

SA Health

# Aboriginal Workforce Framework

2023 – 2031



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge and respect the traditional custodians on whose ancestral land SA Health provides services.

We acknowledge the deep feelings of attachment and relationship of Aboriginal people to country.

## ARTWORK STORY

The artwork by Ngarrindjeri artist Jordan Lovegrove, shows SA Health's commitment to building a stronger and valued Aboriginal workforce, through the statewide Aboriginal Workforce Framework 2023-2031.

The Department for Health and Wellbeing is represented by the large meeting place that provides a safe and supportive workplace ensuring the Aboriginal workforce is equipped to deliver services that are culturally responsive and of the highest standard to meet the needs of its Aboriginal communities. The different coloured dots represent the diversity of the Local Health Networks, communities and cultural backgrounds that are important parts of this journey.



## CONTENTS

Foreword from the Chief Executive	4
Executive summary	5
Overview of the Framework	6
Policy context	10
Celebration of achievements	11
Our Aboriginal workforce priorities	13
Applying the Framework	22
Glossary of terms	26
References	28
Appendix 1	29

The term 'Aboriginal' is used throughout this document as inclusive of people who identify as First Nations, Aboriginal, and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.





## FOREWORD FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

**The SA Health Aboriginal Workforce Framework 2023-2031 outlines how we will grow and strengthen the Aboriginal workforce and position ourselves as an employer of choice for Aboriginal people in South Australia.**

Evidence tells us that a strong Aboriginal health workforce will deliver better outcomes for Aboriginal people. This Framework articulates how we will strengthen SA Health's Aboriginal workforce by improving employment and career development opportunities, and by creating a supportive and culturally responsive work environment in which the workforce can thrive. From this we will build our capacity to deliver high quality culturally responsive care, and positively impact on the health and wellbeing outcomes of Aboriginal South Australians.

SA Health is committed to achieving 3% representation of Aboriginal people across the health workforce, inclusive of all disciplines and layers of leadership, consistent with South Australia's Implementation Plan for the Closing the Gap Agreement. The Framework provides the mechanism to help us achieve this target.

The Framework has been co-designed by key SA Health stakeholders including the Aboriginal Workforce Steering Committee, Senior Officers Group for Aboriginal Health, and the SA Health Aboriginal Workforce Network. Importantly, it has been informed by the knowledge, insights and experiences of members of our Aboriginal SA Health workforce, who have a shared commitment to improving the employment experience for the future SA Health workforce. Their contribution and leadership in ensuring that this Framework addresses the needs of the Aboriginal workforce has been invaluable.

For the Framework to be successful, we will need to work collaboratively with our key partners including Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, the education sector, other government and non-government agencies, and Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal members of the health workforce to drive our strategic priorities. Working together we will share knowledge, resources, and a commitment to deliver the best possible outcomes for the Aboriginal workforce and the Aboriginal people they care for.

I would like to extend my thanks to everyone who has contributed to the development of this Framework. I look forward to working together to deliver our vision for a strong and valued Aboriginal workforce.



**Dr Robyn Lawrence**  
**Chief Executive**  
Department for Health and Wellbeing



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The SA Health Aboriginal Workforce Framework 2023 – 2031 (the Framework) outlines an evidence-based strategic approach to building the representation of Aboriginal people in the health workforce across South Australia.

The Framework recognises that the Aboriginal workforce plays an integral role in ensuring the health system is ready to address the needs of Aboriginal people. It has been developed to guide SA Health planning and investment in the delivery of effective, equitable, safe, and accessible health services that contribute to the longevity, social wellbeing, and health of Aboriginal people.

Consistent with *South Australia's Implementation Plan for the Closing the Gap Agreement*, SA Health is committed to achieving 3% representation of Aboriginal people across the breadth of the health workforce, inclusive of all disciplines and layers of leadership. For this to be achieved, work must be undertaken in partnership with Aboriginal people to grow and strengthen the Aboriginal health workforce and ensure that the health system is culturally responsive.

The Framework is underpinned by the *South Australian Aboriginal Health Care Framework 2023 - 2031* which sets the strategic intent for improving the health and wellbeing of South Australian Aboriginal people. One of the four strategic priority areas identified in the *South Australian Aboriginal Health Care Framework* is to 'Strengthen Aboriginal Workforce', which focuses on strengthening the workforce to develop our future Aboriginal health leaders and support more effective delivery of culturally responsive services.

The Framework has been developed with the guidance of the Aboriginal Workforce Steering Committee, Senior Officers Group for Aboriginal Health, and the SA Health Aboriginal Workforce Network. It has been informed by key Aboriginal workforce policy frameworks, plans and strategies, and builds on the experience and learnings from work previously undertaken in South Australia to strengthen the Aboriginal health workforce.

## Four key areas are identified in the Framework:

1. **workforce growth and development**
2. **education, training, skills, and support**
3. **cultural capability and responsiveness**
4. **shared leadership and partnership.**

The actions sitting under these areas will collectively serve to strengthen SA Health to become an employer of choice for Aboriginal people.

SA Health will work in partnership with all stakeholders to ensure a holistic and localised approach to the implementation of the Framework. The Framework will apply for a period of nine years, until 2031. Governance arrangements with key delivery partners will be established to oversee implementation of the Framework.

**This Framework is closely aligned to the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan 2021 – 2031*.**

**The Plan commits all governments across multiple portfolios to work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, to grow and strengthen the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce and ensure a culturally safe and responsive health system.**



# OVERVIEW OF THE FRAMEWORK

**To have a strong and valued Aboriginal workforce working across the health system in an environment that is culturally responsive and free from racism.**

## VISION

Importantly, this Framework is informed by the voices, knowledge, skills and aspirations of members of the existing SA Health Aboriginal workforce, and their interest in improving the experience of the future workforce.

The Framework provides a pathway to ensure that SA Health provides a supportive workplace for Aboriginal people, where they feel valued and respected as Aboriginal workers, their voices are heard and recognised, there is strong Aboriginal leadership, and cultural safety exists for everyone.

It creates accountability for SA Health to grow, support and retain the Aboriginal workforce and to develop its capacity to become an employer of choice for Aboriginal people.

## PRINCIPLES

The Framework is underpinned by the following five principles outlined in the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan 2021 – 2031* (National Aboriginal Workforce Framework and Implementation Plan).

The principles are designed to affirm the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and guide how all levels of government, in partnership with the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Sector, will achieve the vision and objectives of the National Aboriginal Workforce Framework and Implementation Plan. Further detail about these principles can be found in the [National Aboriginal Workforce Framework and Implementation Plan](#).

## TABLE OF PRINCIPLES

<b>Centrality of culture</b>	Culture must be embraced and embedded across all Aboriginal mainstream services. The cultural determinants must be considered in the planning and design of health workforce strategies.
<b>Leadership and accountability</b>	For health workforce strategies to be successful, all sectors must show commitment and be accountable to Aboriginal communities.
<b>Partnership</b>	For a holistic and sustainable Aboriginal health workforce, all stakeholders, especially Aboriginal people and communities, must be actively included in planning and decision making.
<b>Health system effectiveness</b>	The health system must be culturally safe and supportive, underpinned by robust and transparent governance, and support a health workforce that has connected clinical and cultural functions to address physical and mental health needs and improve the health and social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal people.
<b>Evidence and data</b>	Meaningful and reliable data is needed to support the Aboriginal health workforce to grow and develop.



## PURPOSE OF THE FRAMEWORK

The purpose of this Framework is to:

- provide the policy framework to guide how SA Health will build the representation of Aboriginal people in the health workforce across South Australia
- communicate SA Health's commitment to growing and retaining a strong and representative Aboriginal workforce, and ensuring Aboriginal leadership is present at all levels of delivery, decision-making and governance
- contribute to the achievement of equitable health outcomes for Aboriginal people through the provision of a strong and supported workforce that has the appropriate skills to provide culturally safe and responsive care to Aboriginal communities
- articulate the roles and responsibilities of each part of the health system working under a partnership approach, to strengthen the South Australian Aboriginal health workforce
- guide local service actions that contribute to building and strengthening the Aboriginal health workforce
- inform key performance indicators for Local Health Networks (LHNs), SA Ambulance Service (SAAS) and Statewide Clinical Support Services (SCSS) Service Level Agreements in relation to the Aboriginal health workforce
- guide investments in initiatives that support and grow the Aboriginal workforce across the health system.

## TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience includes key stakeholders and parties who will partner in implementing the Framework including:

- Department for Health and Wellbeing (DHW)
- Local Health Networks (LHNs)
- SA Ambulance Service (SAAS)
- Statewide Clinical Support Services (SCSS)
- Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal health workforce.

We recognise and acknowledge the important role that other partners including Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHSs), other health providers and organisations and Aboriginal communities play in supporting the delivery of the Framework.

## DEVELOPING THE FRAMEWORK

The Framework has been developed under the oversight of the Aboriginal Workforce Framework Steering Committee through an extensive process involving:

- review of the *SA Health Aboriginal Workforce Framework 2017 – 2022* and its associated activities and learnings
- review and analysis of the current policy and strategic context for increasing the representation of Aboriginal people in the health workforce at the national and jurisdictional level
- extensive consultation and co-design with a range of key stakeholders including Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff across the workforce professions of SA Health, and the Senior Officers Group for Aboriginal Health between November 2021 and November 2022.



## REVIEW PERIOD

**Progress against the Framework will be evaluated through the following process:**

### Annual review

Annual reviews will occur in partnership with the Aboriginal workforce and senior Aboriginal leaders and workforce directors to evaluate progress towards achieving the Framework outcomes. This will inform any shifts in implementation activity that may be needed to account for emerging trends and changing priorities. The review will capture the lived and working experiences of Aboriginal employees through the implementation of the Framework.

### Mid-cycle progress review (2026)

An independent mid-cycle review will occur to evaluate progress towards achieving the Framework outcomes. This will inform any shifts in implementation activity that may be needed to account for emerging trends and changing priorities. The review will seek to capture the lived experiences of Aboriginal people throughout the Framework's implementation. A mid-cycle progress report will be developed in mid-2026.

### End-of-cycle review (2030)

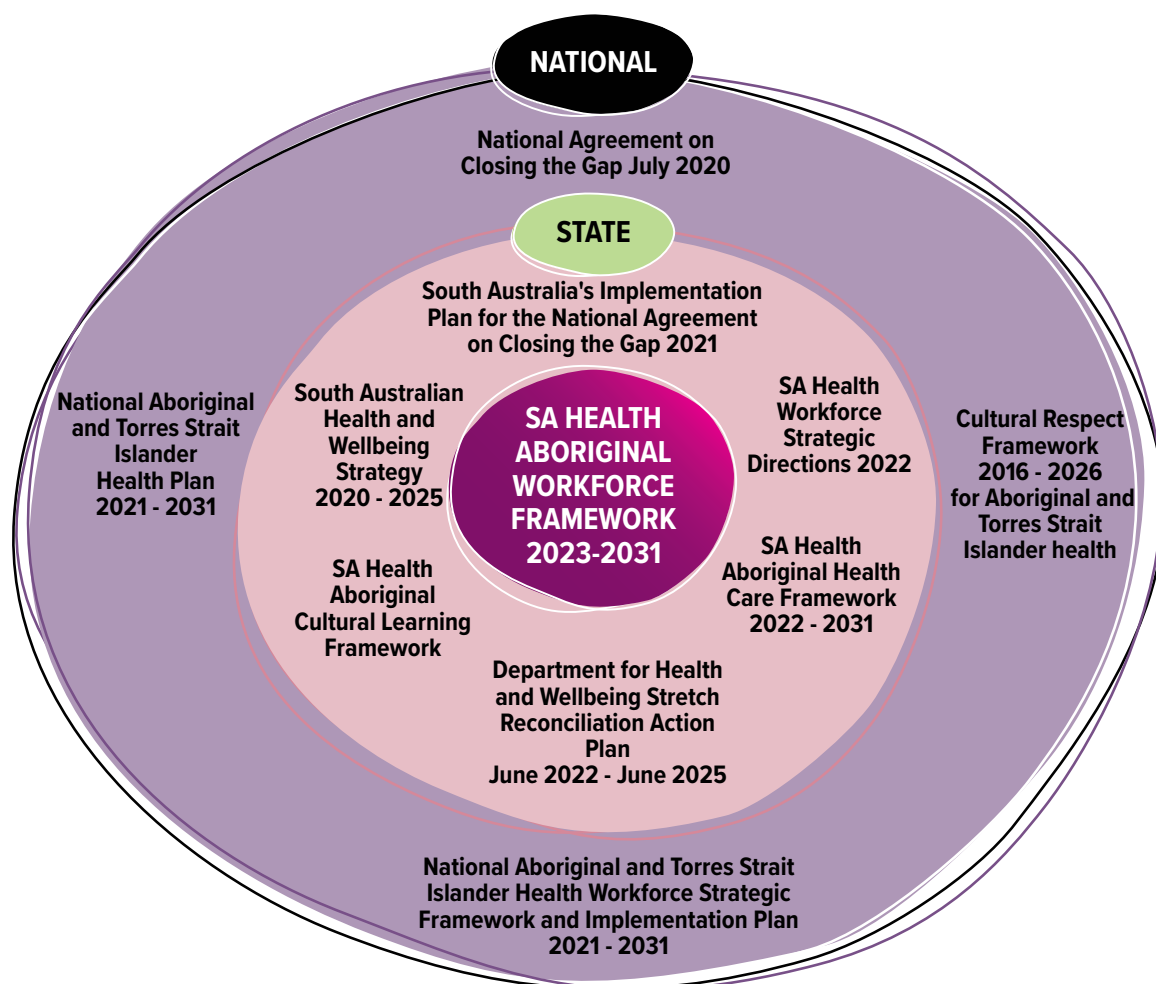
An independent end-of-cycle review will happen in partnership with all implementation partners and stakeholders. This review will evaluate progress over the duration of the Framework and identify future priorities and planning for Aboriginal health workforce. The review will capture the lived and working experiences of Aboriginal employees from across the breadth of the workforce, through a combination of surveys, workshops and interviews.

# POLICY CONTEXT

The South Australian government is committed to working in partnership to improve the lives of South Australian Aboriginal people. It is recognised that a key enabler to achieving this is growing and retaining a strong and representative Aboriginal workforce to contribute to the delivery of effective, equitable and responsive health services for Aboriginal people.

The *South Australian Implementation Plan for the National Agreement on Closing the Gap* commits the state to growing the Aboriginal workforce to reach 3% of the total public sector workforce. This Framework aligns with that commitment by setting the policy direction needed to achieve an Aboriginal workforce of 3% of the total SA Health workforce.

The Framework is underpinned by *South Australia's Aboriginal Health Care Framework 2023-2031*, which identifies 'Strengthening Aboriginal Workforce' as one of four strategic priority focus areas to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal people. It builds on the previous *SA Health Aboriginal Workforce Framework 2017 – 2022* and aligns with priorities and actions identified in a range of national and South Australian frameworks, agreements, strategies, directions, and plans, including those illustrated below:



Details of these Agreements, Frameworks and Plans are provided in Appendix 1.



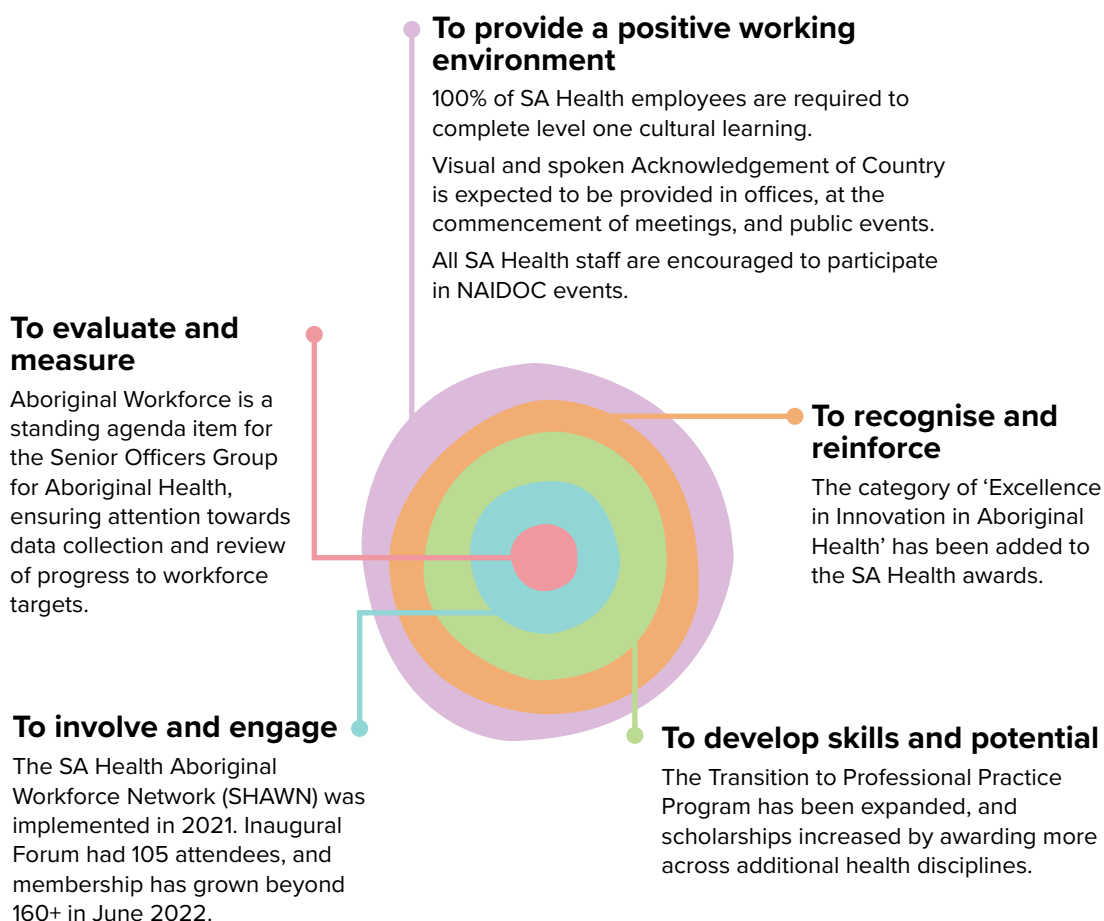
# CELEBRATION OF ACHIEVEMENTS

SA Health is committed to ensuring that members of our current and prospective Aboriginal workforce have a positive experience from the very first time they engage with us, and that this experience is consistent throughout their time working with us.

This means ensuring that their experience is free of racism, inequity, and unconscious bias, and they can see that the cultural leadership of Aboriginal people is recognised and valued across the organisation. Above all they must feel culturally safe in the workplace.

Over the last five years of implementing the *SA Health Aboriginal Workforce Framework 2017 – 2022*, significant progress has been made to achieve our workforce representation target and ensure a positive experience for Aboriginal employees. We have increased our workforce by 270 individual Aboriginal employees.

## Some of the system-level actions taken include:



*"Aboriginal workforce is a key enabler in Closing the health gap. That's what I love about SHAWN – meeting new people and old friends and listening to the amazing ideas and lived experience that is shared to support our workforce in a culturally diverse and safe forum"*

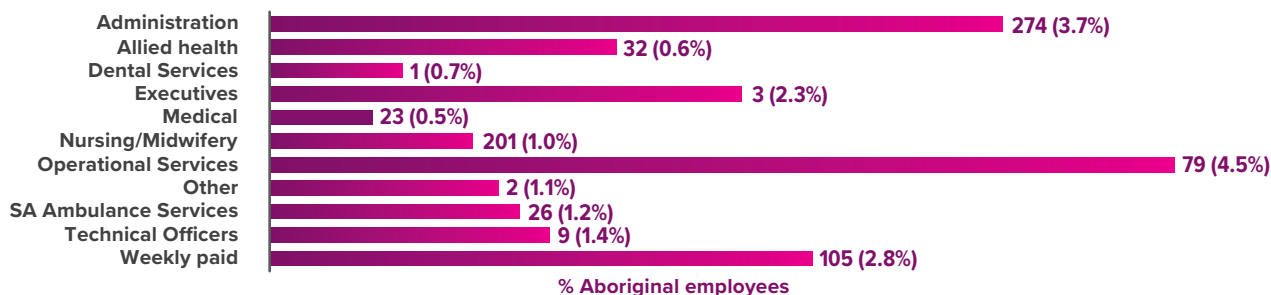
*"I feel incredibly proud to be a part of a concept that helps grow Aboriginal workforce and to provide opportunities for our mob"*

# OUR WORKFORCE SNAPSHOT

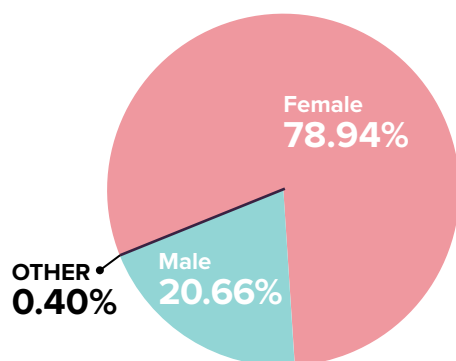
Aboriginal workforce headcount = **755** as at **June 2023**



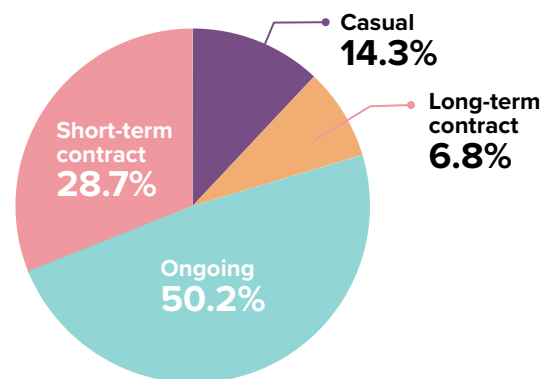
## OUR WORKFORCE BY OCCUPATION



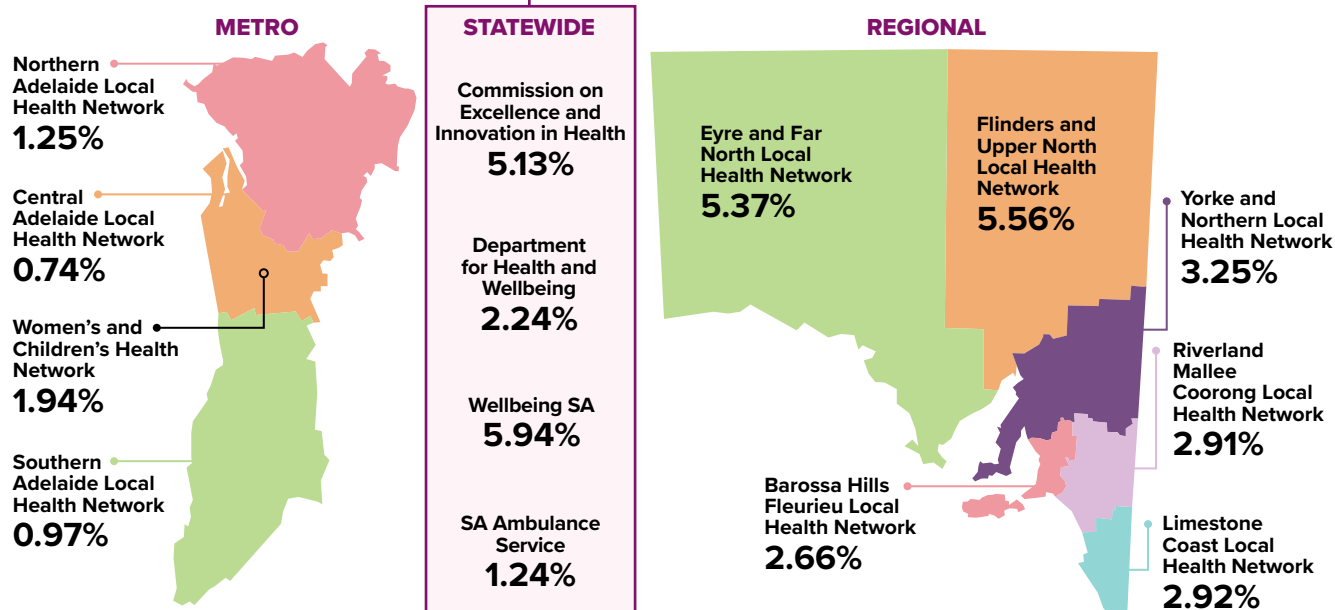
## OUR WORKFORCE BY GENDER



## OUR WORKFORCE BY APPOINTMENT STATUS



## OUR WORKFORCE BY LOCATION



## OUR WORKFORCE PROGRAMS

**Transition to Professional Practice Program**



CALENDAR YEAR **2022**



COMPLETED PROGRAM **13**

The data for "Aboriginal Data frame" is extracted from the Workforce Information Collection (WIC) provided by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment (OCPSE). The data fields are defined by the OCPSE.

Data applicable to LHNs, SAAS and Statewide Services (BreastScreen SA, Donate Life SA, DASSA, Rural Support Services, SA Dental, SA Medical Imaging, SA Pathology, SA Pharmacy, SA Prison Health Services, Trauma SA)

# OUR ABORIGINAL WORKFORCE PRIORITIES

This Framework outlines how SA Health will grow and strengthen the Aboriginal workforce and foster a supportive and culturally responsive workplace in which Aboriginal employees feel safe and valued and are recognised for the unique knowledge, life experiences and skills they can offer. This in turn will ultimately enable SA Health to deliver the best possible services to Aboriginal people and positively contribute to improved Aboriginal health and wellbeing outcomes.

A whole of sector partnership approach is required to apply the Framework across all of SA Health working in collaboration with local service partners to ensure local needs are met.

To guide this approach four strategic priorities have been identified in the following areas of focus that, when pursued together, will drive change across the system to build a stronger and highly valued Aboriginal workforce. Specific actions to drive change under each strategic priority area are detailed in this section, along with an indication of the ways that success is expected to be demonstrated within each area.

**Grow and develop the Aboriginal workforce through representation, skill development and improved sustainability of employment**



**Ensure the Aboriginal workforce has the necessary skills, capacity, and leadership opportunities to fulfill roles across all professions and services in the health system**

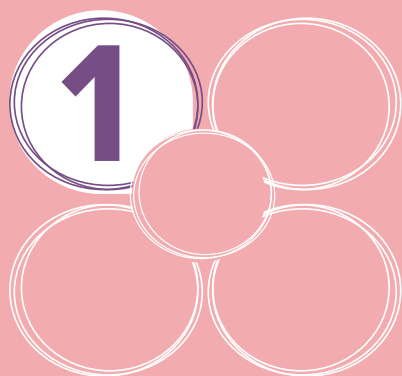
**Develop cultural capability and responsiveness to ensure the workplace is free of racism and designed with cultural understanding and respect**



**Partner with the Aboriginal workforce and agencies within health and other sectors to lead and drive solutions to strengthen the Aboriginal health workforce**







# WORKFORCE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

**Grow, develop and retain the Aboriginal workforce through representation, skills development and improved sustainability of employment.**

## WHAT WILL BE DONE TO ACHIEVE THIS?

### **1.1 Create targeted employment opportunities for Aboriginal people within SA Health**

Undertake targeted recruitment of Aboriginal people to identified positions by:

- expanding and renewing the Equal Opportunity Act Exemption granted to SA Health to permit advertising and preferencing the appointment of Aboriginal people
- creating an Aboriginal employment pool to increase the number of Aboriginal staff recruited or upskilled
- identifying and promoting opportunities in the mainstream health workforce for Aboriginal people.

### **1.2 Promote health careers to Aboriginal people**

Deliver initiatives to attract Aboriginal people to health careers and promote the spectrum of careers available across the health system by:

- establishing an 'inspiring stories' program to promote health service careers to young Aboriginal people
- partnering with Registered Training Organisations and universities to establish a marketing campaign targeting Aboriginal people towards health careers
- collaborating with Aboriginal and mainstream industry and specialist discipline associations to establish targeted promotion of careers to Aboriginal people
- offering work experience and 'industry insight' programs to promote the spectrum of health careers available.

### **1.3 Invest in retaining Aboriginal employees across SA Health**

Support Aboriginal employees to learn and grow on a personal and professional level through the delivery of a statewide peer support, mentoring program and career pathways program.

### **1.4 Apply a strategic approach to Aboriginal workforce recruitment**

Continue to actively participate in the Aboriginal Employment Public Sector Industry Clusters program to leverage best practice Aboriginal recruitment, retention, and development strategies.

## **WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE**

- ▶ **Aboriginal employees sustain ongoing employment in the health system at the same rate as non-Aboriginal employees.**
- ▶ **Aboriginal people represent 3% of the SA Health workforce, in line with South Australia's Implementation Plan for the National Agreement on Closing the Gap target.**
- ▶ **Aboriginal people are well represented across all health disciplines.**
- ▶ **Aboriginal people are supported to access SA Health employment opportunities.**
- ▶ **SA Health is attractive to Aboriginal people as a place to work.**
- ▶ **Peer support programs for all Aboriginal employees, with a focus on graduates and new employees are available across all regions.**



## EDUCATION, TRAINING, SKILLS AND SUPPORT

**Ensure the Aboriginal workforce has the necessary skills, capacity and leadership opportunities to fulfill roles across all professions and services in the health system.**

### WHAT WILL BE DONE TO ACHIEVE THIS?

#### **2.1 Facilitate opportunities for Aboriginal people to transition into health sector employment through health education and training programs**

Create opportunities for Aboriginal people to study and work in the health sector by increasing the number of places for Aboriginal students in health-related fields in targeted programs such as: school-based apprenticeships, traineeships, cadetships, scholarships, and graduate programs.

#### **2.2 Develop workplace education programs that target the needs of Aboriginal employees**

Co-design and implement flexible workplace education programs that:

- build skills and provide career development opportunities for Aboriginal employees
- explore new ways of delivering on-the-job training for Aboriginal employees that enables flexibility and remote working
- support and incentivise Aboriginal employees re-entering the health workforce through the facilitation of a 'return to work upskilling program'.

#### **2.3 Build the capacity of Aboriginal employees to hold leadership roles across SA Health**

Support Aboriginal employees to develop leadership skills and experience by:

- developing a tailored leadership and career pathways program for Aboriginal employees
- identifying and actively targeting Aboriginal employees for mainstream leadership training and development opportunities
- providing access to leadership training programs including those offered by SA Health and partnership-based opportunities with the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment.



## **2.4 Invest in professional development to support Aboriginal employees to build their knowledge, skills and capabilities**

Support professional development and leadership development for Aboriginal employees and recognise and reward Aboriginal employees for their efforts and participation in ongoing professional development.

## **2.5 Support opportunities for Aboriginal employees to explore different careers within SA Health**

Establish and promote pathways to facilitate Aboriginal employees seeking a career change or upskilling opportunity across professions and roles within SA Health.

## **2.6 Recognise and promote the outstanding efforts and achievements of Aboriginal employees across SA Health**

Continue to include the category of 'Excellence in Innovation in Aboriginal Health' in the SA Health Awards; and the category of 'Mary Buckskin Award for Excellence in Practice (Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Nurse/Midwife)' in the Nursing and Midwifery Excellence Awards.

## **2.7 Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers (ATSIHW) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners (ATSIHP) to work to their full scope of practice**

Contribute to the revision, expansion, and national standardisation of the professional scopes of practice for ATSIHW and ATSIHPs.

## **WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE**

- ▶ **Aboriginal health students have successful transitions into the workforce and access clear career pathway options.**
- ▶ **At least 10 scholarships awarded per annum to Aboriginal people studying in university health programs.**
- ▶ **Aboriginal employees have access to, and participate in, a leadership and career pathways program.**
- ▶ **Aboriginal employees report that education and training programs are culturally safe.**
- ▶ **Increase the number of leadership roles within SA Health held by Aboriginal employees.**
- ▶ **Aboriginal employees have opportunities to progress their career across the health system.**
- ▶ **Aboriginal employees are represented in clinical and non-clinical roles, across the breadth of the health system.**
- ▶ **ATSIHWs and ATSHIPs work to their full scope of practice and have well understood and respected roles that are meaningfully incorporated in mainstream models of care.**
- ▶ **Aboriginal employees access ongoing professional development.**



# CULTURAL CAPABILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS

**Develop cultural capability and responsiveness to ensure all of SA Health is free of racism and designed with cultural understanding and respect.**

## WHAT WILL BE DONE TO ACHIEVE THIS?

### 3.1 Continue to build a culturally responsive SA Health workforce

Build cultural responsiveness by:

- delivering best practice training to build a culturally safe and responsive workforce, including ensuring that every SA Health employee participates in *SA Health Cultural Learning Framework* training in line with their role requirements
- implementing cultural practices and protocols across SA Health and educate all staff about their meaning and significance including Acknowledgement of Country, Welcome to Country, displaying the Aboriginal flag and promotion of key Aboriginal community events (e.g. NAIDOC Week).

### 3.2 Embed cultural considerations within SA Health employment practices

Ensure SA Health applies culturally safe and responsive employment practices including:

- acknowledging and accommodating cultural responsibilities and commitments of Aboriginal people within employment arrangements (e.g. 'Sorry Business')
- continuously improving HR policies and procedures, through consultation with Aboriginal advisors to implement anti-racism policy
- ensuring recruitment panels for Aboriginal workforce positions include Aboriginal members
- offering exit interviews to all Aboriginal employees and using the feedback provided to identify any cultural safety concerns and improve employee working experiences.

### **3.3 Support employee participation in Aboriginal workforce networks and programs**

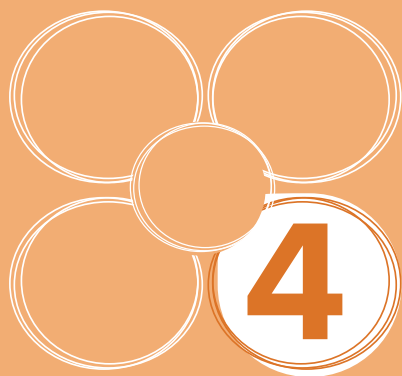
Continue to encourage and support employee participation in Aboriginal workforce networks and programs, including through the SA Health Aboriginal Workforce Network.

### **3.4 Promote opportunities for Aboriginal employees to provide feedback on their perspectives of cultural safety**

Create opportunities to capture feedback and insights of Aboriginal employees in relation to cultural safety and use these to inform continuous improvement approaches.

## **WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE**

- ▶ Workplace and cultural support programs are in place across all regions.
- ▶ The workplace is inclusive and free of racism.
- ▶ Non-Aboriginal employees value and respect the trained skill sets and cultural knowledge of the Aboriginal workforce.
- ▶ SA Health has a culturally safe and responsive health workforce.
- ▶ Aboriginal employees report improved job satisfaction and feelings of cultural connection.
- ▶ Aboriginal employees have positive experiences working with SA Health.
- ▶ Aboriginal employees feel connected to their peers.
- ▶ SA Health policies and practices consider the needs of Aboriginal people.



## SHARED LEADERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIP

**Partner with the Aboriginal workforce and agencies within health and other sectors to lead and drive solutions to strengthen the Aboriginal health workforce.**

### WHAT WILL BE DONE TO ACHIEVE THIS?

#### **4.1 Co-design and produce SA Health employment systems and tools with Aboriginal people**

Work with Aboriginal people to access cultural insights to inform the design, production and review of SA Health employment practices and programs, and the overarching SA Health Aboriginal recruitment and employment pathway; including specifically contributing to the review of the Cultural Learning Framework.

#### **4.2 Collaborate across SA Health and other sectors to co-design and produce strategic approaches to strengthen the Aboriginal health workforce**

Work in partnership to access input from across SA Health, Registered Training Organisations and universities to design and implement mechanisms and initiatives to strengthen the Aboriginal health workforce.

#### **4.3 Facilitate a joint approach to Aboriginal health workforce planning across SA Health**

Implement joint workforce planning across SA Health to identify priority roles, set targets and align action plans, and investigate opportunities to share workforce, improve Aboriginal employee experience and opportunities.

#### **4.4 Establish system-wide Aboriginal workforce data sharing and reporting capability across SA Health**

Co-design a coordinated whole of system approach to monitoring of Aboriginal workforce representation and rates of sustained employment across SA Health.

### **WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE**

- ▶ **Workforce Directors and Aboriginal Health leaders are regularly engaged to share information and collaborate on workforce strategies and initiatives.**
- ▶ **Aboriginal workforce participation and retention is monitored and reported on annually across SA Health.**
- ▶ **Aboriginal employees actively participate in planning and decision-making processes about Aboriginal workforce priorities, issues and systems.**
- ▶ **Increased information sharing and knowledge exchange between Aboriginal health workforce stakeholders on workforce issues.**
- ▶ **Aboriginal health workforce policy and planning continuously improves through shared learning about what works well across the health system.**



# APPLYING THE FRAMEWORK

A whole of system approach is required to implement the workforce priorities and actions set out in this Framework.

As system leader, DHW has set this overarching Framework based on national and state policy frameworks and will monitor and report against key performance indicators (KPIs) and measures of success, in partnership with LHNs, SAAS and SCSS.

Implementation of the Framework will be managed at the local level by LHNs, SAAS and SCSS. It is intended that each LHN, SAAS and SCSS will determine their own implementation plans in 2023, to be developed in partnership with stakeholders such as ACCHSs, the education sector, other government and non-government agencies, and Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal members of the health workforce. This will enable LHNs, SAAS and SCSS to work with their partners to tailor approaches to meet local needs.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The table below provides a high-level summary of the roles and responsibilities between DHW, as system leader, LHNs, SAAS and SCSS, as implementation partners, in the application of the Framework.

Role	Responsibilities
<b>Department for Health and Wellbeing</b>	
<b>System Lead</b> for the Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Set the overarching policy framework for strengthening the Aboriginal workforce, through the development of the Framework.</li><li>▶ Build awareness of the Framework across the SA Health sector.</li><li>▶ Establish governance and accountability for the Framework across SA Health.</li><li>▶ Support LHNs, SAAS and SCSS to implement the Framework through the provision of implementation advice.</li><li>▶ Establish the Aboriginal Workforce Framework Evaluation Plan.</li><li>▶ Monitor, evaluate and report against KPIs and success measures of the Framework.</li><li>▶ Facilitate the mid and end of cycle review processes to evaluate the Framework.</li><li>▶ Revise and update the Framework as required, to align with review outcomes and any broader changes occurring in the sector.</li></ul>

Role	Responsibilities
<b>Local Health Networks, SAAS and SCSS</b>	
<b>Implementation of the Framework at the local level</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Build awareness of the Framework at the local level.</li> <li>▶ Ensure alignment and compliance with the intent of the Framework in LHNs, SAAS and SCSS strategic workforce planning, policy, and management.</li> <li>▶ Develop an implementation plan to detail how the workforce priorities and actions will be delivered at the local level by the LHN/SAAS/SCSS that is developed in partnership with stakeholders such as ACCHSs, the education sector, other government and non-government agencies, and Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal members of the health workforce, to meet key performance indicators and success measures.</li> <li>▶ Report annually to DHW on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- progress against implementation plan as well as continuous improvements against the KPIs and success measures outlined within the Framework.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ Participate in Framework review and evaluation activities.</li> <li>▶ Provide insights into the needs of the Aboriginal workforce within region, and lessons learnt in workforce planning and management.</li> </ul>

## EVALUATION AND REPORTING

The Frameworks implementation and oversight will be established under the new Workforce Services Strategy Committee. This will facilitate regular monitoring and reporting on the progress of the Framework's implementation, and evaluation of the Framework's outcomes.

As part of the performance review meeting process, LHNs agree to annually allocate a meeting on Aboriginal Health as the sole topic. As part of this meeting the progression on Aboriginal Health Care Framework implementation, Aboriginal Workforce Framework implementation and Closing the Gap initiatives (including any specifics in Service Level Agreements) will be discussed in depth.

The DHW will establish an Aboriginal Workforce Framework Evaluation Plan that details the:

- KPIs and measures of success for the Framework
- process to be applied for monitoring implementation and evaluating the outcomes of the Framework
- arrangements for annual reporting on the implementation of the Framework.

The evaluation plan will consider measurement of the outcomes of the Framework at the individual DHW, LHN, SAAS and SCSS level, as well as providing a whole of system perspective.

## TIMETABLE FOR MONITORING PROGRESS

To assist LHNs, SAAS and SCSS with Framework implementation planning, the following timetable has been developed to highlight the areas that DHW will focus its monitoring and evaluation activities on, via a staged approach, across the term of the Framework.

Aboriginal Workforce Priority Areas	Focus area for monitoring and evaluation								
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
<b>PRIORITY 1: Workforce growth and development</b>									
1.1 Create targeted employment opportunities for Aboriginal people within SA Health									
1.2 Promote health careers to Aboriginal people									
1.3 Invest in retaining Aboriginal employees across SA Health									
1.4 Apply a strategic approach to Aboriginal workforce recruitment									
<b>PRIORITY 2: Education, training, skills and support</b>									
2.1 Facilitate opportunities for Aboriginal people to transition into health sector employment through health education and training programs									
2.2 Develop workplace education programs that target the needs of Aboriginal employees									
2.3 Build the capacity of Aboriginal employees to hold leadership roles across SA Health									
2.4 Invest in professional development to support Aboriginal employees to build their knowledge, skills, and capabilities									
2.5 Support opportunities for Aboriginal employees to explore different careers within SA Health									
2.6 Recognise and promote the outstanding efforts and achievements of Aboriginal employees across SA Health									
2.7 Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers (ATSIHW) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners (ATSIHP) to work to their full scope of practice									

Aboriginal Workforce Priority Areas	Focus area for monitoring and evaluation								
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9
<b>PRIORITY 3: Cultural capability and responsiveness</b>									
3.1 Continue to build a culturally responsive SA Health workforce									
3.2 Embed cultural considerations within SA Health employment practices									
3.3 Support employee participation in Aboriginal workforce networks and programs									
3.4 Promote opportunities for Aboriginal employees to provide feedback on their perspectives of cultural safety									
<b>PRIORITY 4: Shared leadership and partnership</b>									
4.1 Co-design and produce SA Health employment systems and tools with Aboriginal people									
4.2 Collaborate across SA Health and other sectors to co-design and produce strategic approaches to strengthen the Aboriginal health workforce									
4.3 Facilitate a joint approach to Aboriginal health workforce planning across SA Health									
4.4 Establish system-wide Aboriginal workforce data sharing and reporting capability across SA Health									

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

This Framework applies the terms and definitions contained the [National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2021–2031](#) (unless otherwise specified).

## **Aboriginal**

The term 'Aboriginal' is used throughout this document as inclusive of people who identify as First Nations, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

## **Aboriginal community control**

A process which allows the local Aboriginal community to be involved in its affairs in accordance with whatever protocols or procedures are determined by the Community.

*(Source: National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation)*

## **Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service (ACCHS)**

ACCHS are non-government, not-for-profit organisations run by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The terms Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (ACCHO) and Aboriginal Medical Service (AMS) are often used interchangeably with ACCHS.

## **Administrative**

Includes employees employed pursuant to the SA Public Sector Salaried Employees Interim Award (for Administrative Services and Manager Services streams). Data extracted from Workforce Information Collection (WIC) provided by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment.

## **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioner (ATSIHP)**

An Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander primary health care professional who is registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency.

*(Source: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan 2021–2031)*

## **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker (ATSIHW)**

An Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person who holds the relevant qualifications in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander primary health care.

*(Source: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan 2021–2031)*

## **Allied health professionals**

Includes employees employed pursuant to the SA Public Sector Salaried Employees Interim Award. Data extracted from Workforce Information Collection (WIC) provided by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment.

## **Executives**

Includes employees employed under the South Australian Executive Service pursuant to the Public Sector Act 2009 Data extracted from Workforce Information Collection (WIC) provided by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment.

## **Mainstream workforce**

Describes all workforce roles that are not determined to be culturally specific.



**Medical practitioners**

Includes employees employed pursuant to the South Australian Medical Officers Award Data extracted from Workforce Information Collection (WIC) provided by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment.

**Nurses and midwives**

Includes employees employed pursuant to the Nurses (South Australian Public Sector) Award Data extracted from Workforce Information Collection (WIC) provided by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment.

**Operational services**

Includes employees employed in classification OPS and OPX Data extracted from Workforce Information Collection (WIC) provided by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment.

**SA Ambulance**

Includes employees employed pursuant to the SA Ambulance Service Award. Data extracted from Workforce Information Collection (WIC) provided by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment.

**Strengths-based approach**

A strengths-based approach focuses on the unique strengths, capabilities and resources of people, places and communities, and looks for opportunities to capitalise on, complement and support existing strengths. Strengths-based approaches work in opposition to deficit-based discourse and approaches, which focus on areas of problem or concern, and can perpetuate negative stereotyping.

**Systemic racism**

In the context of health care, systemic racism is the failure of the health system to provide appropriate, professional, safe, and responsive services to people because of their cultural or racial background. This is often a result of broader historical and ongoing race-based policies, discrimination, and social exclusion.

# REFERENCES

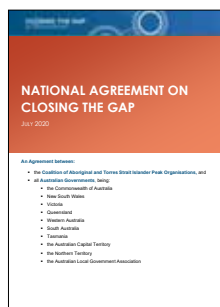
This Framework has been informed by the following sources:

- *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*. Commonwealth of Australia Department for Health. Canberra. (July 2020) retrieved from: [www.closingthegap.gov.au/national-agreement/national-agreement-closing-the-gap](http://www.closingthegap.gov.au/national-agreement/national-agreement-closing-the-gap)
- *South Australia's Implementation Plan for the National Agreement on Closing the Gap*. Adelaide. Government of South Australia. (2021). retrieved from: <https://www.agd.sa.gov.au/aboriginal-affairs-and-reconciliation/closing-the-gap/south-australias-implementation-plan/South-Australias-Implementation-Plan-for-Closing-the-Gap.pdf>
- *Cultural Respect Framework 2021-2026* Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council. Canberra. (2021) retrieved from: [cultural\\_respect\\_framework\\_1december2016\\_1.pdf](#) (wordpress.com)
- *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan 2021–2031*. Commonwealth of Australia Department for Health. Canberra. (2022). retrieved from [National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan 2021–2031 | Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care](#)
- *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2021–2031*. Commonwealth of Australia Department for Health. Canberra (2021). retrieved from: The new [National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2021–2031 | Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care](#)
- *South Australian Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020 – 2025*. Adelaide. Department for Health and Wellbeing, Government of South Australia (2020). retrieved from: [South Australian Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2025](#)
- *SA Health Statement of Reconciliation*. Adelaide. (2020). Retrieved from: [Reconciliation | SA Health](#)
- *Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan June 2022 – June 2025*. South Australian Department for Health and Wellbeing. Adelaide (2022).retrieved from: [Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan June 2022 - June 2025 \(sahealth.sa.gov.au\)](#)
- *South Australian Aboriginal Health Care Framework 2022-2031*. South Australian Department for Health and Wellbeing, Government of South Australia (2022). Adelaide.
- *SA Health Aboriginal Cultural Learning Framework*. Department for Health and Wellbeing, Government of South Australia. Adelaide. (2017). retrieved from: [SA Health Aboriginal Cultural Learning Framework](#)
- *SA Health Workforce Strategic Directions*. Adelaide. (2022)
- *South Australia's Rural Aboriginal Health Workforce Plan 2021–2026*. Rural Support Service, SA Health. (2021). retrieved from: [South Australia's Rural Aboriginal Health Workforce Plan 2021-2026](#)
- *Aboriginal Workforce Strategy 2021-2026*. Victorian Department of Health and Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. (2021). Melbourne. Retrieved from: [Aboriginal Workforce Strategy 2021-2026](#)
- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework 2016-2026*. Queensland Health. (2016). Brisbane. retrieved from: [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework 2016-2026](#)
- *Good Health – Great Jobs: Aboriginal Workforce Strategic Framework 2016-2020*. New South Wales Health. Sydney. (2016). retrieved from: [Good Health- Great jobs: Aboriginal Workforce Strategic Framework 2016-2020](#)

# APPENDIX 1

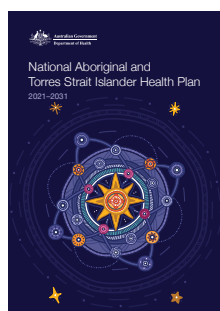
## NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

### National Agreement on Closing the Gap July 2020



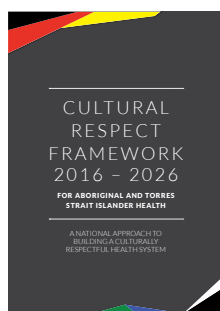
Sets out the agreement reached between Australian governments and the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations. The National Agreement enables Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and governments to work together to overcome the inequality experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and achieve life outcomes equal to all Australians. The National Agreement is built around four Priority Reforms determined by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. These reforms alter how governments work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.

### National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2021- 2031



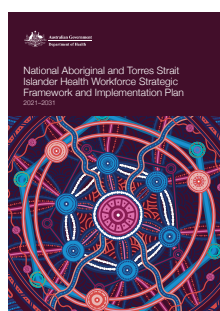
The Plan aligns with actions the priority reforms within the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and includes a strong focus on identifying opportunities to strengthen and prioritise the community controlled health sector and outlining the necessary mechanisms for mainstream health services to provide culturally safe and responsive care. Governments at all levels are jointly accountable for implementing the Plan and making sure it achieves progress on its priorities and objectives.

### Cultural Respect Framework 2016 - 2026 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health



Commits the Commonwealth Government and all states and territories to embedding cultural respect principles into their health systems; from developing policy and legislation, to how organisations are run, through to the planning and delivery of services. The Framework guides and underpins the delivery of quality, culturally safe, responsive health care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and contributes to progress made towards achieving the Closing the Gap targets.

### National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan 2021–2031



The Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan supporting the ongoing development of the size, capability and capacity of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce. The Plan commits all governments across multiple portfolios to work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to grow and strengthen the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce and ensure a culturally safe and responsive health system.

## **SOUTH AUSTRALIAN POLICY CONTEXT**

### **South Australian Aboriginal Health Care Framework 2023-2031**



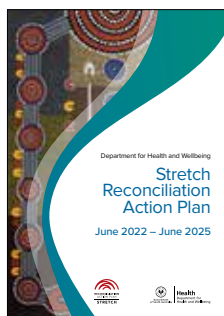
Sets the strategic intent in guiding South Australia's efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of South Australian Aboriginal people. The Framework informs SA Health's planning and implementation efforts to build healthier Aboriginal communities, address the health inequities faced by Aboriginal people, and reduce the gap in health outcomes between South Australia's Aboriginal people and the rest of South Australia's population.

### **South Australia's Implementation Plan for the National Agreement on Closing the Gap**



Sets out South Australia's plan for achieving and addressing the priority reforms and socio-economic targets embedded in the Closing the Gap Agreement to ensure the lives of Aboriginal people in South Australia can improve in all cultural, social and economic aspects. Includes a series of actions to deliver improvements in health outcomes for Aboriginal people.

### **SA Department for Health and Wellbeing Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan June 2022 – June 2025**



DHW's Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2022 to 2025 is the next step in the Department's reconciliation journey.

The Department's Stretch RAP outlines the vision for reconciliation through the three pillars of reconciliation, which include Relationships, Respect, and Opportunities. The Stretch RAP supports the Department to embed reconciliation initiatives into business strategies and practices, so they become 'business as usual'.

### **South Australian Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020 – 2025**



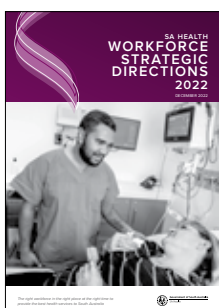
Outlines the key focus areas for development of the South Australian health system to ensure its ongoing relevance for South Australians. The Strategy acknowledges the differences in health status and health outcomes for some population groups such as Aboriginal people, and the need for targeted and tailored actions to meet the complex needs of individuals and communities.

## SA Health Aboriginal Cultural Learning Framework



Outlines a consistent approach to the improvement of the cultural competency within SA Health to meet the needs of its Aboriginal consumers. The Framework was developed as part of the South Australian government's commitment to Closing the Gap.

## SA Health Workforce Strategic Directions 2022



The SA Health Workforce Strategic Directions 2022 contains a Roadmap which has been developed to provide direction for the complex work required to navigate the development and implementation of the SA Health Strategic Workforce Plan 2022-2032 for the longer term, whilst ensuring that we are tackling urgent and critical issues and workforce gaps now.



For more information

**Aboriginal Workforce – Workforce Services**  
**Department for Health and Wellbeing**  
[health.aboriginalworkforcenetwork@sa.gov.au](mailto:health.aboriginalworkforcenetwork@sa.gov.au)  
[www.sahealth.sa.gov.au](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au)



<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/>

© Department for Health and Wellbeing, Government of South Australia.  
All rights reserved. FIS: 23014.2 August 2023