



Aboriginal and Torres Strait  
Islander Health Practice  
Chinese Medicine  
Chiropractic  
Dental  
Medical  
Medical Radiation Practice  
Nursing and Midwifery  
Occupational Therapy  
Optometry  
Osteopathy  
Pharmacy  
Physiotherapy  
Podiatry  
Psychology

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

## Communique

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24 October 2018

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Strategy Group

The strategy group is co-Chaired by Professor Gregory Phillips, CEO of ABSTARR Consulting and Ms Julie Brayshaw, Chair of the Occupational Therapy Board of Australia.

The group met on 24 October to continue the development of the strategy.

Members discussed:

1. the terms of reference and agreed to update them
2. the Strategy Group will provide a submission to the consultation on [regulation of Australia's health professions: keeping the National Law up to date and fit for purpose](#), which is released for public comment by the COAG Health Council
3. that 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health' and 'culturally safe'/'cultural safety' have different meanings and agreed that any work in defining one must also seek to define the other. Members also agreed to partner with the National Health Leadership Forum (NHLF) to release a draft definition of cultural safety for public consultation, with a view of having an agreed definition for the National Scheme in 2019. This agreed definition will then be used by the entities in the National Scheme
4. an update that was provided by AHPRA on the recent procurement process for seeking cultural safety training providers for AHPRA, National Boards and their Committees and Accreditation Authorities
5. an update on the research being led by the Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum (HPACF). This research seeks to understand the role accreditation plays in improving Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and/or Māori health outcomes and producing a health workforce, which is culturally safe. The preliminary findings of this research are [available online](#). The initial analysis indicates the strength of accreditation as a lever for change and opportunities to learn across all the professions. Given this is the first time since the inception of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme that a thematic review has been undertaken across all health professions, these opportunities are the most exciting outcome of this project and in determining the role of accreditation in improving Indigenous health outcomes
6. the draft *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health strategy*, which outlines the National Scheme's priorities and work to support the [Statement of intent](#).
7. the barriers and opportunities for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice profession, and noted:
  - o that this profession is 100% Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and vital in embedding cultural safety
  - o the [excellent new brochure](#) produced by one of the Strategy Group member organisations, NATSIHWA, about the profession and what it does
  - o the opportunity to increase awareness and understanding of the profession, how it can contribute to the health system and provide culturally safe care for patients and support better access to health services. This includes working with National Boards across all the regulated professions.

- the Strategy Group's support for a national, strategic approach to supporting the growth of this profession
- the importance of ensuring right touch regulation and avoid unnecessary regulatory burden
- changes to subsidies for registered training organisations affects potential registrants from joining the profession, and
- the new free and public online cultural safety training resource produced by Strategy Group members Professors Roianne West and Gregory Phillips for Griffith University at <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/first-peoples-safer-healthcare/1>.

### Next meeting

The next meeting will be held in the first quarter of 2019.

### Attendees

- Professor Gregory Phillips, ABSTARR Consulting (Co-chair)
- Ms Julie Brayshaw, Occupational Therapy Board of Australia (Co-chair)
- Mr Allan Groth, Indigenous Allied Health Association (proxy for Donna Murray)
- Ms Anita Mills, Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association
- Ms Anita Rivera, AHPRA
- Dr Anna Ryan, Chiropractic Board of Australia (proxy for Ailsa Wood)
- Ms Annette Symes, Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (proxy for Lynette Cusack)
- Ms Darlene Cox, AHPRA Community Reference Group
- Ms Eliza Collier, AHPRA
- Ms Jill Humphreys, AHPRA
- Mr Karl Briscoe, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker Association
- Ms Marion Hale, Psychology Board of Australia
- Mr Martin Fletcher, AHPRA
- Mr Michael Gorton AM, AHPRA
- Ms Narelle Mills, Australian Dental Council (representative of Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum)
- Professor Roianne West, Griffith University
- Dr Sabine Hammond, Australian Indigenous Psychology Education Project (proxy for Pat Dudgeon)
- Ms Tanja Hirvonen, Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association
- Ms Theanne Walters, Australian Medical Council (representative of Health Professions Accreditation Collaborative Forum)

### Apologies

- Ms Renee Owens, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Board of Australia
- Ms Janine Mohamed, Congress of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives
- Mr Michael Piu, Pharmacy Board of Australia
- Ms Pat Turner, National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
- Professor Alex Brown, SA Health and Medical Research Institute
- Dr Ngiare Brown, University of Wollongong