# Cultural Safety in Aged Care

**Wardliparingga Aboriginal Health Equity**

South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI)
Adelaide, South Australia

### Cultural protocols– Acknowledgement of Country

It is important that appropriate protocols are adhered too. Therefore, recognising local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their connection to Country is extremely important.  When meetings or important events are held, acknowledgement of the traditional custodians of the place is a very significant and important part of formal recognition of Aboriginal people. An Acknowledgement of Country is an opportunity for staff to show respect for the traditional custodians and continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to Country (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protocols Document SAHMRI, 2017).

Appropriate and respectful acknowledgment of Country, Elders past, present and future as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people presenting and attending the presentation(s) must be undertaken prior to starting.

**Note:** When presenting this content, we encourage the presenter to acknowledge the local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people of the geographical area. The following example can be used and/or adapted to suit the local area and acknowledgement of relevant traditional custodians.

"We acknowledge and respect the traditional custodians whose ancestral lands we are meeting upon here today, the _____ people. We acknowledge the deep feelings of attachment and relationship of the _____ to their Country. We also pay respects to the cultural authority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people visiting/attending from other areas of _____ present here"

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies have developed an online interactive tool which can assist with the identification of different language groups across Australia.  It is available at:
https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/articles/aiatsis-map-indigenous-australia

### 1. Making use of the Presenter Guide

The presenter guide is intended to assist you with presenting the information provided in the accompanying powerpoint slides.  You can use the notes included in this guide to:

1. Outline the main information provided in the accompanying powerpoint slides.
2. Provide examples of suggested strategies described in the slides.
3. Assist with generating discussion with participants – see included questions throughout the guide.

**Note:** Please remind participants to use the accompanying workbook to note any thoughts and questions relating to content.  The questions in the presentation slides are included in the workbook to record participants' notes and responses.

### 2. Presenter Introduction

1. Presenter introduce yourself
2. Invitation to participants to introduce
- themselves, their work roles etc
- their organisation affiliations (where appropriate)
- their reason for attending the Cultural Safety in Aged Care Training and
- what they want to get out of the course, i.e. what would they like to learn about cultural safety in aged care?

Cultural Safety in Aged Care

Principle 4. Employ Aboriginal Staff
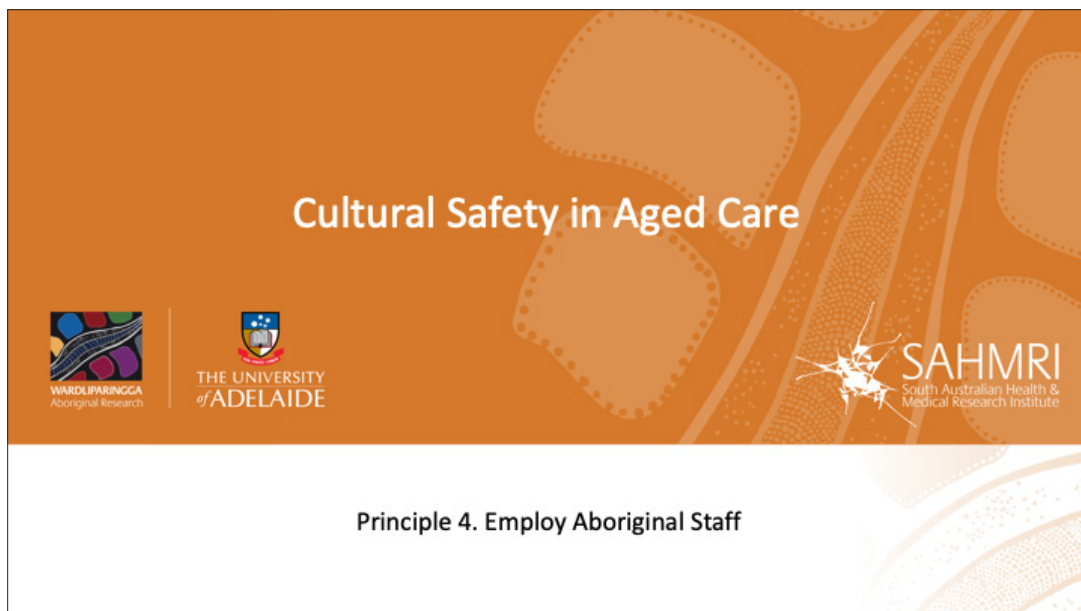
## Presenter Notes Title Slide

In this presentation, we will describe key concepts relating to Principle 4. "Employ Aboriginal Staff" and consider:

1.      What did we learn from Aboriginal Elders about their cultural safety needs in aged care?
2.      What are the benefits to aged care organisations?
3.      What are the opportunities for aged care organisations?
4.      What can an aged care organisation do?

**Note:** Remind participants that they can use the accompanying workbook to note any thoughts or questions relating to this principle.  The questions in the presentation slides are also included in the workbook to record participants' response.

This presentation describes the benefits of employing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to improve the cultural safety of aged care from an organisational and client perspective. The content draws upon some existing national and jurisdictional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce strategic frameworks across various workforce sectors.

Building the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce that is culturally responsive and safe is a critical element to increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' access to acceptability of services coupled with increasing the cultural competency of the non- Indigenous workforce (Aboriginal Workforce Strategy 2018 - 2022, Women's and Children's Health Network, 2017).

**Reference**
Women's and Children's Health Network. 2018. Aboriginal Workforce Strategy 2018 – 2022. http://www.wch.sa.gov.au/services/az/other/allied/aboriginal/documents/Aboriginal_Workforce_Strategy_2018-2022.pdf

**Slide 2**



## Presenter Notes Acknowledgement of Country

Appropriate and respectful acknowledgment of Country, Elders past, present and future as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait people presenting and attending the presentation(s) must be undertaken prior to starting.

**Note:** We encourage the presenter to acknowledge the local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people of the geographical area. The example in this slide can be used or adapted to suit the local area and acknowledgement of relevant traditional custodians.

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## Principle 4. Employ Aboriginal Staff

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### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Key to Closing the Gap

"Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers play a pivotal role in improving the health disadvantage of many Indigenous Australians. Without Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers, the gap in the health outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians would be even wider than it is today." (Minister Nash, 2014, indigenous.gov.au)

### Australia's Aged Care Workforce Strategy

Attract and expand the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander aged care workforce (Australia's Aged Care Workforce Strategy Taskforce, 2018)

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**Presenter Notes** Employ Aboriginal staff

**Presenter points to follow:**

1. Governments and organisations are increasingly recognising the need to expand the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce across a range of service systems and sectors, including health care, social and human services, education and aged care. For example, see National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework, 2016–2023.

2. In 2017, the Australian Government established an independent Taskforce to develop a strategy for growing and sustaining the aged care workforce. The Taskforce delivered its report, A Matter of Care. Australia's Aged Care Workforce Strategy in June 2018. The report sets out 14 'strategic actions' to be implemented by the Government and the aged care sector to achieve reform.

   The Taskforce emphasised the lack of workforce planning capability as a risk to the sector. In particular, it recognised the need to expand the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander aged care workforce as vital to support culturally safe care.

3. Creating and increasing career pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people has multiple benefits including
-   increasing the education and economic participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practitioners, and
-   the cultural competency of services
-   strengthening the cultural competency of mainstream services and staff

**Reference**

Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council. 2017. National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework 2016–2023. https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/4A716747859075FFCA257BF0001C9608/$File/National-Aboriginal-and-Torres-Strait-Islander-Health-Workforce-Strategic-Framework.pdf

Aged Care Workforce Strategy Taskforce. 2018. A Matter of Care. Australia's Aged Care Workforce Strategy. https://agedcare.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/09_2018/aged_care_workforce_strategy_report.pdf

Slide 4



## Presenter Notes The Australian Aged Care Workforce

**Presenter points to follow:**

1. The main source of data on the aged care workforce is the National Aged Care Workforce Census and Survey (NACWCS), conducted by the National Institute of Labour Studies (NILS) every four years, on behalf of the Australian Department of Health. The NACWCS collects comprehensive data on the profile of prevailing trends in the aged care workforce.

2. The most recent report shows that of the almost one million people employed in the Australian aged care workforce only 1% employed in residential care and 2% employed in home care and home support care settings are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders.

   Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are employed mainly in personal care attendant roles in the residential aged care workforce (81%) and as community care workers in the home care and home support aged care workforce (94%).

**Reference**

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. 2017. 2016 National Aged Care Workforce Census and Survey – The Aged Care Workforce, 2016. https://www.gen-agedcaredata.gov.au/Resources/Reports-and-publications/2017/March/The-aged-care-workforce,-2016

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. 2018. GEN Aged Care Data. People in Australia's aged care workforce.

**Presenter Notes** People in Australia's aged care workforce

**Presenter points to follow:**

This slide provides further context on Workforce data for Residential aged care in Australia.

Personal Care Attendants (PCAs) are the largest occupational group in residential aged care (70 per cent). Facilities that employ PCAs who spoke a language other than English were asked to nominate the most common ethnic or cultural background of those workers. Most residential facilities (91%) employed PCAs from linguistically diverse backgrounds in 2016, most commonly from India (28.3) and the Philippines (26.7).

**Reference**

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. 2018. GEN Aged Care Data. People in Australia's aged care workforce. https://www.gen-agedcaredata.gov.au/Resources/Dashboards/People-in-Australia-s-aged-care-workforce

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. 2017. 2016 National Aged Care Workforce Census and Survey – The Aged Care Workforce, 2016. https://www.gen-agedcaredata.gov.au/Resources/Reports-and-publications/2017/March/The-aged-care-workforce,-2016

**Slide 6**



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**People in Australia's aged care workforce**

Home care services with PCA/CCWs from a linguistically diverse background, 2016

Distribution of most common language groups in services with PCA/CCWs from a linguistically diverse background, by care type (Home care), 2016

Care type: Home care

Source: NILS, *The aged care workforce, 2016*, tables 3.48, 5.49

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. 2018. GEN Aged Care Data. People in Australia's aged care workforce.

**Presenter Notes** People in Australia's aged care workforce

**Presenter points to follow:**

This slide provides further context on workforce data for community aged care in Australia.

1.  Home care and home support outlets that employed Community Care Workers from CALD backgrounds were asked to nominate the most common ethnic or cultural background of those workers.

2.  72 per cent of all home care and home support outlets employed Community Care Workers (CCWs) who spoke a language other than English.  Of those outlets that did employ CCWs who spoke a language other than English the most common languages spoken were Italian (16 per cent) and South East Asian (11 per cent).

3.  For home care and home support outlets with more than a third of CCWs speaking a language other than English Chinese, Italian and South East Asian were the three most widely spoken language groups.

**References**

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. 2018. GEN Aged Care Data. People in Australia's aged care workforce. https://www.gen-agedcaredata.gov.au/Resources/Dashboards/People-in-Australia-s-aged-care-workforce

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. 2017. 2016 National Aged Care Workforce Census and Survey – The Aged Care Workforce, 2016. https://www.gen-agedcaredata.gov.au/Resources/Reports-and-publications/2017/March/The-aged-care-workforce,-2016

## Principle 4. Employ Aboriginal Staff

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### What did we learn from Aboriginal Elders about their cultural safety needs in aged care?

*"I don't want a non-Aboriginal worker. I'd rather have an Aboriginal worker."*

*"But we don't get it here [aged care]. We would like them to do that here so we can get it here. The kids should get trained, the teenage girls and boys. They go to (X)\* and train at the trade-training centre learning to cook, they should be able to use these skills to look after the old people."*

*"But there are no males that means only the women are working. Why is there only women?"*

\* (X) – name of town de-identified

**Presenter Notes** **What did we learn from Aboriginal Elders about their cultural safety needs in aged care?**

**Presenter points to follow:**

1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people commonly express the desire to be cared for by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers.

2. Training and employing local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth is highly regarded and seen as a valuable opportunity for the entire community.

3. This quote reflects the low proportion of male workers in aged care.

**Slide 8**

## Principle 4. Employ Aboriginal Staff

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### What are the benefits for Aged Care Organisations?

- Key strategy for delivering culturally safe care

- Improved service delivery and satisfaction for Elders receiving care

- Cultural connection between Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff and Elders receiving care

**Presenter Notes** **What are the benefits for aged care organisations?**

**Presenter points to follow:**

1. The employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce is considered a key strategy in providing culturally safe care.

2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are likely to prefer and have more trust in services that employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait staff.

3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff bring intrinsic cultural knowledge and experience that promotes an environment where Aboriginal people can feel safe and draw strength in their identity, culture and community. They will understand clients' unique circumstances, their local communities and understanding of historical context and impacts on contemporary Australia.  This has a positive benefit for organisations, to better understand the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and communities and deliver improved services.  It also provides benefits to staff, through fostering invaluable cultural knowledge between elders and carers.

## Presenter Notes What are the opportunities for aged care organisations?

**Presenter points to follow:**

1. The following slides include examples of opportunities and actions aged care organisations should consider in working towards employing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

2. Examples are drawn from existing workforce strategies These are intended as suggestions only as organisations will need to consider strategies relevant to their own needs and capacity.

## Principle 4. Employ Aboriginal Staff

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### What are the opportunities for aged care organisations?

- Support and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff through capacity building, mentoring initiatives and ongoing career progression.

- Allocate adequate resources over the long-term to support targeted employment strategies and initiatives.

- Build relationships with vocational education and training provider sectors including local Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and secondary schools to identify initiatives that create pathways into the aged care workforce, such as traineeships.

**Presenter Notes** What are the opportunities for aged care organisations?

**Presenter points to follow:**

1.  Aged care organisations need to explore opportunities and develop strategies to increase the number of and ongoing support of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.

2.  Sustained efforts must incorporate:
-   training and ongoing professional development processes
-   workforce supports, including systems to retain employees, eg culturally appropriate workplace policies such as cultural leave, flexible employment conditions,
-   recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to positions at all levels of the organisation to develop capacity

**Reference:**
Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. 2017. National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards - User guide for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health.
https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/sites/default/files/migrated/National-Safety-and-Quality-Health-Service-Standards-User-Guide-for-Aboriginal-and-Torres-Strait-Islander-Health.pdf

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- Allocate adequate resources over the long-term to support targeted employment strategies and initiatives

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**Presenter Notes** **What can aged care organisations do?**

**Presenter points to follow:**

1. When developing communication strategies or advertising positions consider the most appropriate avenues to raise awareness and attract Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job applicants. This might involve advertising and promoting job opportunities through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media, communities, networks, education and other organisations and services.

2. Ensure advertising and recruitment processes are culturally appropriate. Consider the need to offer flexible hours, cultural leave policies to accommodate cultural obligations such as Sorry Business.

3. Connect with other organisations and training providers for professional development opportunities both in and out of the aged care sector to build skills and capacity.

4. Ensure support for opportunities to grow and develop into leadership positions.

**Slide 12**

## Discussion

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- Does your organisation have an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce strategy?

- If so, what strategies does your organisation utilise to support and strengthen the workforce?

*Suggested readings and helpful resources*

Aged Care Workforce Strategy Taskforce. 2018. A Matter of Care. Australia's Aged Care Workforce Strategy. https://agedcare.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/09_2018/aged_care_workforce_strategy_report.pdf

NWMR Koolin Balit PCP Consortium Project. 2015. http://inwpcp.org.au/toolkit-main-page/expanding-our-aboriginal-workforce/

Women's and Children's Health Network. 2018. Aboriginal Workforce Strategy 2018 – 2022.http://www.wch.sa.gov.au/services/az/other/allied/aboriginal/documents/Aboriginal_Workforce_Strategy_2018-2022.pdf

Australian Health Ministers Advisory Council. 2017. National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework 2016–2023. https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/4A716747859075FFCA257BF0001C9608/$File/National-Aboriginal-and-Torres-Strait-Islander-Health-Workforce-Strategic-Framework.pdf

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. 2017. National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards - User guide for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health.https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/sites/default/files/migrated/National-Safety-and-Quality-Health-Service-Standards-User-Guide-for-Aboriginal-and-Torres-Strait-Islander-Health.pdf

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. 2017. 2016 National Aged Care Workforce Census and Survey – The Aged Care Workforce, 2016. https://www.gen-agedcaredata.gov.au/Resources/Reports-and-publications/2017/March/The-aged-care-workforce,-2016.

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