

## **Media Release – New publication confirms important improvements in the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people**

16 May 2016

The *Overview of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health status 2015* provides a comprehensive summary of the most recent indicators of the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The *Overview* shows that the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continues to improve slowly and that there have been declines in infant mortality rates and increase in life expectancy. There have also been improvements in a number of areas contributing to health status such as increased immunisation coverage and a slight decrease in the prevalence of tobacco use among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. <http://www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au/health-facts/overviews>

The *Overview*, which draws on the most up-to-date, authoritative sources and undertakes some special analyses, is freely available on the HealthInfoNet web resource, along with downloadable PowerPoint presentations of key facts, tables, and figures. It is an important part of the HealthInfoNet's commitment to collaborative knowledge exchange, which contributes to 'closing the gap' in health between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians by making research and other knowledge available in a form that is easily understood and readily accessible to both practitioners and policy makers.

HealthInfoNet Director, Professor Neil Drew said 'The *Overview* is our flagship publication and has proved to be a valuable resource for a very wide range of health professionals, policy makers and others working in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sector. The *Overview* provides an accurate, evidence based summary of many health conditions in a form that makes it easy for time poor professionals to keep up to date with the current health status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people throughout Australia. This year, we have made some important changes including a greater focus on strengths based approaches. Also, as part of our ongoing commitment to using culturally respectful language we have changed the title to further acknowledge the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and peoples.'

The 2015 *Overview* is dedicated to the memory of the HealthInfoNet founding Director, Professor Neil Thomson, who passed away in January 2016.

**Spokesperson:** Professor Neil Drew - HealthInfoNet Director

Tel: 08 9370 6155; Email: <mailto:n.drew@ecu.edu.au>

**Media contact:** Tara Hoyne – Development and Marketing Manager

Tel: 08 9370 6109; Email: [t.hoyne@ecu.edu.au](mailto:t.hoyne@ecu.edu.au)

**About the HealthInfoNet:** Since 1997, the Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet web resource has been informing practice and policy in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health by making research and other knowledge readily accessible. In this way, the HealthInfoNet contributes to closing the gap in health between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians. Working in the area of translational research with a population health focus, the HealthInfoNet makes research and other information available in a form that has immediate, practical utility for health practitioners and policy-makers in the area. [www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au](http://www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au)