

Sunshine Coast Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Equity Strategy

2022 - 2031

Sunshine Coast Health respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians, the Kabi Kabi (Gubbi Gubbi) and Jinibara peoples on whose land we provide our services. We also pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, past, present, and future. We recognise the strength and resilience that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their ancestors have displayed in laying strong foundations for the generations that follow.

Our vision

Improved health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through providing culturally responsive, sustainable, and effective healthcare.

Our purpose

To advance health equity, eliminate racism across the health system and to achieve life parity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by 2031.

Why health equity:

As noted in the Queensland Closing the Gap (CTG) Snapshot Report Card (2019) the life expectancy gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males was 7.8 years and females 6.7 years, with the child mortality rate 1.7 times higher than that of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in Queensland. There is evidence that interpersonal and institutional racism continues to be experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people when accessing healthcare.



Our opportunities:

To develop a workforce that is culturally responsive, inclusive and educated to negate discrimination and racism.

To co-design services in consultation with community, our partners, Our Primary Health Network and North Coast Aboriginal Corporation for Community Health to embed new and innovative models of care.

To strengthen, develop and retain existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and to utilise them to their full scope of practice.

To own Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health as Business as Usual (BAU) by embedding into clinical governance practices and service planning.

To improve integration with our community partners when delivering services.

To increase access to programs that aid with early detection, strengthen health literacy and support healthy communities.



The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is upwards of 12,000 people, approximately 2.8 per cent of the total population.



Almost half of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are aged 20 years or under.



The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population on the Sunshine Coast will increase at a faster rate than the rest of the population.



The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population on the Sunshine Coast over represent in various conditions causing potentially preventable hospitalisations including ear, nose and throat infections, convulsions and asthma.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Equity Strategy is a pivotal opportunity for Sunshine Coast Health to address these determinants of health. The Strategy is an overarching blueprint to address health equity for Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander people in the Sunshine Coast area giving opportunity for subsequent implementation plans to be developed in three-year cycles (2022-2031) in consultation with prescribed stakeholders.

Our challenges:

Social determinants

Addressing the social determinants of health requires whole of government coordination, strong inter-sectorial partnerships and collaborative dynamic leadership.

Demand

The ability of the health service and other local health care partners to meet the diverse needs of the community we serve and improve health outcomes amidst rising demand that potentially is in excess of capacity and funding.

Data

The ability for the health service and other local health care partners to access robust and verified data for service planning and outcome measurements.

Disaster response / pandemic

The health service's ability to meet the needs of our patients and the wider community in the event of an outbreak and its impact on robust consultation and time restraints.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Equity Strategy



Objectives	Eliminate racial discrimination	Increase access to healthcare	Culturally diverse and confident workforce	Culturally safe and responsive healthcare	Co-design and partnerships	Health parity
Our voice	<p>“Even if I was dying, I would not set foot in that hospital.” - Elder</p>	<p>“Most services are set up to suit the hospital not the consumer. We need to look at how consumers consume health. We need to offer flexible services that work with community not just send a letter and say be here at this time.” - SCHHS Staff</p>	<p>“Get our mob into jobs and get those positions into the community. I want to know them; I want to see them at events.” - Elder</p>	<p>“Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health care needs to be owned by everyone.” - SCHHS Staff</p>	<p>“We need better collaboration between organisations, we should work together and spread the services widely” - Provider</p>	<p>“When I think of the health gap I think of my Mum. I am lucky because she is here to support me with raising my boy. I couldn’t imagine doing it on my own but some people in my community have to.”- Consumer</p>
Intent	Adopt a zero-tolerance workplace culture and actively address racism and discrimination.	Increase access to health care services and directly address the barriers.	Support and grow our workforce to be skilled, culturally diverse, resilient, and confident.	Deliver sustainable, culturally safe and response health care services.	Work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations to deliver and monitor health services.	Address the leading drivers of the health gap, minimise modifiable risks and influence social determinants.
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and address instances of racial discrimination and unconscious bias. Strengthen anti-racism and cultural diversity training practices. Encourage education and truth-telling about historical and contemporary injustices and inequities. Empower champions within the health service to callout racism and support change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer innovative models of care that deliver care closer to home. Strengthen our engagement with community to understand the barriers to access. Improve coordinated care to guide our community on their journey through and out of hospital. Create clear pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to access services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grow Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation across all streams across all levels. Strengthen and develop staff and support them to work to full scope of practice. Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation at board and executive levels. Actively recruit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into the health service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed culturally safe care into clinical governance practices. Leverage opportunities for funding via Quality Incentive Payments (QIPs) Identify the needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and integrate this into all health service design, assessment, and planning. Commitment from all areas to fund Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services as BAU. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in consumer engagement, service design and planning. Develop robust data for service planning, outcome measurements and continuous quality improvement. Establish partnerships and integration between the hospital, community, ATSI-CCHO, local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services and broader system partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase access to programs that aid with early detection, strengthen health literacy, and support healthy communities. Develop partnerships to engage with younger persons to reduce health risk. Maximise the potential for health gain by targeting the leading drivers of the health gap. Establish partnerships across the broader social system with a view to develop regional responses to critical determinants.
What success looks like	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated mechanisms that encourage feedback from patients and staff to identify review and address instances of racial discrimination. Ready access to culturally safe complaints processes that capture robust data for evaluation. Ongoing anti-racism, unconscious bias and equity training for all health service staff, that is evaluated regularly for effectiveness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A growing number of services delivered via telehealth or in partnership with community-controlled services. Increased patient engagement in preventive and early detection services as well as outpatient appointments. A decrease in Potentially Preventable Hospitalisations (PPH). Considered strategies for hard-to-reach groups in the community and priority access pathways for overrepresented conditions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth and retention of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce. Integrated career pathways within the health service and access to education and career development for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce. Clear and supported scope of practice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander positions. An increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment targets for student placements and nursing graduates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All clinical governance and evaluation processes include cultural safety as part of BAU. Health Equity is prioritised and routinely considered in all service planning and commissioning activities. An increase in Identified positions by converting existing positions. An increase in funding being allocated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community have access to healthcare services that they want and need. Transparent decision making and accountability backed by robust data and evidence. Reportable KPIs. Shared data across services. Integrated mechanisms are in place to evaluate services regularly to ensure they remain appropriate to community needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth in health literacy and increased engagement with the health service throughout their life journey. Reduction in the leading drivers of the health gap (Cardiovascular Disease, Diabetes, Chronic Respiratory Disease, Cancers and Mental Illness) and modifiable risk factors (smoking, alcohol, obesity, high blood pressure and high cholesterol).

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Equity Strategy has been created in partnership with our Community, Primary Health Network, Health and Wellbeing Queensland and our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Health Organisation.

Health and wellbeing through person-centred healthcare