



Dear colleagues,

Today is National Close the Gap Day, a day where we reaffirm our commitment to achieving health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

As an organisation, we recognise the power of action, advocacy, and partnership in closing the health gap and progressing our health equity agenda.

In March 2008, then-Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and Opposition Leader Brendan Nelson signed the Close the Gap [Statement of Intent](#) at the Close the Gap Campaign's National Indigenous Health Equality Summit.

This Statement of Intent serves as the foundation, representing a commitment by the Australian Government to a strong, evidence-based approach to achieving health equity.

One milestone in the Close the Gap journey for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders was when legislative requirements passed by Queensland Parliament in 2020 and 2021 for Hospital and Health Services to develop and implement [Health Equity Strategies](#).

It is up to us as an organisation to understand the health disparities experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and make systemic changes that reflect the voices of our community. This includes ongoing co-design to shape our services, ensuring a holistic approach to healthcare delivery.

Cultural and social determinants play a key factor in the health gap faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. A key priority in our health equity agenda is increasing our access to healthcare with a strong focus on mental health, alcohol and other drugs. We are also focussed on increasing and strengthening our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce, and providing continuity of care for mums, babies, and families. Another key item on our agenda is the implementation of an Anti-Racism Policy and supporting campaign, due to be launched later this year, addressing unconscious bias across Metro North.

We are proud of our work to date in improving health outcomes. In the last few years, we have seen a statewide expansion of key Metro North Health initiatives such as our Better Together Medication Access, Deadly Start School-based Traineeship and First Nations Cadetship programs, as well as an increase in partnership programs providing care closer to home. We still have a long way to go but are excited for the journey ahead.

As we near the end of our *Metro North Health Equity Strategy 2022 – 2025* work, we now prepare to move into our next phase, with the launch of the new strategy to take place in July 2025.

Health Equity is an opportunity for all of us to create positive and equitable health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. **Health Equity is everyone's business.**

Regards,

Jackie and Sherry

Metro North Health



We uphold our commitment to health equity through our Values in Action
Respect | Integrity | Compassion | High performance | Teamwork

Metro North Health acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the Land upon which we live, work and walk, and pay our respects to Elders both past and present.



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