






Alcohol and Other Drug Stream - May 2023 Participant Forum

This forum was co-facilitated with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Team, and included participants from services across Australia who all identify as members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait community. The session included open, informative and lively discussion, along with encouraging words of support offered to other participants.

“It is good that we learned more about that culture and traditions, but we also need others to learn more about our cultures and traditions in order to respect us.”
- Participant





We heard

-  Overall, services deliver holistic, client led care and support tailored to an individuals’ journey, including supporting and exploring cultural identity, but there is room for improvement.
-  Better cultural knowledge, sensitivity and practices in services, including knowledge of the local country, would benefit all participants, especially those who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
-  Ensuring cultural safety is complex, staff need to be trained, and participants require support that is free from assumptions

“I didn't know how to care for myself because I [had] just done what I was told. It's been better because this time I've learned how to look after myself and I've been encouraged to explore my heritage.”
- Participant

We will

- Support services to develop relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups to provide local knowledge and support cultural practicess 
- Review staffing structures in services to create dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander positions in each service 
- Explore offering a dedicated online group for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people nationally, as an option for further culturally appropriate peer support 