

# ACT ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER AGREEMENT 2019-2028

Delivering equitable outcomes for  
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

## PHASE TWO FOCUS AREA ACTION PLAN

July 2022 – December 2024

### FOCUS AREA:

### Health and Wellbeing

### QUALITY LIFE OUTCOME:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have equity in health and wellbeing outcomes as any other members of the community.

### WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS OUTCOME BY FOCUSING ON:

- Maintaining collaborative partnerships across governments, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and the health sector for co-design, future investment, and implementation of actions that address the social and cultural determinants of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.
- Advocating the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service providers in the provision of services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Coordinating and planning health system improvements for increased access to culturally safe health and wellbeing services and programs that are culturally responsive and racism free.
- Planning and establishing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led data collection and research strategies, and resourcing to ensure the ACT health system is innovative, effective, responsive, and sustainable now and in the future for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Recognising the value and need for culturally based healing programs in the ACT that acknowledge the significance of community connectedness and provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples to undertake activities on Country to promote health, wellbeing, and healing.

### CLOSING THE GAP TARGETS

- Close the Gap in life expectancy within a generation, by 2031.
- By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander babies with a healthy birthweight to 91 per cent.
- Significant and sustained reduction in suicide of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people towards zero.\*

\*Due to the size of the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, suicide numbers are not reported, as this could result in privacy breaches.

### ACT HEADLINE INDICATORS

- Increase in patients starting treatment on time.
- Increase in babies with a healthy birthweight.
- Decrease in patient walk-outs in emergency departments.
- Increase in patients receiving elective surgeries on time.
- Increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and women who are having an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander baby who attend five or more antenatal visits.
- Zero Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples waiting for more than 24 hours in the ED for an inpatient mental health bed.
- Increased numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples reporting stronger connections to Country, culture, community, and family (self-assessed), as these are recognised protective factors for mental health and wellbeing.



## PHASE-BASED QUALITATIVE STATEMENTS

### Closing off on Phase One implementation

While some key actions have been completed, work towards many of the Phase One actions in the Health and Wellbeing focus area are still in progress, and this work will continue to be advanced in parallel to implementation of the Phase Two Action Plan. In addition, some actions under Phase One represent commitments to ongoing work. Full detail on the status of the actions under Phase One is available on the Community Services Directorate website under the section on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Policy Development.

Successes of the Agreement that are evident at the end of Phase One include the Health Directorate and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Working Group developing a community-led commissioning process to support the establishment of a culturally appropriate suicide prevention and aftercare service for the ACT region; and the Canberra Health Services and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consumer Reference Group working to improve access to treatment for children requiring ear, noise, and throat surgery. This partnership resulted in an end to the long waitlist in 2021.

### To be achieved in Phase Two implementation

By the end of Phase Two implementation:

- increasing culturally responsive health services in the ACT.

## PRIORITY ACTIONS

New Priority Actions for Phase Two Implementation



| Action Number | Priority Actions  |
|---------------|---|
| 1             | Develop systems and mechanisms that support the adoption of healing aware and Trauma Informed Care and Practice (TICP) in health, justice, and education service delivery.  |
| 2             | Develop an ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Action Plan, including the use of appropriately collated data to create pathways to increase the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing workforce in the ACT. This plan will be iterated to ensure alignment with local responses to national implementation plans when they become available. This includes the <i>National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan 2021–2031</i> and the <i>Health Sector Strengthening Plan</i> . |
| 3             | Develop a Disability Health Strategy that includes a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with a disability.  |
| 4             | Increase cultural responsiveness for the whole of the ACT health system to reduce systemic racism and bias; to improve culturally responsive design and delivery of all health services; in collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations and the Capital Health Network.   |
| 5             | Through co-design with the Ngunnawal Bush Healing Farm Board transition to the delivery of a residential program, as well as a community-based service delivery.  |
| 6             | Continue to work with Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health and Community Services and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community on the establishment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander alcohol and other drug residential rehabilitation service.  |
| 7             | Increase the number and/or reach of culturally responsive preventive health and ‘Healthy Lifestyle’ and wellbeing programs that incorporate cultural models that connect with Country.  |
| 8             | Ensure reasonable adjustments are provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with disability as part of the <i>Canberra Health Services Disability Action and Inclusion Plan</i> .   |

## STATUS BAR | 10-YEAR PLAN

The status bar provides an at-a-glance timing of Agreement phases highlighting the current Phase.

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|---|---|--|---|
| <b>Phase One</b><br>Feb 2019 – Jun 2022<br>Status: Complete | <b>Phase Two</b><br>Jul 2022 – Dec 2024<br>Status: <b>In progress</b> | <b>Phase Three</b><br>Jan 2025 – Dec 2027<br>Status: Not started | <b>Phase Four</b><br>Jan 2028 – Dec 2028<br>Status: Not started |
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