

## IAHA Strategic Plan 2017-2020

### Foreword

Indigenous Allied Health Australia Ltd. (IAHA) - a national not-for-profit, member based, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health organisation, leading sector workforce development and support to improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

As we enter this new strategic phase, we are optimistic about the opportunity to transform the health system. We welcome the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan and Implementation Plan that envisions a health system free of racism, recognises the power of community-driven responses, and places culture at the centre of improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing.

We firmly believe in the strength and resilience of our communities to keep our cultures strong and determine their own health agenda. Despite the challenges, our communities remain steadfast in their commitment to forge a greater future for our future generations. IAHA also stands firm on eliminating pervasive discrimination our people face and the impacts this has on the health and wellbeing of our communities.

The strategic plan is owned by our membership – a committed collective of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous people and organisations who share our vision, and believe in the essential role allied health plays in a holistic, culturally-responsive health system.

Their expertise, reflection, time and knowledge went into developing this ambitious plan that will focus our energy and guide our direction for the next three years.

We have adopted a Leadership Statement which will inform how we work and the leadership commitment we have to each other, our families and communities, and to our vision as a national organisation.

This plan is focused on four key strategic priority areas:

- Support, and engage our membership in advocacy, leadership capability and professional developments so that members are a strong, culturally-informed allied health workforce.
- Grow, and to support the sustainable development of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health sector.
- Transform, and contribute to the broader health system to ensure culturally safe and responsive care is embedded in creating sustainable change led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Lead, through promoting the collective voice of our membership and provide strong national Indigenous health leadership.

Although we operate within a complex ever-changing globalised environment, our culture remains at the centre of everything we do. We look forward to working with our membership, strengthening our partnerships, building on our achievements and continue to be innovative and adaptive in achieving our vision.



Nicole Turner, Chairperson



Donna Murray, Chief Executive Officer

## About IAHA

IAHA has four categories of membership with full member (graduate/student), associate member (individual/corporate). We welcome Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health professionals and students in our full membership and value our diverse associate membership inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health professionals, support workers, non-Indigenous allied health professionals and students, corporate bodies and other Indigenous organisations.

Our membership is very diverse across sectors including health, mental health, disability, aged care, education, justice, community services, academia and policy.

## What We Do

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health professionals play a vital role in addressing the health and wellbeing of Australia's First Peoples. In order to close the gap in health outcomes, more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must be encouraged to consider, pursue and succeed in allied health careers.

As a leading national organisation IAHA:

- provides professional development opportunities and support for our members.
- strengthens leadership capacity across the allied health and Indigenous health sectors.
- works closely with key education stakeholders to support educational pathways into allied health, improve health curricula and professional standards in building a culturally safe and responsive workforce.
- works in partnership with key stakeholders and communities to improve allied health workforce strategies, policy and models of care to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.
- provides expert advice to governments and stakeholders, on Indigenous allied health workforce and Indigenous health policy.
- develops and maintains networks and connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members and communities to ensure our core objectives are meeting their needs and aspirations.
- works closely with health sector partners and communities to improve access to culturally safe and responsive allied health services.
- provides cultural responsiveness training and mentoring.

## **Leadership Statement**

As a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation with a broad membership, we are committed to leading in the allied health sector and working closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

We view our leadership roles through a unique and diverse lens that supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, cultures and knowledges that are central to achieving our vision.

We believe that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being and doing can influence and transform systems through collective action and partnership.

We will collaborate with integrity, find strength in and value diversity, and will seek and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led strategies to meet local needs.

We will work closely with each other and our communities to assert Indigenous rights, have ownership over their own health and wellbeing and improve access to allied health services. IAHA will support our communities with strong, culturally-informed health leadership.

We have a sense of responsibility to continue the work of those who have come before us. We thank them for their perseverance, resilience and foresight in paving the way for us. We will nurture this spirit of resistance, and, learn from our experiences to inspire and create sustainable change for generations to come.

## **Vision**

All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and future generations, are; healthy, strong, thriving and self-determined.

## **Purpose**

We will collectively transform the allied health sector, led by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce to improve health and wellbeing outcomes.

## **Shared Values**

We value and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander:

- Cultures & Identities
- Knowledges & Perspectives
- Sharing & Relationships

## Principles

The following principles lay the foundation for IAHA strategic priorities, goals and strategies.

Culture as central to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing.

IAHA recognises culture is foundational to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing. We believe in the holistic view of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing that relates to the physical, emotional, spiritual and cultural wellbeing of the individual and community.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and self-determination

We support and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership, strength, resilience and self-determination. We affirm that health is a fundamental human right and every human being is entitled to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health conducive to living a life in dignity. As Indigenous Peoples, we have the right to determine the strategies and priorities of our own health and wellbeing to ensure our individuals, families and communities are strong and thriving.

Culturally-informed, strengths-based practice

IAHA will embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge, perspectives and innovations in everything we do. We commit to engaging our members to ensure their voice is heard in our written policy submissions, advocacy and programs. We commit to continuously learn and develop, while keeping our cultural practice and knowledge at the core of our work.

Partnership and Collaboration

IAHA will work collaboratively together as members, with our partners and wider health sector to achieve our vision and purpose. We believe that trust and equality is at the centre of building strong lasting relationship with mutual respect. We will be open to new knowledge and provide opportunities for members to engage in meaningful and supportive ways.

Accountability and Responsibility

IAHA commits to base our efforts on a foundation of evidence with active engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in collaborative and inclusive decision-making. We commit to being reliable partners through effective and transparent good governance practices. We commit to support our members with a strong organisation that is fiscally responsible and accountable.

## Priority Areas

Each priority area provides a direction for achieving IAHA's vision. Each priority area includes a defined goal which is supported by individual strategies. Implementation and delivery of the strategies will be monitored by the IAHA Board of Directors through a set of actions and key performance indicators.

### Support

Goal 1: Support an engaged and active membership

To support and strengthen our membership, we will:

1.1 – Strengthen and build on the capabilities and skills of members

1.2 – Strengthen culturally-inclusive engagement and connection with members

1.3 - Represent and enable the collective voice of our membership

As a RESULT, we aim to see:

- Members are actively engaged in policy development, professional development and other initiatives.
- Members report feeling valued, supported, heard and respected.
- An increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student and graduate membership

### Grow

Goal 2: Facilitate the development of a strong, sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health workforce.

To grow the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health workforce we will:

2.1 – Shape National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health workforce development.

2.2 – Advocate for a strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health evidence base

2.3 – Encourage the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health leaders.

2.4 - Actively promote allied health careers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, individuals and communities

As a RESULT, we aim to see:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members report feeling supported along their professional journey.
- Increased investment in allied health workforce initiatives.
- Raised awareness of allied health within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

## **Transform**

Goal 3: A culturally safe and responsive health system free of racism

To improve access of the allied health sector, we will:

3.1 – Develop and maintain collaborative partnerships focused on sustainable change and culturally responsive healthcare.

3.2 - Lead the development of a culturally-responsive allied health and wider workforce

3.3 – Strengthen and maintain partnerships with governments and stakeholders

As a RESULT, we aim to see:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have equitable access to a culturally safe and responsive allied health workforce.
- Increased health workforce participation in cultural responsiveness training and development
- Universities, educational institutions and professional bodies have culturally responsive policies, processes and practices embedded in organisations.

## **Lead**

Goal 4: Provide and build strong, sustainable, national allied health leadership in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health

To be a sustainable organisation that demonstrates national leadership, we will:

4.1 – Provide expertise and contribute to the national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health policy and campaign agendas.

4.2 – Continue to implement effective communications strategies.

4.3 – Secure and maintain financial and governance sustainability

4.4 – Promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led and driven allied health research and culturally responsive practice.

As a RESULT, we aim to see:

- Governments develop and implement policies and practices that support the current and future allied health sector.
- Greater recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures in health policy and across multiple health related sectors.
- Greater recognition of Indigenous Allied Health Australia
- Increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health research that supports culturally responsive practice.
- Continued strong governance practices and secured financial sustainability.