care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- IV. Seeking opportunities to further reinforce these actions in HHS Service Agreements, annual reporting and other key governance obligations.



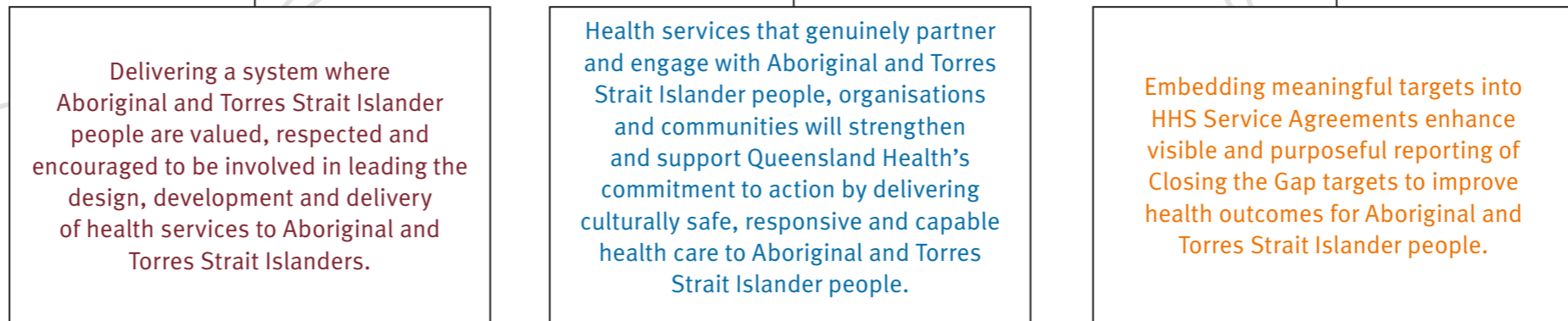
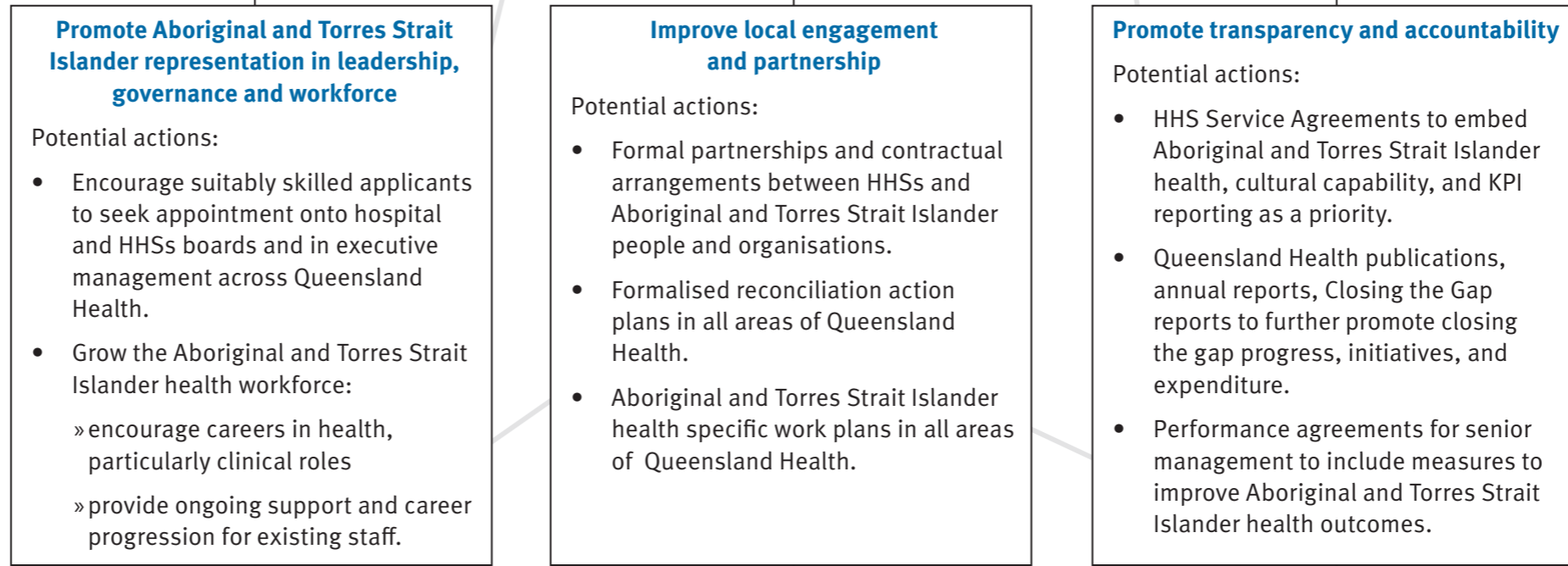


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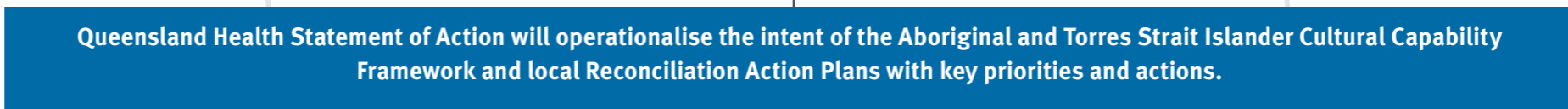
Levers



Opportunities to achieve vision and promote public visibility of progress and reconciliation



Output



Outcome

