



Aboriginal health and wellbeing in public health planning

Objective 4: Enable – Bolster public health systems and workforce leverage and partnerships to support health and wellbeing

Objective 4 of the *State Public Health Plan 2025–2030* recognises strengthening public health systems is critical to safeguarding and promoting the health and wellbeing of all communities.¹ Objective 4 relates to high-quality data, building meaningful collaborative partnerships and investing in a skilled and sustainable workforce. Applying an Aboriginal cultural lens to the development and implementation of strategies related to objective 4 will support community wellbeing, self-determination and effective public health outcomes for Aboriginal people.

Local spotlight: *The Champion Centre, located in Seville Grove, is a facility owned and operated by the City of Armadale. It provides a dedicated gathering place for Aboriginal people and for agencies working alongside Aboriginal families and communities. The centre offers an inclusive, welcoming, and culturally safe environment that promotes healing, reconciliation, the sharing of knowledge, and meaningful connections with the wider Armadale community. It is a place that fosters hope, growth, and opportunities for all who engage with it. A wide range of programs operate from the centre, focusing on early childhood development, parenting support, health hubs, Elders' programs, and more. The centre also offers multiple spaces for hire, which are ideal for meetings.*

Theme	POTENTIAL STRATEGIES		
	<i>Fundamental</i>	<i>Intermediate</i>	<i>Advanced</i>
Strengthening partnerships and relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and maintain a contact list of local ACCOs, Aboriginal Elders and other key Aboriginal stakeholders to support regular and ongoing engagement to strengthen relationships. Develop policies and/or processes which encourage local government officers participate in Aboriginal health cross-sector and cross-agency forums to facilitate information sharing and knowledge exchange. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support officers and Elected Members within the local government to appropriately engage with Aboriginal stakeholders. Advice and/or support should be co-designed with the local Aboriginal community and consider on the ground/face-to-face engagement and ways to build trust, rapport and create a culturally responsive environment. Host regular yarning sessions or community conversations for Aboriginal community members. Develop policies and/or processes which ensure ACCOs are formally invited to attend relevant local government events and/or meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formalise respectful, long-term partnerships and relationships with ACCOs and/or Traditional Owner groups through written agreements and/or memorandum of understanding. Agreements should outline shared goals and accountability.
Aboriginal workforce development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set measurable workforce targets for Aboriginal employment within the local government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create positions within the local government which are specifically designated for Aboriginal people, applying section 50d of the Equal Opportunity Act 1984. Develop policies which support local government officers in training and develop opportunities in fields related to public health. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with schools and TAFEs to offer Aboriginal youth on-the-job training opportunities within the local government.
Aboriginal cultural learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and support access to and completion of Aboriginal cultural learning for local government officers and Elected Members, including localised cultural learning and emersion sessions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement mechanisms that assess the impact of cultural learning on behaviour, decision making and relationships within the local government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employ Aboriginal cultural mentors or Elders to support ongoing learning and provide guidance for local government officers.

Aboriginal governance structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an Aboriginal governance structure within the local government to ensure Aboriginal voices are involved at all levels and stages of the public health planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish or strengthen Aboriginal advisory committees that have a formal role in supporting public health planning in the local government area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fund or support ACCOs to lead Aboriginal specific elements of public health planning. Allocate funding streams related to public health planning to be governed or co-managed by ACCOs.
Invest in Aboriginal owned businesses, suppliers and contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, maintain and share a list of Aboriginal-owned businesses, suppliers and contractors who provide services in the local government area. Include Aboriginal-owned businesses, suppliers and contractors in construction, public art and landscaping projects. Set targets or KPIs for local government procurement with Aboriginal-owned businesses, suppliers and contractors. Publicly report on spending with Aboriginal-owned businesses, suppliers and contractors and actively promote success stories. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update procurement policies to prioritise or give weighting to Aboriginal-owned businesses during tender processes, suppliers and contractors, supporting economic participation and self-determination. Provide co-working spaces in local government facilities. Offer mentorship projects to support local Aboriginal businesses, suppliers and contractors. Partner with ACCOs to run business develop workshops or grant-writing support initiatives for Aboriginal people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a business start-up grants program or business challenges specifically for Aboriginal people.
Aboriginal data governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge and promote the principles of Aboriginal data governance within the local government to support culturally responsive data collection, access, use and/or disclosure. Establish feedback processes which enable the local Aboriginal community to advise how data about Aboriginal communities should be collected, used and shared. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an Aboriginal data governance policy to ensure the local government recognises the rights of Aboriginal people to govern the collection, ownership and use of data about their people and communities. This policy can ensure culturally responsive data collection, access, use and/or disclosure. Partner with ACCOs on data projects such as local needs assessments or evaluations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a joint data governance committee and/or memorandum of understanding with local Aboriginal communities to guide data collection, use and/or disclosure.

References

¹ Department of Health, Government of Western Australia (2025). *State Public Health Plan 2025–2030*. Available from: <https://www.health.wa.gov.au/~media/Corp/Documents/About-us/Public-Health-Act/State-Public-Health-Plan-2025–2030.pdf>

Acknowledgement of Country and people

WA Health acknowledges the Aboriginal people of the many traditional lands and language groups of Western Australia. It acknowledges the wisdom of Aboriginal Elders both past and present and pays respect to Aboriginal communities of today.

Using the term Aboriginal

Within Western Australia, the term Aboriginal is used in preference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, in recognition that Aboriginal people are the original inhabitants of Western Australia. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander may be referred to in the national context and Indigenous may be referred to in the international context. No disrespect is intended to our Torres Strait Islander colleagues and community.

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