

## Guideline for Mental Health Service Responsiveness for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

**Custodian/Review Officer:** Director, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Hub for Mental Health

**Version no:** 1

**Applicable To:** all involved in the delivery of mental health services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

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**Authority:**

**Approving Officer:** Executive Director Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drugs Branch

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**Accreditation References:**

**National Standards for Mental Health Services 2010:**

Standard 1 – Rights and Responsibility

Standard 2 – Safety

Standard 4 – Diversity Responsiveness

Standard 6 – Consumers

Standard 7 – Carers

Standard 9 – Integration

Standard 10 – Delivery of Care

**EQuIP5:** 1.1.1; 1.1.2; 1.1.6; 1.1.8; 1.3.1; 2.3.3

**National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards:** 1.7.1; 1.7.2; 1.17.3; 5.5.1; 6.2.1; 8.1.1

### 1. Purpose

This Guideline provides recommendations regarding best practice for promoting a systematic and safe approach to mental health responsiveness to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

### 2. Scope

This Guideline provides information for all Queensland Health employees and Hospital and Health Service employees (permanent, temporary and casual).

### 3. Supporting documents

#### Policy and Standard/s:

- Mental Health Services Policy: National Standards for Mental Health Services 2010
- Implementation Standard for Diversity Responsiveness
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld)
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cwth)
- Making tracks towards closing the gap in health outcomes for Indigenous Queenslanders by 2033: Policy and Accountability Framework

#### Procedures, Guidelines, Protocols

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Information Gathering Tool Guideline
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Supervision Guideline

#### Forms and templates

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Information Gathering Tool (CIGT)



## 4. Guideline for Mental Health Service Responsiveness for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

This guideline provides recommendations for best practice for responding to the cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in a mental health context. The aim of the guideline is to facilitate equitable access and improved mental health outcomes for people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.

### 4.1 Cultural Competency

Directors and Managers shall facilitate cultural competency in all staff and volunteers through the provision of education and training including but not limited to:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health First Aid
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness Training
- Cultural Diversity and Interpreter Training
- Cultural Capability and Supervision (refer to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Supervision Guidelines)
- Multicultural Services Cross Cultural Learning and Development.

### 4.2 Resource development

Emotional and social well-being information and general health care information is provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers, carers and families.

### 4.3 Community engagement

- Facilitate and support engagement, communication and partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups in their communities.
- Embed the Queensland Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Framework 2010 – 2033 in engagement, communication and partnership protocols with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider community.

### 4.4 Leadership and partnership

- Align and include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural capability in planning, development and reporting systems.
- Identify dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership positions.
- Work in partnership with other government and non-government organisations to deliver coordinated, culturally capable healthcare for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Work in partnership with consultative forums for the continued improvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes.
- Implement guidelines for continuous quality improvement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health care.



#### 4.5 Data Collection and analysis

- Facilitate the collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data including:
  - the identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers
  - epidemiological and clinical information
  - the analysis and use of such data in health service planning, patient safety and continuous quality improvement
  - use of the Cultural Information Gathering Tool.

#### 4.6 Inclusive recruitment and retention

- Maximise the potential for providing culturally responsive, safe and capable services through the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.
- Align recruitment and retention strategies with the Queensland Health Clinical Workforce Strategy 2011 – 2016, Queensland Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2009-2012 and other relevant workforce strategies.
- Establish local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health Coordinator positions, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker positions and Hospital Liaison positions.
- Facilitate the establishment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Network (ATSISN) for:
  - promoting the engagement, participation and advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff across all occupational streams to enhance retention
  - providing a forum for exchange of information
  - building and sharing practical knowledge in policy and program effectiveness
  - strengthening linkages, engagement and synergies across Queensland Health.
- Support staff membership of the ATSISN.

#### 4.7 Interpreter Services

- Promote the availability of interpreter services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Support access to interpreter services through the Queensland Health Multicultural Services, Interpreter Service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.
- Collect data and monitor uptake of interpreter services.



## 5. Definition of Terms

Definitions of key terms are provided below.

Term	Definition / Explanation / Details	Source
Consumer	Consumer is a person who is accessing or has previously accessed a mental health alcohol and other drug service.	Queensland Health Consumer, Carer and Family Participation Framework
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	The term is used to describe a person of indigenous descent. The person identifies as an Aboriginal person and/or a Torres Strait Islander.	Making Tracks: toward closing the gap in health outcomes for indigenous Queenslanders by 2033.
Carer	A person who voluntarily provides ongoing care or assistance to another person who, because of disability, age, frailty, chronic illness or pain requires assistance with everyday tasks. Carers include, for example, parents, partners, children, grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings and/or friends of the consumer.	Consumer Carers Family Framework
Emotional and social wellbeing	<p>A holistic view of mental health similar to the; in other words, a whole-of-life approach to the physical, social, emotional and cultural wellbeing of the community. Today many health services in Australia use the phrase 'social and emotional wellbeing' when they talk about mental health in Indigenous communities to reflect the holistic way of thinking Indigenous people have.</p> <p>The whole state of health, with the focus on mental health, so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can reach their full physical, emotional, cultural and spiritual potential at the individual, family and community level.</p>	<p>Making Tracks: toward closing the gap in health outcomes for indigenous Queenslanders by 2033.</p> <p>Emotional and Social Wellbeing (including mental Health)  <a href="http://www.healthinonet.edu.au/other-health-conditions/mental-health/plain-language/background-information">http://www.healthinonet.edu.au/other-health-conditions/mental-health/plain-language/background-information</a></p>
Education/training	Instruction and learning activities to develop or bring about change in knowledge, attitudes, values or skills.	National standards for mental health services 2010

## 6. References and Suggested Reading

- *Mental Health Act 2000*
- *Health and Hospital Network Act 2011*
- *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986* (Cwth)
- *The United Nation's Principles for the protection of people with Mental Illness and for the improvement of Mental Health Care 1991*
- National Standards for Mental Health Services 2010
- Making tracks towards closing the gap in health outcomes for indigenous Queenslanders by 2033: Policy and Accountability Framework



- Queensland Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Framework 2010 – 2033
- Making tracks towards closing the gap in health outcomes for indigenous Queenslanders by 2033: Implementation Plan
- The Fourth National Mental Health Plan: An agenda for collaborative government action in mental health 2009-2014
- National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health 2007 – 2013
- Queensland Health Strategic Plan for Multicultural Health 2007 - 2012
- Queensland Plan for Mental Health 2007-2017
- Queensland Health Clinical Workforce Strategy 2011 – 2016
- Queensland Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2009-2012
- The Fourth National Mental Health Plan: An agenda for collaborative government action in mental health 2009-2014
- The People of Australia – Australia’s Multicultural Policy 2011
- Mental Health Patient Safety Strategic Plan 2012 – 2017
- Clinical Supervision Guidelines for Mental Health 2009

## 7. Guideline Revision and Approval History

Version No.	Modified by	Amendments authorised by	Approved by
1	Paul Pedro and Penny Dale, Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drugs Branch	Cassandra Gillies, Director Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Hub for Mental Health	Executive Director, Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drugs Directorate

