

Title:	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Consideration			
Section:	Governance	PRH:	Chief Executive Officer	Procedure

1. INTRODUCTION:

To ensure that Alexandra District Health (ADH) provides safe high quality health care and experiences to our consumers by actively following the Victorian Clinical Governance Framework and through its Consumer Participation Framework actively engage and partner with consumers.

To ensure all staff are responsible and accountable for safe and high quality care, and ADH continuous improvement will be informed by regular monitoring and evaluation of performance.

2. PURPOSE:

ADH accepts an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person as any person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, who identifies with, and is accepted by the Aboriginal community which he or she is associated with. This procedure is designed to ensure equity of access to ADH services for Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander people, through culturally relevant services.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

All staff are responsible and accountable to know, understand and support each other to meet the requirements of the Victorian Clinical Governance Framework. All staff will be aware of the Consumer Participation Framework and actively engage and partner with consumers, demonstrate ownership and accountability for safe, quality care, and participate in regular evaluation and monitoring of performance to inform improvement.

4. PROCESS:

- ADH acknowledges and is respectful of the Taungurung people as the Traditional Owners of the land on which the ADH and its campuses are located.
- ADH extends an apology to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in regard to past policies and practices in health care.
- Closing the Gap: ADH focus is on the six key priority areas of Koolin Balit: Victorian Government's strategic directions for Aboriginal health 2012-2022
- ADH recognises the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This includes their cultures, traditional and contemporary ways, lifestyles, geographic location, gender and sexual orientation, and status.
- ADH supports the model of addressing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health with coordination and collaboration with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
- ADH Aboriginal Health and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan currently guides improvements in Aboriginal Health and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Competence at ADH. The Plan is based on the Koolin Balit Aboriginal Health Cultural Competence Action Plan 2017-2020.
- ADH will ask the question re identification of Aboriginal consumers to enable culturally sensitive health service delivery and coordination in discharge planning
- ADH is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through ensuring equity of access to safe, high quality, culturally sensitive health services.
- When Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people present to the Urgent Care Centre or are admitted to ADH, they can request support from an Aboriginal Health Liaison Officer (AHLO). ADH can refer to Eastern Health. The AHLO can provide cultural support, support with referrals, advocacy and various other possibilities.
- ADH will consult with Aboriginal people, through peak Aboriginal bodies, on all appropriate matters.

Title:	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Consideration			
Section:	Governance	PRH:	Chief Executive Officer	Procedure

- ADH acknowledges that kinship or family relationships are important to Aboriginal people. We acknowledge their right to culture and their right to participate in cultural activities within their community.
- ADH does not tolerate prejudice and racism and through its policies, processes and practices complies with all laws and regulations relevant to equal opportunity, racial discrimination and the promotion of cultural safety.

A Welcome to Country occurs when the traditional Aboriginal Custodians welcome people to their land. This is a significant recognition and formal process. Welcome to Country ceremonies are to be conducted by the representatives of the local Aboriginal custodians of the land. A Welcome to Country can occur in the opening ceremony of ADH events or functions. It should be presented preferably as the first item or occur immediately after the event opening. It should be presented preferably before other welcomes, acknowledgements or introductions.

An Acknowledgement of Country recognises the unique position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australian culture and history. In addition to its intrinsic value, ADH advocates that such recognition enables the wider community to share in ADH support of Indigenous culture and heritage. ADH aims to foster a respectful culture that works towards improving the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members. This process facilitates better relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians. It is not necessary for a member of the traditional owner group to give this acknowledgement. The person giving the acknowledgement can be an Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal. An acknowledgment to country can occur with or without a welcome to country.

ADH will utilise the skills and knowledge of Aboriginal organisations and elders whenever possible and appropriate to ensure best possible care for the consumer and their family. Where relevant and possible ADH will seek this support from local Aboriginal organisations including The Taungurung Land and Waters Council (TLWC); Eastern Health Aboriginal Liaison officers, and Rumbalara Health and Wellbeing Service

ADH is committed to ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness, safety and competency training for all staff.

ADH has a non-discriminative admission and clerical procedure. As part of this, and in line with government requirements, all patients admitted to ADH are to be asked whether they are of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent, as written on the admission forms. Posters and information on 'Asking the Question' are posted in waiting areas. The rationale for asking about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin is Aboriginal people have poorer health status than other Australians and their life expectancy is less than other Australians. The information is collected to ensure culturally sensitive services are provided and data is used to support development of services for this population group.

ADH supports the availability of appropriate health and community services information to Aboriginal people. Health information for Aboriginal people are placed in waiting areas

ADH will continue to develop its internal and outside spaces to be welcoming, and contain formal acknowledgement and culturally appropriate pamphlets and health information. ADH will acknowledge and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Days of Significance with staff and the community. The days will celebrate and increase staff awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and the social, economic and health gaps that exist for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

Title:	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Consideration			
Section:	Governance	PRH:	Chief Executive Officer	

5. REFERENCES:

- National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards, (Second Edition), 2017
- The Kilmore and District Hospital *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Needs procedure*, retrieved from Prompt 16/08/2020
- User Guide for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health
- State of Victoria, Korin Korin Balit-Djak Aboriginal Health, wellbeing and safety strategic plan 2017-2017
- State of Victoria, Balit Murrup: Aboriginal Social and Emotional Wellbeing Framework 2017-2027
- Taungurung Clans Aboriginal Corporation
(<http://www.vic.gov.au/aboriginalvictoria/heritage/registered-aboriginalparties/taungurung-clans-aboriginal-corporation.html>)
- Australian Government: Closing the Gap Report 2019
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013–2023
- Improving Cultural Responsiveness of Victorian Hospitals, Final Report 2018

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS:

Clinical Governance Framework
Partnering in Health Care Framework – Identified domain, Equity and inclusion.
Primary Health facilitating Access for Special Needs Groups Policy