

Written statement of candidate: Tom Brideson

Tom Brideson is a Kamilaroi/Gomeroi man from north-west NSW. Since 2007 Tom has been the State-wide Coordinator for the NSW Aboriginal Mental Health Workforce Program. For more than 20 years Tom has been actively involved in Aboriginal mental health developments including: health policy; social and emotional wellbeing; clinical mental health care; suicide prevention; and education. Tom has published articles regarding the Aboriginal mental health workforce and advocates for emerging degree based professions across all health and human services. The most recent publication was a chapter in the second edition of Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice. Tom sits on a range of mental health leadership committees and projects to improve the mental health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Tom has enjoyed being a Director of Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA) since late 2012 and is an active participant in IAHA's Governance at a Board level and more broadly throughout representation and stakeholder engagement in the health and mental health areas. Tom believes the greatest challenge facing IAHA into the future is to significantly reduce reliance on Government funding and the ever changing landscape of distraction. By reducing reliance it will enable IAHA to establish true independence and self determination as an organisation that demonstrates maturity and growth.

Tom will continue to add value to the functions of the Board and IAHA through his integrity, honesty, inclusiveness and engagement in the decision making processes. Tom is a team player and an effective communicator who as a Board member will always put the best interest of the organisation first and foremost. The organisation is its members and without question this remains the basis of any decision that Tom supports. Of course there are clear governance processes as outlined in the IAHA Governance Charter that Tom fully understands. These processes form the basis of the organisation and guide the Board as well as outline the separation of operational requirements that the executive and secretariat perform. Tom is respectful of these distinct functions.

Finally, Tom is passionate about improving health outcomes and career employment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Those who have gone before us have provided sound foundations and made us proud. The children following us need to be equally proud of our contributions. We are the only ones who can make our contribution count.