



# Aboriginal Health Impact Statement and Declaration for WA Health

## USER GUIDE

### What is an Aboriginal Health Impact Statement and Declaration?

The Aboriginal Health Impact Statement and Declaration for WA Health (hereafter referred to as Aboriginal Health ISD) is an online eForm, by which WA Health staff can declare and demonstrate that the health impacts on, and opportunities for, Aboriginal people have been considered and appropriately incorporated into health policies and other relevant health initiatives.

Consulting with Aboriginal stakeholders will inform and increase Aboriginal cultural understanding in the provision of health services.

### Why complete an Aboriginal Health ISD?

The overarching vision of the [WA Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Framework 2015-2030](#) (the Framework) is *Aboriginal people living long, well and healthy lives*. The Framework details strategic directions that navigate a path toward realising this vision. Strategic Direction 3: *A culturally respectful and non-discriminatory health system* is a key strategic enabler for improving health outcomes for Aboriginal people. All employees in the WA Health system need to consider and respond to the needs of Aboriginal people as part of their core business.

WA Health is committed to ensuring that *Aboriginal health is everyone's business*. The Aboriginal Health ISD process forms part of a broader set of strategies to achieve this.

An Aboriginal Health ISD incorporates the principles of equity, a whole-of-life view of health, recognition of the importance of self-determination in Aboriginal communities, working in partnership with Aboriginal people, cultural security and acknowledgement of the impact of trauma and loss on Aboriginal communities and families.

By participating in the Aboriginal Health ISD process, and recording their engagement and consultative actions with Aboriginal consumers, the WA health system also demonstrates alignment to the [National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards User Guide for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health](#).

In the global context, international Governments have adopted the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#). This includes the rights of Indigenous people to be actively involved in developing and determining health programs affecting them.

### Who should complete an Aboriginal Health ISD?

All WA Health staff involved are responsible for undertaking Aboriginal Health ISDs. Depending on the policy or initiative, the Aboriginal Health ISD will be applied at the local, regional or state-wide level.



Health Service Providers (HSPs) are responsible for developing their own local guidelines and processes to support staff as they undertake an Aboriginal Health ISD.

## When should an Aboriginal Health ISD be completed?

The Aboriginal Health ISD should be considered at the beginning of the policy or program development. This will allow early engagement with Aboriginal people if required.

The mandatory policy dictates the scope of activities for which an Aboriginal Health ISD form must be lodged. This includes:

- All new policies, policy revisions and major amendments to policies

While not mandatory, it is encouraged that an Aboriginal Health ISD form be lodged as part of the local approval process for health initiatives such as:

- Quality improvement activities (by which impacts on, or opportunity for, Aboriginal consumers and/or the Aboriginal workforce are probable)
- Health program/project proposals (by which impacts on, or opportunity for, Aboriginal consumers and/or the Aboriginal workforce are probable)

HSPs retain the flexibility to develop and maintain their own service level guidelines which go further than the mandated scope of activities.

You may wish to seek advice from the Policy Unit and the Aboriginal Health Strategy Unit within your area to ascertain whether an activity is deemed within scope under your service level guidelines.

## About the A10 Aboriginal Health ISD eForm

### How to access the A10 Aboriginal Health ISD eForm

WA Health staff can access the [A10 Aboriginal Health ISD eForm \(external site\)](#) online to complete an Aboriginal Health ISD. As the author you will be required to log in using your HE number and WA Health password. The online Aboriginal Health ISD eForm takes approximately 20 minutes to complete.

### Components of the A10 Aboriginal Health ISD eForm

The A10 Aboriginal Health ISD eForm requires the author to consider the following:

- Potential impacts of the health policy or health initiative on Aboriginal people (staff, consumers or community)
- Consultation or engagement with Aboriginal people
- Approaches taken to address issues and/or needs identified through the consultation
- How the health policy or health initiative aligns with the *WA Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Frameworks 2015-2030*.



### Aboriginal Health ISD Approval Function

Upon completing the form, you will be prompted to enter your manager's details for approval. You will receive a printable copy of the Aboriginal Health ISD once your manager approved to it, which should be saved in-line with local record keeping procedures.

HSPs retain the flexibility to implement additional local approval processes (should they wish to), which will need to be outlined within their own service level guidelines.

### Undertaking Consultation with Aboriginal Stakeholders

The term Aboriginal stakeholders is intentionally broad in definition. Depending on the type of health service, and the context and purpose of the new policy or health initiative, the level and nature of engagement with Aboriginal people may vary. The target Aboriginal stakeholder group with whom to consult could include:

- WA Health Aboriginal employees
- WA Health senior Aboriginal representatives
- Aboriginal Health Teams / Aboriginal Health Strategy Units in WA Health
- Aboriginal advisory committees
- Aboriginal representative bodies / organisations
- Aboriginal adult consumers accessing WA Health services
- Aboriginal child consumers accessing WA Health services; and their parent/carers
- Aboriginal community members

Consulting with Aboriginal people will inform and increase Aboriginal cultural understanding in the provision of health services. Aboriginal stakeholders can provide advice on local health issues as well as general advice about how to incorporate Aboriginal health needs into relevant policies and initiatives.

Consultation takes time, so it is important to undertake this process as early as possible to allow for representatives to engage and respond effectively. Aboriginal stakeholder consultation needs to be facilitated in a culturally safe way to ensure the engagement is effective.

For Aboriginal people, effective consultation should be based on principles of openness, transparency, integrity, partnership, trust and mutual respect.

#### Tips for culturally respectful facilitation:

- Staff involved in consultation with Aboriginal people should consider participating in Aboriginal cultural learning programs to assist in better understanding Aboriginal history and culture.
- Contact the senior Aboriginal health representative in your Health Service Provider to discuss the most appropriate Aboriginal stakeholders to consult (see list on next page).
- It is important to tailor the consultation style and content to the needs and preferences of the target group. Make sure the questions asked are relatable and use plain language.



- Consider and mitigate participation barriers where possible. For example, is the venue accessible by public transport and does it offer parent room amenities if required by the target group?
- Always begin with an Acknowledgement of Traditional Ownership (also referred to as 'Acknowledgement of Country'). See [Welcome to Country and Acknowledgment of Traditional Ownership Guidelines and protocols for WA Health](#).
- At the start of the consultation, all attendees should be informed about how their contributions will be utilised and reported back to them.

### Senior Aboriginal health representatives:

- North Metropolitan Health Service  
Director, Aboriginal Health  
Phone: 9380 7755
- South Metropolitan Health Service  
Director, Aboriginal Health  
Phone: 6152 1178
- WA Country Health Service  
Area Director, Aboriginal Health  
Phone: 6553 0877
- East Metropolitan Health Service  
Director, Aboriginal Health Phone:  
9224 1683
- Child and Adolescent Health Service  
Director, Aboriginal Health  
Phone: 6456 5425
- Department of Health  
Director, Aboriginal Health Policy  
Phone: 9222 2478

### Monitoring and Reporting

Each health service provider is responsible for maintaining its own records in relation to approved Aboriginal Health ISDs.

The Department of Health will provide quarterly statements of the number of Aboriginal Health ISDs completed across your health service.

### For further information about undertaking an Aboriginal Health ISD, please contact:

Aboriginal Health Policy Directorate  
Department of Health  
Ground Floor, C Block  
189 Royal Street  
EAST PERTH WA 6004  
Tel: (08) 9222 0245