



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cancer Plan Consultation

The National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) is developing the first national cancer plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, proposing a plan towards the elimination of inequitable and avoidable differences between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians in cancer prevention, screening, treatment and supportive care.

The significant and persistent disparities in cancer outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous people in Australia, are well known, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples more likely to be exposed to cancer risk factors such as tobacco use, increased alcohol use, lower levels of physical activity, and poor diet than non-Indigenous peoples.

Cancer Council Australia welcomed the opportunity to provide input into the draft Plan – consulting across State and Territory Cancer Councils and with Cancer Council’s First Nations Advisers. We wholly support actions to improve health outcomes experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Critical to achieving success is an awareness of the cultural values of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and co-designing interventions, services and programs to improve cancer outcomes and narrow the disparity gap.

Cancer Council is very supportive of the draft Plan, and agreed with the vision and key goals, identified gaps and proposed strategies to address them. This included an emphasis on cultural safety and creating culturally safe environments, services and initiatives being community-led, the need for more resources, a workforce with cultural protocols and combating racism. Cancer Council agreed with the key focus of the plan on reducing inequities and avoidable differences, however suggested this could be strengthened by the explicit inclusion of a higher-level focus on driving down cancer incidence and improving cancer outcomes and experiences for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our submission noted how imperative it is that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cancer Plan aligns and is complementary to existing national, and State and Territory policy, and to the impending Australian Cancer Plan. We also encouraged the Plan could be strengthened by including clear implementation and action plans, including designated funding, and structures to ensure accountability for the successful roll-out of the Plan,

This submission can be made available upon request by contacting:

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