

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) is in the process of developing a series of modules to provide advice and guidance on how to meet the Standards for Guidelines 2016.

These [Standards](#) were published in 2016 and are applicable to all guidelines containing recommendations for clinical practice, public health and environmental health.

These draft modules are based on international standards, peer reviewed literature and current NHMRC policies and have been contextualised for an Australian audience.

The modules are being published on NHMRC's Guidelines for Guidelines website in a staged process between 2018 and 2020.

NHMRC is currently seeking comment on the following draft modules:

1. [Engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in guideline development](#); and
2. [Training](#).

General Comments on modules

1. **Your comments on Engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in guideline development [2000 word limit] ***

Improving the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is everyone's business. We can work together to build genuine partnership, improve service delivery and ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people take a lead role in decision making about matters that involve them, their families and their communities. A partnership approach, based on respectful and productive relationships, is key to developing guidelines and achieving outcomes.

Engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is and will have to occur in the future. This ensures that the guidelines are culturally appropriate and reflect community preferences for care.

The engagement process will form partnerships with stakeholders in Indigenous health, as well as its own infrastructure to support community consultations. Engagement will be based on local community pathways and processes, with facilitators and meeting logistics being identified by local community contacts. By building, supporting and investing in strong Aboriginal governance, which is necessary to ensure local people drive local solutions. Aboriginal people possess great knowledge about their culture, and they want to maintain and share this knowledge with non-Indigenous people. One of the best ways to achieve this end is through the vast network of community controlled organisations that serve the needs of the communities across the country¹.

2. **Your comments on Training [2000 word limit] ***

Training and the development of training packages is dependent on the audience and learning principles inclusive of the options provided within the module to ensure appropriate learning outcomes are reached. Training needs to ensure that reflection, enhancing of skills and attributes necessary for the implementation of improvement projects.

The module identifies that individualised training creates the best conditions for members of an audience to contribute and provided with the appropriate consideration for their input, decision making and when recommendations are formulated. Training involves the process of; plan, develop, implement, evaluate and report on educational or improvement outcomes.

Specific questions for public consultation

- 1. The aim of updating Guidelines for Guidelines is to provide current, relevant and practical advice to Australian guideline developers. Has this goal been achieved in these draft modules? [2000 word limit] ***

The draft modules provide current, relevant and practical advice to guideline developers utilising communication methods with the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within case studies, easy to read text with infographics. Practical advice is provided to ensure that issues relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are identified and priorities determined with the use of resources.

- 2. Do you have examples of practical strategies from experiences with published Australian guidelines that would be useful to refer to in these draft modules? [2000 word limit] ***

Through the Medical Specialist Outreach Assistance Program (MSOAP)ⁱⁱ rural and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children obtain the specialist medical services such as; Ear, Nose and Throat surgeon and specialist nurses. The program is based on a community needs-based approach.

One focus is the assessment and treatment of Otitis Media (OM, middle ear infection) in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, identification of the extent of the problem with photos for review by the surgeon, then surgical or non-surgical assessment.

Ear disease and associated hearing loss are significant health problems for Indigenous children, can lead to delayed speech and also contribute to poor educational achievement which has long term effects on the child's well beingⁱⁱⁱ.

Preventing ear disease in Indigenous children is a high priority with achievable outcomes through collaboration to promote individual person centred care utilising the skills and knowledge, talents of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health professionals. A collaborative approach that involves all relevant stakeholders; healthcare consumer, Community Health Nurses, Aboriginal Health Workers and Aboriginal Medical Services (AMS) and hospital clinicians (Nurses and surgeons, hospital liaison officers) and allied health professionals^{iv}.

- 3. Do you know of any useful resources that have not been included that should be referred to in these draft modules? (Refer to the attached Principles for selecting resources) [2000 word limit] ***

- Australian Government My Life My Lead December 2017.
- National
- Oxfam Australia. 2019. In Good Hands, the people and communities behind Aboriginal - led solutions.
- Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council. National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework 2016-2023.

- RHD Australia. Rheumatic Heart Disease eLearning Module for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners. Retrieved from: <https://www.rhdaustralia.org.au/>
- Diabetes Australia. Retrieved from; <https://www.diabetesaustralia.com.au/for-health-professionals>
- Cancer Council. Retrieved from; <https://www.cancer.org.au/health-professionals/>
- Heart Foundation Retrieved from; <https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/for-professionals>
- Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. Retrieved from; <https://www.safetyandquality.gov.au/standards/clinical-care-standards>

ⁱ Oxfam Australia. 2019. In Good Hands, the people and communities behind Aboriginal - led solutions. Retrieved from; https://www.oxfam.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/2019-AP-001-IN_GOOD_HANDS_FINAL_FA_WEB.pdf Accessed 4 February 2020.

ⁱⁱ Medical Specialist Outreach Assistance Program Guidelines - May 2010 - Retrieved from; <https://www.ruralhealthwest.com.au/docs/outreach-in-the-outback-docs/msoap---specialist-services.pdf?sfvrsn=0&sfvrsn=0> Accessed 4 February 2020.

ⁱⁱⁱ Australian Government. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. Australian Institute of Family Studies. Closing the Gap. Ear disease in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. 2014. Retrieved from; <https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/c68e6d27-05ea-4039-9d0b-a11eb609bacc/ctgc-rs35.pdf.aspx?inline=true>

^{iv} 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. Retrieved from: <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> Accessed 4 February 2020.