

# SA HEALTH

# ABORIGINAL CULTURAL RESPECT FRAMEWORK

*Upholding the rights of Aboriginal people to maintain, protect and develop their culture and achieve equitable health outcomes.  
(AHMAC National Cultural Respect Framework 2004-2009)*



**Government  
of South Australia**

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Department of Health

## FOREWORD

Providing culturally appropriate health services to Aboriginal people is one of the key factors to improve Aboriginal health outcomes.

The National *Cultural Respect Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health 2004 – 2009* provides the guiding principles to develop policy and initiatives to lift the cultural competency of mainstream health services.

Cultural Respect, as defined in the National Framework, is achieved when the health system is a safe environment for Aboriginal people and where cultural differences are respected.

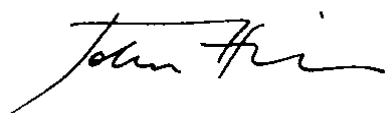
Our vision for South Australia is to improve Aboriginal Health outcomes so the gap in life expectancy between Aboriginal people and the rest of the population is eliminated.

The *Aboriginal Cultural Respect Framework for SA Health* (the Framework) is an overarching implementation plan to be read in conjunction with the *SA Aboriginal Health Policy*, the *SA Health Statement of Reconciliation*, the *Aboriginal Health Impact Statement* and the *Aboriginal Workforce Reform and Development Strategy*.

The Framework forms the basis for the way our health policies and health services respond to Aboriginal people in South Australia. The Framework has four key result areas – policy and program development, services reform, workforce development and monitoring and evaluation.

To achieve the strategies set out in the Framework we must work in close cooperation with the Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia Inc, Aboriginal community controlled health services and other Government departments.

I look forward to working together with key stakeholders to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal people and ensure all health services are respectful and culturally appropriate.



**MINISTER FOR HEALTH**



Minister John Hill

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Appreciation is extended to the Department of Health in Western Australia for allowing us to build on the good work that they have led in developing a framework for cultural respect at the jurisdictional level.

## Background

In March 2004, The Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council (AHMAC) endorsed the National Cultural Respect Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health. This Framework identified areas to be addressed, however indicated that each jurisdiction should be responsible for determining its own implementation processes.

SA Health has accordingly developed its Aboriginal Cultural Respect Framework which is an overarching plan that identifies key areas needed to harness 'Cultural Respect' within its system.

## Cultural Respect

***“Cultural Respect is the: recognition, protection and continued advancement of the inherent rights, cultures and traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.***

***Cultural Respect is about shared respect. Cultural Respect is achieved when the health system is a safe environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and where cultural differences are respected. It is a commitment to the principle that the construct and provision of services offered by the Australian health care system will not wittingly compromise the legitimate cultural rights, practices, values and expectations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The goal of Cultural Respect is to uphold the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to maintain, protect and develop their culture and achieve equitable health outcomes.”*** (AHMAC Cultural Respect Framework for Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Health 2004-2009, pg7).

## Implementation

The Aboriginal Cultural Respect Framework is set around four (4) key result areas:

1. Policy and Program Development
2. Services Reform
3. Workforce Development and Reform
4. Monitoring and Evaluation

These key result areas will form the basis and building of key strategic initiatives and processes that will demonstrate SA Health's commitment to implementing 'cultural respect', and invariably Aboriginal health improvement.

The Aboriginal Cultural Respect Framework is to give rise to the development of regional implementation plans, which will be known as Aboriginal Health Improvement Plans – they will provide a narrative of planned and future activities. A template will be developed to assist health regions to establish their plans.

A set of key performance indicators for measuring Aboriginal Health in South Australia is being developed and will complement the development of the Aboriginal Health Improvement Plans.

## 1. Policy and Program Development

Strategy	Actions
1a SA Health Aboriginal Health Policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minister for Health approves and releases policy</li> <li>• Promote use throughout SA Health</li> <li>• Develop regional Aboriginal Health Improvement Plans – they will provide a narrative of planned and future activities.</li> </ul>
1b Develop an Aboriginal Health Impact statement to be used in the process of policy and program development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Portfolio Executive (PE) approval</li> <li>• Promote use throughout SA Health.</li> </ul>
1c A renewed Statement of Reconciliation that is aligned to the responsibilities of SA Health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signing and launch ceremony is held</li> <li>• Signatories to involve the Chief Executive, Department of Health, and two representatives of the Aboriginal Elders Council of SA</li> <li>• A 2 year Reconciliation Action Plan developed and implemented (2007-2009).</li> </ul>

## 2. Services Reform

Strategy	Actions
2a Develop local cultural partnerships to advise services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regions to develop Aboriginal community engagement strategies and partnership protocols</li> <li>• Develop partnerships with the Aboriginal Health Council of SA Inc (AHCSA) and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHS)</li> <li>• Support the development of staff exchange strategies with ACCHS</li> <li>• Encourage local Aboriginal communities and organisations to be involved in the development of services.</li> </ul>
2b Provide cultural awareness and responsiveness training for staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that staff participate in localised cultural awareness and responsiveness workshops periodically as part of professional development particularly where there is substantial contact with Aboriginal people</li> <li>• Raise awareness that English is not the first language of many Aboriginal clients and support access to interpreters where required</li> <li>• Support education of local Aboriginal communities regarding health providers and protocols to be observed.</li> </ul>

## 2. Services Reform

Strategy	Actions
<p>2c Undertake reviews of services, or service components, to identify where they may compromise the legitimate cultural rights views, values and expectations of Aboriginal people; and develop practices to ensure cultural respect is maintained.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self assessment of services or service components through a cultural respect checklist</li> <li>• Walk through assessments by Aboriginal cultural partners</li> <li>• Self-assessment by health professionals on their own understanding of cultural protocols and cultural respect practices</li> <li>• Implement procedural and staff changes in response to reviews as part of the quality improvement processes of services.</li> </ul>

## 3. Workforce Development and Reform

Strategy	Actions
<p>3a Develop and Implement an Aboriginal Health Workforce Development and Strategy strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue implementation of the SA action plan for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Plan</li> <li>• Ensure that all health services set targets for Aboriginal employment in accordance with Target 6:24 of South Australia's Strategic Plan</li> <li>• Support opportunities for Aboriginal staff to obtain and upgrade formal qualifications</li> <li>• Encourage and support opportunities for joint training programs between ACCHS and area health services</li> <li>• Support the completion of the national competency framework for Aboriginal health workers</li> <li>• Promote opportunities for Aboriginal health workers in area health services</li> <li>• Maintain and further develop scholarships and traineeship programs</li> <li>• Expand the Unique Centres of Learning initiative in targeted areas.</li> </ul>

## 4. Monitoring and Evaluation

Strategy	Actions
<p>4a Assess the extent to which SA Health services are implementing cultural respect processes, and the perception of Aboriginal people as to how culturally respectful services are.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor use of the Aboriginal Health Impact Statement in program and policy proposals across SA Health</li> <li>• A set of key performance indicators for measuring Aboriginal Health in South Australia is being developed</li> <li>• Monitor number of cultural partnerships, cultural education sessions and services reviews by directorates and health services by use of Aboriginal Health Improvement Plans developed at the Regional and Divisional level</li> <li>• Assess trends in Aboriginal hospital admission data</li> <li>• Conduct periodic Aboriginal patient satisfaction surveys</li> <li>• Consult local Aboriginal community representatives on the cultural appropriateness of local health services</li> <li>• Annual reporting against Aboriginal Health Improvement Plans as a means of ascertaining the implementation of the key components of the SA Health Cultural Respect Framework</li> <li>• Conduct bi-annual reviews of the effectiveness of the Framework in changing the culture of the Health System. The first review commencing December 2009.</li> </ul>