



**NAATSIHWP**

National Association of Aboriginal and Torres  
Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners

# **Supporting healing: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners as central to mind, body & spirit**

**AIDA CONFERENCE 2025**





# OVERVIEW

01

About NAATSIHWP

02

The Aboriginal and/or Torres  
Strait Islander Health Worker &  
Practitioner Workforce

2

03

Systemic enablers to support  
Workforce's positive impact



# ABOUT NAAATSIHWP

NAATSIHWP stands for the National Association for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners

01

One of four National  
Peak Workforce  
Organisations

02

Unique remit with no  
mainstream equivalent

03

Responsible for  
representing and  
promoting the  
Aboriginal and Torres  
Strait Islander Health  
Workforce

03

Underpinned by an  
Indigenous Terms of  
Reference



# OUR FOUNDING MEMBERS





# OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Chair: David  
Follent (NSW)**



**Deputy Chair: Suzi  
Smith (TAS)**



**Treasurer: Richelle  
Jackson (Vic)**



**Secretary: Judith  
Parnham (QLD)**



**Raelene  
McKenna (WA)**



**Skyan  
Fernando (ACT)**



**Dawn Daly (NT)**



**Antoinette Liddell  
(SA)**



**Charlotte  
Nonna (TSI/NPA)**





# Our Strategic Plan

---

We are guided by our Strategic Plan which highlights four key focus areas.

- 01 Recognise and value our full scope of practice
- 02 Workforce support, development and leadership
- 03 Leadership and advocacy in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health
- 04 Workforce recruitment, retention and career pathways





# Our Services

We focus on these areas through the services we deliver.



**Professional Development**



**Engagement and Leadership**



**Workforce Promotion and Development**



**NAATSIHWP Consulting**



**NAATSIHWP Group Education and Training**







# Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Health Worker & Practitioner Workforce

The only culturally based workforce in Australia with national regulation and training. Embodiment of self-determination.





# Workforce Value

---

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Health Practitioners play a vital role in improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Restoring trust  
as health  
system  
navigators

Delivering  
culturally safe  
health care

Early  
intervention  
and prevention

Chronic  
disease  
management

Improving  
access to  
healthcare and  
the patient  
experience

Holistic  
approaches to  
health





# Health Workers

---

- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person
- Has gained a Certificate II or higher qualification in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care
- Works in government, community controlled or private healthcare settings
- Total number of Health Workers is current unknown (estimated to be a few thousand)

# Health Practitioners

---

- An Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person
- Has gained a Certificate IV in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care Practice and
- Maintains registration with ATSIHPBA (AHPRA)
- Works in government, community controlled or private healthcare settings
- Protected Title
- Over 1000 registered Health Practitioners as at September 2024





# Challenges to the Workforce

---

**Limited  
Workforce Data**

**Racism,  
discrimination  
and culturally  
unsafe  
workplaces**


**Inconsistent  
Scopes of  
Practice**

**Lack of  
sustainable  
funding for  
workforce roles**

**Lack of workforce  
planning**

**Limited  
understanding of  
the role and  
value of the  
Workforce**





*We need whole  
of system  
change!*

# Systemic Enablers

Future priorities to support systemic reforms and expand the impact of Workforce contributions to the Australian healthcare system

**01**

**National standardised scopes of practice**

**02**

**Develop resources to promote full scope of practice**

12

**03**

**Educate & support the recognition, utilisation and respect for Workforce**

**04**

**Address systemic racism & institutional resistance**





# Thank you

Contact: [policy@naatsihwp.org.au](mailto:policy@naatsihwp.org.au)