



IAHA

Indigenous Allied
Health Australia

Collaboration Agreement

between Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA) and

Mount Isa Centre for Rural and Remote Health, James Cook University (MICRRH)

Background

IAHA and MICRRH are committed and responsive to the allied health needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This includes increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people participating in the allied health workforce, fostering a community centred and priority driven allied health research agenda for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, and strengthening the cultural competence of allied health graduates.

IAHA and MICRRH assert that in order to positively affect the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the right “*to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health*”¹ as per Article 24(2) of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (the Declaration). This right is in addition to the basic right to health for all described within the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948);
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and knowledge must be privileged across teaching and research activities;
- Allied health education providers have a responsibility to ensure their graduates attain the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes that will enable them to deliver culturally responsive care. This includes providing clinical experiences that expose them to the unique needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations and remote and regional Australia; and
- The current and future allied health workforce must be both culturally responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and clinically competent.

Allied health professionals operate within widely diverse settings, from clinics, hospitals, rehabilitation centres, laboratories, schools, long-term care facilities, Aboriginal Medical/Health Services, community health centres to home healthcare agencies. Therefore a workforce mix that includes allied health professionals as key players across health, education and community sectors will be essential to address the social, historical, political and

¹ http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf accessed 11 September 2013

cultural determinants that negatively impact the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Goal

Increase the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health workforce in remote and regional QLD and Northern Australia to improve the health and well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Objectives

Collaborate and share knowledge, information, experience and resources to:

1. Lead, influence and inform Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health education, research and workforce development initiatives;
2. Increase the opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health students to have a student placement experience in remote and regional QLD and Northern Australia;
3. Influence student placement opportunities in remote and regional QLD and Northern Australia to ensure that all students have a student placement that is culturally responsive to the unique health needs of those that reside in remote and regional Australia.

Outputs

Work collaboratively to find practical opportunities which support IAHA student members having student placement opportunities in Mount Isa. Activities undertaken may include, but not be limited to:

- cultural knowledge and sharing
- student recruitment and support activities
- pathways that lead to future employment opportunities for allied health graduates in remote and rural QLD and Northern Australia
- mentoring professionally and culturally
- fostering of culturally safe learning environments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the allied health and education sector, namely in remote and rural QLD and Northern Australia
- showcasing and mentoring around good practice case studies
- improved engagement between Universities and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations
- gathering and sharing information on trends and service needs in building a culturally responsive allied health workforce in remote and regional QLD and Northern Australia.

Success Measures

- Increased number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health students undertaking a remote or rural placement.
- Improved student placement opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health students to experience a remote or rural placement in QLD and/or Northern Australia.
- Increased cultural responsiveness of all staff involved in student placement activities
- Increased learning opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health students that involve local based learning and multidisciplinary learning opportunities
- Increased awareness around the role and need for allied health workforce in remote and rural Australia.