

MEDIA RELEASE

IAHA calls for targeted investment in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health workforce development

7 April 2025

IAHA is pleased to release our [election priorities](#) for the upcoming 2025 Federal Election on Saturday 3 May. IAHA identifies five urgent priorities that, collectively, will play a pivotal role in improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes and grow an appropriately skilled, culturally responsive allied health workforce, critical for an efficient and equitable national health system.

Ahead of the election, IAHA are calling on all sides of politics to commit to:

- sustainable and long-term investment in the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan* via our member-based and self-determining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce organisations
- changing their ways of work of working to enact the priority reforms under the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap* and to address the shortfalls and negative experiences identified by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- strategic and coordinated investment in culturally safe, responsive, and place-based allied health education, training and employment pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- greater development of allied health service and workforce models – including effective rural and remote models – to keep people well, on Country, and to ensure a sustainable healthcare system.
- implementing and monitoring the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* to affirm our rights as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Kamilaroi woman Ms Nicole Turner, Chairperson of IAHA, said of the election priorities “health rightfully remains at the forefront of pre-election campaigning, and both major parties are spruiking their ability to ensure a sustainable health care system to ensure all Australians have access to care. However, it is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership, workforce, and responsive allied health services underpin access to sustainable, high quality and equitable care. It is evident that there is an absence of coordinated long term vision for allied health to keep people well and thriving on all sides of politics. IAHA were disappointed recently, for example, with the clear omission of allied health from a new national health workforce campaign to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to pursue careers in primary care.”

IAHA, alongside the Black Dog Institute, Gayaa Dhuwi Proud Spirit Australia, Thirrili, and the Australian Indigenous Psychologists Association, have called for politicians to engage in a respectful election. Ms Turner said “we don’t need to agree on everything, but we can debate respectfully and avoid the unnecessary politicisation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. All political parties, and our media, have a responsibility to support positive, truthful and safe discussions which empower our people and voices.”

END MESSAGE

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Media enquiries

Paul Gibson
Chief Operating Officer
Indigenous Allied Health Australia
(02) 6285 1010 | paul@iaha.com.au