

Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social and Emotional Wellbeing Action Plan 2016–18

Dreaming big Country Land Sea Elders Family Community
Grandparents Valued Respect Safe Spirit Cultures Accepted Acknowledged Belonging Life
Spirit Body Connected Kustoms Traditions Language Identity Hope Happy Aspire Dreaming
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Aunties Uncles Grandparents Valued Respect Safe Spirit Cultures Accepted Acknowledged
Belonging Life Spirit Body Connected Kustoms Traditions Language Identity

Acknowledgements

We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, past, present and future. We also acknowledge the important role played by Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders as the First Nations people, their traditions, cultures and customs across Queensland.

We also acknowledge people living with mental illness, mental health problems and problematic alcohol and other drug use, and their families and carers. We can all contribute to a society that is inclusive and respectful, where everyone is treated with dignity and is able to focus on wellness and recovery and lead fulfilling lives.

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Forewords

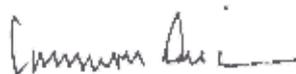
Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services

Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders, the First Nations people of Queensland, are an integral part of our community. They contribute significantly to our State's culture and economy.

As custodians of the oldest living cultures in the world, Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders draw on traditions and customs as a source of pride and strength. We acknowledge that the impact of historical policies and present day circumstances hinder many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders from realising their aspirations, participating in the community and leading fulfilling lives.

The Queensland Government is committed to removing barriers to full participation in our community and the economy and providing greater opportunities for improved social and emotional wellbeing.

The *Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social and Emotional Wellbeing Action Plan 2016–18* (this Action Plan) seeks to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders to achieve their aspirations. Only by supporting and working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities can we as a State achieve our great potential.



The Honourable Cameron Dick MP
Minister for Health and Minister
for Ambulance Services



Queensland Mental Health Commissioner

In 2015 the Commission hosted a discussion among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders to contribute to the development of the national *Gayaa Dhuwi* (Proud Spirit) Declaration. The Declaration calls for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership in mental health to be recognised and valued within the system. I was pleased to support the *Gayaa Dhuwi* Declaration.

In developing this Action Plan, the Commission has been privileged to hear from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, community members and service providers across the State from the Torres Strait in the north, to Mount Isa in the west and south to Logan. We were told that while many services are in place and considerable investment has been allocated, a different approach which involves partnerships and Indigenous leadership is needed.

We heard that supporting improved social and emotional wellbeing requires us to think differently about how policies and programs are developed and delivered. This Action Plan advances this process. I thank all who have contributed to its development, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders who so generously shared their experiences and views.



Dr Lesley van Schoubroeck
Queensland Mental Health
Commissioner



Queensland Mental Health and Drug Advisory Council members

This Action Plan is a unique and welcomed recognition of the strong cultural existence of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders, their kinship circles and communities. Today the interconnectedness of life and wellness is a spiritual, mental, emotional, physical and cultural exploration.

The unique strength of this plan is the community engagement and consultation which informed the development of key priority areas and actions to better enhance social and emotional wellbeing in Queensland. Social and emotional wellbeing has a foundation of strong indigeneity and connections with culture, family, community, land, fresh water, air and the seas. This has been identified by the Queensland Mental Health Commission which articulates the importance of strong and resilient individuals, families and communities of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders.

Our connections to our cultures, our community and family and to Country are the foundation for being healthy and well.

When we are connected and have a strong sense of where we come from, and who we are, and where we fit in our communities and in the wider world, Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders are healthy in body, mind and spirit.

When we are able to value ourselves, and are valued and respected by the broader community and able to access the same opportunities as others we excel.

Social and emotional wellbeing for me is about harmony and health in body, mind and spirit both as an individual and as a community. Inherent in this is supporting our young people to realise their full capabilities and take their rightful place in the world as proud First Nations People.

Improving our social and emotional wellbeing is complicated and will take time. But every step, taken together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders,

The Action Plan recognises the requirement for a coordinated, whole-of-government approach and identified the urgency for Queensland Government to work with local communities and bring to an end the ongoing deficit and illness-focused services. This is an opportunity to reform the coordination of social and health services to deliver coordinated social and emotional wellbeing programs for all Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders.



Sam Wild
Queensland Mental Health and Drug Advisory Council member

towards addressing the social determinants of health and social and emotional wellbeing as well as removing barriers such as social exclusion is important.

As a member of the Queensland Mental Health Advisory Council I am committed to advocating for reform to support the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. This Action Plan is an important first step towards achieving the reform that is needed.



Dr Mark Wenitong
Queensland Mental Health and Drug Advisory Council member

Executive summary

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders are resilient with culture and customs continuing to be a source of strength and pride and the foundation for good social and emotional wellbeing.

However, there is a significant gap in mental health and life outcomes with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders being more likely to: experience psychological distress, be hospitalised for mental health conditions, die by suicide, and experience problematic alcohol and other drug use. A higher proportion is not satisfied with their lives.

Social and emotional wellbeing is a protective factor against adverse life events, suicide, problematic alcohol and other drug use, and some mental illnesses. It also supports those living with mental health problems and mental illness to recover. Influenced by cultural identity and connections, intergenerational grief and trauma and racism, social and emotional wellbeing also contributes to improving life outcomes.

The *Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social and Emotional Wellbeing Action Plan 2016–18* (this Action Plan) aims to improve social and emotional wellbeing. It defines social and emotional wellbeing, based on consultation with Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders, as being resilient, being and feeling culturally safe, having and realising aspirations and being satisfied with life.

Improved social and emotional wellbeing contribute to reducing the incidence, severity and duration of mental illness, reducing suicide and its impact, and preventing and reducing the adverse impact of alcohol and other drugs.

This Action Plan seeks to address the factors that influence social and emotional wellbeing and adopts a holistic, life-course approach which builds on the strengths of communities, supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and is supported by culturally capable integrated and coordinated services and programs.

This Action Plan includes 62 additional actions under three priority areas:

1. Inclusive communities
2. Thriving and connected families
3. Resilient people

It builds on the 17 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific commitments made in three population-level plans developed as part of the *Queensland Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol Strategic Plan 2014–2019*.

Introduction

Queensland is home to an estimated 203,000 Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders¹. As the custodians of the world's oldest continuing cultures, Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders are diverse, practicing different traditions and customs and speaking different languages. They live in very diverse communities across the State from small remote islands, regional centres and towns to metropolitan areas.

Representing around 4.3 per cent of the State's population, Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is on average younger and growing at a faster rate than the rest of the population².

Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders fare worse than other Queenslanders against many life outcome measures. The course towards these outcomes is influenced by many factors and adverse life events that commence before birth and are reinforced throughout life.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders are resilient with culture and customs which continue to be a source of strength and social and emotional wellbeing enabling many to endure hardship and adversity. Linked closely to community and family and to culture and customs as well as connections to land and sea, social and emotional wellbeing is the foundation for proud and strong First Nations Peoples.

About this Action Plan

The *Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social and Emotional Wellbeing Action Plan 2016–18* (this Action Plan) realises a commitment made by the whole-of-government *Queensland Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol Strategic Plan 2014–2019* (the Strategic Plan) to identify and take actions to improve the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders.

It builds on 17 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific commitments made as part of the Strategic Plan and associated population-level action plans, including the:

- *Early Action: Queensland Mental Health Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention Action Plan 2015–17* (*Early Action 2015–17*) which aims to improve the mental health of all Queenslanders and reduce the incidence, severity and duration of mental illness.
- *Queensland Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2015–17* (*Suicide Prevention Plan 2015–17*) which aims to reduce suicide and its impact on Queenslanders.
- *Queensland Alcohol and Other Drugs Action Plan 2015–17* (*Alcohol and other Drugs Plan 2015–17*) which aims to prevent and reduce the adverse impact of alcohol and other drugs on Queenslanders.

What we heard

This Action Plan has been significantly shaped by the views of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders including Elders, government and non-government service providers as well as other stakeholders from across the State representing a broad range of interests, experiences and perspectives.

The Queensland Mental Health Commission started formal consultations in 2016 through:

- two Strategic Conversations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders and government and non-government organisations
- the release of the *Improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social and Emotional Wellbeing in Queensland* discussion paper seeking the views of targeted stakeholders and the broader public
- nine community forums held in Ipswich, Logan, Townsville, Toowoomba, Cairns, Rockhampton, Thursday Island, Mount Isa and Brisbane, attended by more than 200 participants
- a youth forum held in Brisbane hosted by Headspace on 22 June 2016 attended by nine young people.

Stakeholders were asked what social and emotional wellbeing means to them and their community and to identify priorities for action and what is currently working.

All stakeholders agreed that social and emotional wellbeing is essential to closing the gap in life outcomes for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders and that its complexity requires an approach which addresses many factors in a coordinated way. Key themes and views are highlighted throughout this Action Plan, including excerpts taken from letters addressed to 'The World' written by young people at the youth forum held in Brisbane.

What is social and emotional wellbeing

Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders have understood social and emotional wellbeing for thousands of years. It is an intricate part of cultural practices, spiritual belief and connections to land and sea.

Social and emotional wellbeing is viewed differently from non-Indigenous concepts of mental illness and mental health and wellbeing³. Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders view the wellbeing of communities and families as being as important as that of individuals⁴ reflecting a holistic understanding of life and health, which includes physical health, mental health and other factors such as cultural, spiritual and social wellbeing⁵.

Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders participating in community forums and Strategic Conversations said that good social and emotional wellbeing means feeling happy, being and feeling culturally safe, having and realising aspirations and being satisfied with life. Social and emotional wellbeing was also linked to having a strong sense of cultural identity, being resilient and being able to cope and withstand adversity as well as recovering and healing from trauma.

Based on the views of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders, this Action Plan defines social and emotional wellbeing as being resilient, being and feeling culturally safe, having and realising aspirations and being satisfied with life.

Social and emotional wellbeing today

There is a significant gap in the mental health and life outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders and non-Indigenous people in a range of areas⁶.

Nationally, in 2014–15 a higher proportion of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders aged 15 years and over reported not being satisfied with their lives than non-Indigenous people (9.7 per cent compared to 4.7 per cent). Conversely, a higher proportion reported experiencing very high overall life satisfaction (17.4 per cent compared to 13.7 per cent)⁷.

In the same year, a greater proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders aged 18 years and over experienced high or very high levels of psychological distress than non-Indigenous Queenslanders (31.4 per cent compared to 12.0 per cent)⁸.

Dear World...

Emotional wellbeing for me is feeling whole,
for me it's about feeling connected.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders are more than one and a half times more likely to die by suicide than non-Indigenous people (20.5 deaths per 100,000 people compared to 13.0 deaths per 100,000 people)⁹. Each suicide affects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities and its relative frequency compounds grief and trauma¹⁰.

Problematic alcohol and other drug use is influenced by and affects social and emotional wellbeing. Nationally, in 2013 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 14 years and over were more likely to have abstained from drinking alcohol in the previous 12 months (27.8 per cent) than non-Indigenous people (21.8 per cent)¹¹.

However, nationally those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who reported drinking alcohol did so at greater life-time risky levels (23.5 per cent compared to 18.1 per cent), and half reported drinking alcohol at single occasion risky drinking levels (46.4 per cent compared to 38.4 per cent)¹² than non-Indigenous people. Over the same period, a greater proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people nationally aged 14 years and over reported using illicit drugs in the past year compared to non-Indigenous people (22.8 per cent compared to 15.1 per cent), as well as smoking tobacco daily (32.2 per cent compared to 12.5 per cent)¹³.

Why is social and emotional wellbeing important

Social and emotional wellbeing affects the everyday lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders, their families and the community.

It is a significant protective factor against the worst impacts of stressful life events and has enabled Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders to endure historical and present day hardships and adversity¹⁴. Social and emotional wellbeing is also a protective factor against some mental illnesses, suicide, and problematic alcohol and other drug use and supports recovery¹⁵.

Improving social and emotional wellbeing is important for all Queenslanders. It contributes significantly to the fabric of our State and is fundamental to achieving the State Government's objectives to build caring and connected communities.

It influences and reinforces a wide range of life outcomes, including educational outcomes, employment and economic participation, physical health and mental health¹⁶. By improving life outcomes, social and emotional wellbeing can reduce the need for government services¹⁷.

Our shared goal

This Action Plan aims to improve social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, families and communities.

Social and emotional wellbeing means being resilient, being and feeling culturally safe, having and realising aspirations and being satisfied with life.

By improving social and emotional wellbeing, this Action Plan will contribute to reducing the incidence, severity and duration of mental illness, reducing suicide and its impact and preventing and reducing the adverse impact of alcohol and other drugs.

Proud
and
Strong

What influences social and emotional wellbeing

Social and emotional wellbeing is largely influenced by the society in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders presently live, work and age. It is also influenced by historical events and policies which continue to have an impact today.

Many of the factors which influence social and emotional wellbeing are inter-related and reinforce each other. They include:

- cultural identity, belonging and connections
- being and feeling culturally safe
- healing from grief and trauma
- family connections
- involvement in the criminal justice system including as victims
- physical health, mental health and alcohol and other drug use
- education, employment and housing.

Dear World...

I believe for me to heal and understand who I am I need to go home... in order for me to reconnect I need to meet my Elders and the rest of my family. Overall, finding out who I am as an Aboriginal woman is what social and emotional wellbeing means to me. I am currently on a journey which will enhance my social and emotional wellbeing through the process of putting together my Aboriginal identity.

Cultural identity, belonging and connections

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members and stakeholders clearly identified cultural identity and needing to belong and having connections to community, family and to land and sea as being a source of strength and resilience. Many indicated that cultural identity and connections have gradually eroded over time due to a range of factors, including displacement and removal from Country.

Many were also concerned that children and young people, particularly those who have been removed from their families and communities, are struggling through lost identity. All indicated that Elders and others in the community have maintained their connections but need support to hand their knowledge and wisdom down to the next generation.

Dear World...

What matters to me is equality, justice and happiness. I think everyone deserves to have the basic rights no matter religion, age, sex ...

Cultural identity, belonging and connections are expressed in many ways, including through art and dance as well as identification with a clan group, participation in cultural practices and speaking a traditional language.

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (the National Social Survey) indicates that in 2014–15, 66.1 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders identify with a clan, tribal or clan group, compared to 62.3 per cent nationally¹⁸. More than half of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders (61.0 per cent) were involved in cultural events, ceremonies and organisations in the previous 12 months (compared to 62.6 per cent nationally)¹⁹.

However, a much smaller proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders speak an Australian Indigenous language (18.1 per cent in Queensland compared to 18.3 per cent nationally)²⁰. About one in ten reported the main language they spoke at home was an Australian Indigenous language (10.7 per cent in Queensland compared to 10.5 per cent nationally)²¹.

Being and feeling culturally safe

Being and feeling culturally safe in the broader community, when accessing services and in all aspects of life, is considered essential to social and emotional wellbeing.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders across the State told us that racism and discrimination has a profound influence on social and emotional wellbeing. Not only does it impact on their ability to achieve their aspirations by limiting opportunities it also influences their ability to access effective services²².

Participants in the Strategic Conversations and during the community forums indicated racism and discrimination often meant they do not feel valued as a member of the broader community. Racism also means many do not feel safe participating in the broader community for fear of discrimination or being subject to negative views, with many feeling they are often required 'to prove they are more than the stereotypes.'

Around one third of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders nationally felt they had been treated unfairly in the last 12 months (33.5 per cent)²³. The most common unfair treatment reported was hearing racial comments or jokes (23.0 per cent). Just under half (14.0 per cent) reported avoiding situations due to past unfair treatment²⁴.

Some at the community forums indicated there is need for a place where non-Indigenous Queenslanders could learn about local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture as a way of addressing negative stereotypes and raising awareness.

Healing from grief and trauma

All stakeholders acknowledged the strength and resilience of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders, families and communities. However, they also indicated continued exposure to events which result in grief and trauma affects the ability of many to heal.

Reduced life expectancy, higher rates of suicide and other factors such as the removal of children mean Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience life events that lead to grief and trauma, on average, more frequently than other Queenslanders. Additionally, present day adversity is compounded by the impact of past events, including the effects of past policies such as the removal of children.

The National Social Survey indicates that 68.4 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders nationally had experienced at least one life stressor in the last 12 months. The death of a family member or close friend was the highest reported stressor (27.6 per cent) and was even higher in remote communities (34.4 per cent)²⁵.

Stakeholders indicated a need to reduce the number of suicides as well as needing a place of healing in their community where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are able to gather and receive support.

Family connections

The lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders are centred on families and are bound by cultural concepts of family obligations and roles. Extended family members, particularly Aunties, Uncles, Grandparents all play an important role in the day-to-day lives of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders.

Family problems and breakdown, including through domestic and family violence and child protection issues were all seen as some of the main issues impacting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities. Further, past policies and practices, such as policies which lead to the separation of children from their families, have had a detrimental impact on effective parenting practices²⁶ and together with high levels of family and domestic violence have contributed to present day high levels of child protection issues.

Dear World...

I think everyone needs a good role model especially the younger generations so that they have guidance around them.

Involvement in the criminal justice system

Being and feeling safe is crucial to achieving good social and emotional wellbeing. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders experienced higher victimisation rates for some offences than non-Indigenous people, particularly for sexual assaults²⁷ and domestic and family violence²⁸. Reduced community safety has also contributed to a high incarceration rate. As at 30 June 2015, 32.0 per cent of Queensland's adult prison population was Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander²⁹.

Many at the community forums indicated lateral violence within their communities as preventing their community from reaching their full potential.

Physical health, mental health and alcohol and other drug use

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are more likely to be living with chronic health conditions, disability, mental health problems and mental illness.

Nationally in 2014–15, just under half (45.1 per cent) of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders aged 15 years and over reported experiencing a disability or (restrictive) long-term health condition³⁰.

Around two-thirds of those with disability experienced varying degrees of functional impairment. Almost eight per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people always needed help with or supervision of their self-care, mobility or communication due to a disability that lasted more than six months or a long-term health condition³¹.

During consultations, many indicated they cared for others providing assistance to access health and other support services. In 2014–15, one-quarter (25.5 per cent) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people provided unpaid care for a person with disability, a long-term health condition or old age³².

In 2014–15, nationally 29.3 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 15 years and over experienced a mental health condition. Almost one third also reported experiencing high and very high levels of psychological distress (31.4 per cent)³³ while around one in six reported having lower levels of overall life satisfaction than others.

Social and emotional wellbeing can have a positive impact on the recovery of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living with a diagnosed mental illness leading to reduced hospitalisation. However, between 2011 and 2013 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders were 1.5 times more likely than non-Indigenous Queenslanders to be hospitalised for mental health conditions³⁴.

Education, employment and housing

Promoting social and emotional wellbeing of individuals requires strengthening the socio-economic protective factors such as good educational outcomes, economic participation through training and employment and access to housing. The National Social Survey indicates Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders who are unemployed or who have not completed Year 12 are more likely to experience lower overall life satisfaction³⁵.

Employment gives a sense of purpose, independence and dignity. It was identified by many during the community forums and the Strategic Conversations as essential to good social and emotional wellbeing. However, just under half of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders are employed (49.6 per cent compared to 74 per cent of non-Indigenous Queenslanders³⁶). Unemployment and other factors mean a high proportion also experience financial stress, with 31.4 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders aged 15 years and over reported household members had run out of money for basic living expenses in the last 12 months and 30.1 per cent experienced homelessness at some point in their lives³⁷.

What works to improve social and emotional wellbeing

To support improved social and emotional wellbeing, strategies need to recognise the connectedness between the individual, family and the community. They need to adopt a holistic approach, focused on addressing the factors that influence social and emotional wellbeing, including historical factors which continue to have an impact and present day circumstances.

All strategies need to focus on:

- a holistic approach which recognises the needs of people at different stages in their lives
- a strengths-based approach and supporting local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership
- improving the effectiveness and cultural capability of policies, programs and services
- increasing integration and collaboration between services and organisations
- being Indigenous-led, culturally capable and addressing local circumstances^{38,39}.

Holistic life-course approach

Adopting a holistic life-course approach is accepted by many researchers as fundamental to improving social and emotional wellbeing⁴⁰. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and community members indicated a need to focus on the different needs of individuals as they age and as they take up different roles in their lives, families and communities including being parents and Elders.

Many called for a focus on children and young people, particularly where they are in child protection care, youth detention and/or have lost their connections to their culture. Research strongly supports focusing on children and young people indicating that the number of factors, timing, frequency and duration all influence social and emotional wellbeing with some experiences before birth and early in childhood having an impact throughout life⁴¹.

Strengths-based approach and supporting local leadership

Evidence strongly suggests that strategies and initiatives are more likely to be effective if local Indigenous people lead their development and implementation⁴². This was also identified during community consultations where many indicated a need for local Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders to be involved in procurement decisions about which organisation should deliver a service and as co-designers of programs and initiatives.

Not only would this increase a sense of ownership it would also ensure services are tailored to meet local needs and conditions.

In 2015, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership in Mental Health group publicly released the national *Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Declaration*, calling for greater support and recognition for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership in the mental health system⁴³.

Local Indigenous leadership through Elders was identified by stakeholders as critical to improving the effectiveness of services. However, many indicated the demand on Elders from their communities and from service providers is significant and many require support to undertake this important role.

Good Practice Spotlight

Integrated Social and Emotional Wellbeing and Primary Care model

In 2014, Apunipima Cape York Health Council Ltd (Apunipima) redefined its model of care to include promotion and support of individuals' and communities' social and emotional wellbeing. It recognised that if any real changes in wellness outcomes are to occur, a comprehensive approach to primary health care needs to be built on a strong social and emotional wellbeing platform.

The integrated Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) and Primary Health Care (PHC) model of care aims to empower Cape York people by providing culturally competent, comprehensive primary health care through a community-controlled health service. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led service considers the social, emotional, spiritual and cultural needs of individuals, families and communities.

In late 2014, Apunipima was supported with a \$50,000 grant through the Commission's Stronger Community Mental Health Grants Program to empower a group of social and emotional wellbeing leaders across four Cape York communities, to inform future community health planning activities. Through consultation within the community, it was determined that providing a Family Wellbeing program as well as training in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Mental Health First Aid was appropriate for the four communities of Napranum, Mapoon, Aurukun and Kowanyama.

The Family Wellbeing program was developed in the early 1990s by a group of Stolen Generation leaders in Adelaide. It aims to boost individuals' self-confidence and promote acceptance of responsibility for family, work and community life.

Mental Health First Aid was developed in 2001 by Orygen Research Centre, at the University of Melbourne. It has been adapted to provide culturally appropriate training for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The program provides information on how to assist a person who is experiencing a mental health crisis or may be developing a mental illness.

Over a six month period in 2015, 49 Cape York community leaders participated in the programs. In addition, five Apunipima staff trained as facilitators in Family Wellbeing and a further 30 staff were trained in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health First Aid.

The training has provided a framework to promote physical, emotional, mental and spiritual wellbeing and, in turn, provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with pathways to family cohesion, employment and further training.

Through its trained leaders, Apunipima is continuing to deliver Family Wellbeing as part of the SEWB and PHC model of practice in all Cape York communities.

Good Practice Spotlight

National Empowerment Project

The National Empowerment Project (NEP) is an innovative Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led project working directly with communities to address their cultural, social and emotional wellbeing. It is led by Professor Pat Dudgeon at the University of Western Australia.

The program aims to strengthen cultural, social and emotional wellbeing. It also aims to increase resilience, and reduce psychological and community distress and high rates of suicide in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The NEP is underpinned by the following principles:

1. Human rights and social justice
2. Community ownership
3. Community capacity building
4. Resilience-focused
5. Empowerment and partnership
6. Respect for local knowledge

From 2014 the Queensland Mental Health Commission has provided funding to Ngonbi Co-Operative Society Ltd, now Ngonbi Community Services Indigenous Corporation, to implement NEP in Kuranda and Cherbourg.

NEP is delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Consultants who have completed a Certificate IV Mental Health (Non-clinical) course and the Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre Leadership Training. The training was funded through NEP.

NEP is supporting the wider community through Mental Health First Aid and the Cultural Social and Emotional Wellbeing programs. These programs have empowered members of the community with the knowledge and tools to assess, prevent and respond to mental health issues and be able to refer when necessary.

Effective and culturally capable services

The vast majority of services accessed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are delivered through mainstream organisations including schools, hospitals, and justice and housing services⁴⁴. As noted by the National Mental Health Commission, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people rely on mainstream mental health services and programs but the level of access and whether the services are contributing to better mental health outcomes is largely unknown.

Although there have been many improvements in service delivery, those consulted indicated there is a need to continue to increase the cultural capability of service providers. Some identified a compliance approach to cultural awareness training, rather than one which embeds cultural understanding and practices into service protocols and practice. Others suggested a need for an accreditation process to ensure that cultural capability is deeply embedded in service provision.

Many indicated this needs to extend to those developing policies and implementing programs. Further, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be directly involved in policy development and overseeing implementation. The need for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce in a wide range of areas was identified in all community forums.

One of the main concerns raised by stakeholders was an approach which adopted a one-size-fits-all and did not recognise the diversity of Aboriginal cultures and Torres Strait Islander Customs.

Integration and collaboration

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders, particularly those with complex needs, access multiple services in a wide range of areas, including health, housing and community supports. At consultations, many indicated that needing to retell their story to multiple service providers and workers created barriers to access and effective service delivery.

Stakeholders also indicated some services do not wish to collaborate with others due to concerns regarding future funding. To overcome this issue, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders indicated a need for the community to work together, for services to be required to collaborate as part of their funding agreement, and for the community to be a part of decision-making when funding is provided.

Good Practice Spotlight

Transition 2 Success

Transition 2 Success (T2S) is transforming the way Youth Justice works with young people. The T2S program puts evidence into action through addressing youth offending by improving the outcomes of children and young people in the youth justice system.

T2S will be fundamental to efforts in Youth Justice to reduce over representation in the youth justice system.

T2S is an alternative education and vocational training program which is delivered in a community setting to young people aged 14 to 18 years. It is delivered in partnership at a local level between the Youth Justice Service Centre, Education Queensland (local secondary schools), registered training organisations, not-for-profits and local business.

T2S participants are achieving outstanding results in reducing offending and transition into education, training and employment. As at 15 July 2016, there have been 61 T2S program graduates who have achieved the following outcomes:

- 85 certifications issued across eight courses
- 85 per cent of attendees transitioned onto further education or employment
- 24 young people re-engaged with mainstream school or other education

- 28 gained employment or engaged with an employment agency, and
- 76 per cent have had no further offending or their offence is considered significantly less serious than previous offending.

These results were generated in Atherton and Western Brisbane and support the expansion of T2S to other parts of Queensland where the participants will be predominantly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

The Cassowary Coast program, based in Atherton had 26 participants, 23 who were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Ten of these graduated in May 2016 and completed a Certificate II. Eight of these ten graduates were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

Youth Justice staff are incredibly proud of these young people and those who work with them will continue to monitor their outcomes.

T2S has since commenced in more locations including: Gold Coast, Bundaberg, Hervey Bay and Townsville, and will soon commence in Redland Bay, Cairns and Yarrabah.

Who plays a role

No single organisation or government can improve the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It requires governments, and communities, including non-Indigenous communities, families and individuals to work together.

We heard from many at the community forums and the Strategic Conversations that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families and communities have a very strong role to play. As noted by some there is a need to 'own the way of healing' but there is also a need for government support to undertake this role.

Australian Government

The Australian Government plays a very significant role in supporting social and emotional wellbeing, reducing suicide and problematic alcohol and other drug use. Many of the factors which influence social and emotional wellbeing fall within the Closing the Gap building blocks, for example early childhood, education, housing in remote communities and economic participation.

Some programs funded by the Australian Government specifically focus on social and emotional wellbeing, including the: Social and Emotional Wellbeing Program, which focuses on supporting members of the Stolen Generations and their families and the Access to Allied Psychological Services program, which targets those diagnosed with mild or moderate mental illness.

In response to the National Mental Health Commission's *Review of Mental Health Services and Programmes*, the Australian Government has committed to improving integration between mental health, drug and alcohol, suicide prevention, and social and emotional wellbeing services at the regional level. It has also committed to continue working under the *National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Mental Health and Social and Emotional Wellbeing 2014–2019*; the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Strategy 2013*; and the *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Drug Strategy 2014–2019*.

Our actions

The State Government is currently implementing or developing strategies and plans to address many of the factors which influence social and emotional wellbeing. This Action Plan seeks to draw these initiatives together with other actions to collectively support improved social and emotional wellbeing.

This Action Plan commits to additional actions the State Government will implement to improve social and emotional wellbeing under three inter-related priority areas:

- Inclusive communities
- Thriving and connected families
- Resilient people.

Actions outlined in this Action Plan are based on evidence of what works as well as the views of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, community members and service providers from across Queensland. They also build on the actions already committed under the three population level plans.

Inclusive communities

Feeling and being culturally safe is essential to enabling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders to participate fully in the broader community. This requires reducing racism and discrimination and acknowledging, respecting and valuing Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders as the First Nations People.

There is a need to address both present day issues and the impact of historical policies and practices which continue to affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. It is also essential that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders are empowered to play a leadership role in the decisions which affect them, including in the management of land and sea. This will not only increase participation and inclusion, but will also improve the effectiveness of services and initiatives.

Actions in this priority area will focus on:

- Acknowledging, respecting and valuing the cultures, history and contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the broader community.
- Providing opportunities for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders to play a leadership role in the decisions, services and programs which affect their community.

What we will do

- 1. Support the repatriation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural property including ancestral remains and significant objects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities** (Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships).
- 2. Administer the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Acts to ensure the preservation and protection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage across Queensland** (Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships).
- 3. Support the native title process in Queensland.** DATSIP provides detailed research reports and records to Native Title Representative Bodies and Native Title claimants to inform Connection to Country reports (Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships).
- 4. Proactively support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement and participation in the co-design, development and delivery of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs and services to maximise outcomes** (Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships/all agencies).
- 5. Develop a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) for the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games in 2018.** The RAP has been developed by the Office of the Commonwealth Games in the Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games to support tangible actions and initiatives for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Through three priority areas of respect, relationships and opportunities, the RAP includes programs which promote the celebration and promotion of Indigenous culture, art and histories as well as increasing the Government's cultural capabilities. The RAP will work to increase Indigenous participation in sport and recreational programs, education, upskilling, employment and procurement. The aim of the RAP is to leave a legacy of physical, social, emotional and community wellbeing (Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games).
- 6. Scope and commence research into the impact of stigma and discrimination related to problematic alcohol and other drug use on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, families and individuals.** The project will be developed in consultation with key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander non-government organisations and relevant government agencies. The project will recognise that a larger proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people do not drink alcohol. It will consider not only the impact of stigma and discrimination on people who are experiencing problematic alcohol and other drug use but also the negative stereotypes that effect the social and emotional wellbeing of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (Queensland Mental Health Commission).
- 7. Implement the Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger program. The Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger program cares for land and sea and Country and increases Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in environmental management.** Indigenous land and sea rangers are currently contracted to 14 regional communities throughout Queensland. Land and sea rangers are employed through local Indigenous host organisations, with funding by the Queensland Government (Department of Environment and Heritage Protection).
- 8. Establish Murri Courts in 13 locations across Queensland.** Murri Courts provide an opportunity for members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community (including Elders and victims) to participate in a court process which requires defendants to take responsibility for their offending behaviour but which also respects and acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture (Department of Justice and Attorney-General).
- 9. Support the Cultural Social and Emotional Wellbeing Pilot in Kuranda and Cherbourg.** The pilot is an initiative under the National Empowerment Project. It seeks to strengthen cultural, social and emotional wellbeing, to increase resilience, and reduce psychological and community distress and high rates of suicide in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The Commission provides funding of \$367,000 to Ngoonbi Community Services Indigenous Corporation. The pilot provides Mental Health First Aid and Cultural Social and Emotional Wellbeing programs to empower community members with the knowledge and tools to assess, prevent and respond to mental health issues (Queensland Mental Health Commission).

10. Continue to support the Youth Justice First Nations Action Board. The cultural diversity and distinct cultural views of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should not be ignored and for this reason the Youth Justice First Nations Action Board (YJFNAB) was developed. This group is made up of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff members that are considered strong advocates and leaders for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues in their local areas. The YJFNAB has been established to guide the organisation's priority focus on reducing over-representation in the youth justice system and to ensure that youth justice policy, programs and interventions are designed and delivered appropriately for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, their families and communities. The YJFNAB will ensure there is a cultural lens embedded in the way Youth Justice does its business to enhance a stronger workforce to address the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in the justice system (Department of Justice and Attorney-General).

11. Embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into Restorative Justice practice. Key Queensland communities will be engaged to raise the perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, families and communities about how Youth Justice might increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in diversionary justice processes. This work is in response to the proposed Restorative Justice Reform and aimed at maximising the impact of the new reform to address the over-representation of this cohort within the Youth Justice system. Through the development of specific client-led responses the project proposes to make justice responses more culturally attuned and supportive of raising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities' ownership of responses to young people's offending behaviour. Such a response is in line with the intended outcomes of the restorative justice project plan and upholds the Youth Justice First Nations Action Board's key priority of embedding First Nations People's perspectives in restorative justice reform (Department of Justice and Attorney-General).

12. Support an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander connecting to Country Policy and Procedure. This program has been developed to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to establish, re-establish and/or deepen their connection with their culture, traditional country and community. It is intended that Connecting to Country experience will assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to: gain new/additional cultural knowledge and/or traditional skills; contribute or gain exposure to relevant departmental business which impacts on their community or traditional country; participate in local cultural events, traditional customs and protocols; reconnect with, engage and learn from Traditional Owners, Elders and community members, and contribute or impart personal knowledge where appropriate (Department of National Parks, Sport and Recreation).

13. Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women as part of the *Queensland Women's Strategy 2016–2021*. Engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to further the aims and objectives of the *Queensland Women's Strategy* to ensure there are actions in the Community Implementation Plan that will increase their economic and social participation including in leadership roles, and that will improve their safety and health and wellbeing (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services).

14. Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders and organisations as part of the *Women in Boards: Toward Gender Parity Initiative*. A talent pool of potential leaders for board membership will be developed. The engagement of stakeholders will include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and organisations (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services).

What we will continue to do

Early Action 2015–17

Provide mental health and personalised support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to participate in their community and to achieve outcomes that are meaningful to them (Queensland Health).

Provide \$645,000 to beyondblue for community awareness and stigma reduction activities in Queensland. This includes dissemination of national advertising campaigns and supporting resources covering depression, anxiety, perinatal depression); life stages (for example, youth, older people); population groups (for example, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex people; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people); and settings (for example, rural communities) (Queensland Mental Health Commission).

Deliver the Stronger Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Grants Program 2015–16 to support non-government organisations and local governments to undertake activities which: support social inclusion of those experiencing mental illness, mental health problems and problems related to alcohol and other drug use. The grants will focus on vulnerable groups including people living in rural and remote Queensland, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Queensland Mental Health Commission).

Thriving and connected families

Family connections as well as the culture of obligation and reciprocity play an important role in the everyday lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. When these connections are strong, individuals have a stronger sense of identity, connectedness and are better able to overcome adverse events and heal.

Actions in this priority area will focus on:

- Supporting families to enable children and young people to flourish including housing and financial support
- Increasing opportunities to maintain cultural identity, family and community connections
- Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to heal and reduce the causes of grief and trauma.

What we will do

15. Support Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders to reconnect with their families and map their histories by providing research and reports. The displacement of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders from traditional lands and the removal of children from families have resulted in many losing knowledge and connections. DATSIP provides detailed research reports and records to individuals, families and to Link-Up clients who are or who are related to, members of the Stolen Generations (Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships).

16. Invest in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Wellbeing Services across Queensland to offer vulnerable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families a coordinated mix of services to address multiple levels of need and build family and community capacity to safely care for and protect their children. Funds of \$150 million over five years are available to support the implementation of these services (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services).

17. Implement Trauma-Informed Practice (TIP) across youth justice policy, programs and all service delivery. TIP is a strengths-based framework that understands and responds to trauma and aims to support survivors of trauma to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment in their lives. A significant emphasis will be placed on how trauma impacts the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in the youth justice system (Department of Justice and Attorney-General).

18. Develop a Queensland action plan for vulnerable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families. In *Towards a Queensland action plan for vulnerable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families*, released in May 2016, the Queensland Government committed to developing an action plan that will drive a fundamental shift in how child protection, family support and other services work with, and for, Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experiencing vulnerability.

The action plan will contribute to reducing the over-representation of children and families in the child protection system; contribute to reducing child and youth sexual abuse and contribute to closing the gap on life outcomes. Work to develop the action plan has commenced and involves a collaborative approach involving Elders, relevant government agencies and community leaders, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and mainstream non-government service provider members

of the Queensland Family Matters group facilitated by the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak. The action plan will build on existing initiatives, including the broader actions of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social and Emotional Wellbeing Action Plan as well as including new, practical actions.

The Queensland Government is the first State committed to partnering with Family Matters, and is working with the Queensland Family Matters Working Group to develop and then plan for implementation of the action plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families experiencing vulnerability. Family Matters is a national campaign driven by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and service providers to work strategically across all levels of government and the sector to eliminate the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out of home care (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services).

19. Implement the Strengthening Families Protecting Children Framework for Practice. The framework for practice reinforces the values of family and child connection, participation, partnership, cultural integrity, strengths and solutions, fairness, and curiosity and learning. Seven Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Practice Leaders (ATSIPL) with one leader representing a region and an Identified Quality Practice Officer assist the framework for practice implementation and ensure a continuous quality improvement approach to practice with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families. Two Practice Leader positions are also funded in the peak organisation, Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak Ltd (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services).

20. Invest in Family and Child Connect Intensive Family Support Services. The services aim to ensure that families experiencing challenges can access appropriate supports in a timely manner to enable them to care safely for their children and protect them from harm. Family and Child Connect services are being established state-wide across 20 catchments to assist families to engage with the services they need to safely care for their children at home. Intensive Family Support services are also being established state-wide to expand the range of options for families with multiple and complex needs requiring intensive support for an extended period. These services are funded to operate as part of a network of local agencies, including drug and alcohol services, to ensure that families receive holistic responses to their various needs (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services).

- 21. Implement the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Service Reform Project focused on early intervention and prevention for children and families in discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.** The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services is investing \$2.8 million annually in models that support early intervention and prevention for children and families in discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, to support and strengthen families, and reduce the risk of involvement in the statutory child safety system. Key focus areas of the project include coordinated service provision, improving access to universal and secondary services, improving referral pathways and information exchange, and supporting local people for employment in new initiatives. The project aims to fund models that enable effective partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to implement, review and adapt initiatives to meet the needs of the community. This is part of a suite of responses to the recommendations of the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services).
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- 22. Support families through partnerships with the primary health care sector** through funding of multi-disciplinary care teams in community controlled organisations to conduct Medical Benefits Scheme health checks which include assessments to identify mental illness and suicide risk. Queensland Health is investing \$3.3 million over two years from July 2016 in the Birthing in Our Communities program. The Birthing in Our Communities program is a partnership between the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health, the Mater Mothers and the Aboriginal and Islander Community Health Service Brisbane to provide a culturally safe birthing service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pregnant women or the pregnant partners of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men in South-East Queensland, with a particular emphasis on vulnerable women (Queensland Health).
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- 23. Support children and young people who leave care to know their families and obtain proof of Indigeneity.** In conjunction with the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services and non-government organisations trace the family histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care to ensure that when they leave care they know their extended family history and are able to obtain proof of Indigeneity (Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships).
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- 24. Invest in models that support early intervention and prevention for children and families in discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, to support and strengthen families, and reduce the risk of involvement in the statutory child safety system through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Service Reform Project.** Key focus areas of the project include coordinated service provision, improving access to universal and secondary services, improving referral pathways and information exchange, and supporting local people for employment in new initiatives. The project aims to fund models that enable effective partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to implement, review and adapt initiatives to meet the needs of the community. The contribution by the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services is \$2.8 million annually as part of a suite of responses to the recommendations of the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services).
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- 25. Maintain supportive tenancy management practices and guidelines** that acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family connections with place, recognise the cost of living in remote locations and understand the cultural importance and obligations of kinship structures. Tenancy teams will work closely with mental health workers and support agencies, including Wellbeing Centres, to overcome difficulties in order to sustain tenancies or to facilitate submission of housing applications (Department of Housing and Public Works).
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- 26. Deliver the Employment Related Accommodation Program (ERAP)** to assist eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people re-locate from remote communities to take up employment, education or training opportunities in regional centres. Participants are offered housing for the length of their employment, education or training course. The program removes barriers to accessing affordable housing enabling people and their families to improve their economic circumstances through long-term, sustainable employment, education and training, thus having a positive contribution to the families' wellbeing (Department of Housing and Public Works).
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- 27. Gather insights of current housing demand and future housing goals or aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander NDIS participants, particularly in rural and remote areas.** Having access to affordable and appropriate housing positively influences the social and emotional wellbeing of Indigenous peoples. The Department of Housing and Public Works (DHPW) will improve data on housing demand that reflects the actual housing preferences of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders, particularly in rural and remote areas. DHPW will undertake this by working closely with the National Disability Insurance Agency to collect relevant information as the NDIS is progressively rolled out across Queensland. This will ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who are NDIS participants have access to affordable and accessible housing, which is based on their preferences and what they are likely to choose (Department of Housing and Public Works).
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- 28. Provide funding to support specialist domestic and family violence support services in rural and remote Queensland.** Domestic and family violence negatively impacts the mental health of victims and their children and often leads to increased isolation from family and support networks. In 2016, funding was provided for new specialist domestic and family violence support services in the Tablelands, Longreach, Emerald and Kingaroy. In 2016–17 and 2017–18, the department will provide funding for more rural and remote communities to provide specialist services (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services).
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- 29. Establish a new integrated response to domestic and family violence in Mount Isa in 2016–17, centred on a multi-agency High Risk Team.** This team provides a forum for appropriate information sharing across government and non-government agencies to ensure risk assessments are comprehensive, inform safety planning and risk management and facilitate swift and flexible action across agencies to support safety needs. Later a trial will be conducted in a discrete Indigenous community, providing opportunity to develop and test culturally appropriate models (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services).
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- 30. Develop the Queensland Violence Against Women Prevention Plan which will acknowledge the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.** The Queensland Violence Against Women Prevention Plan will outline the government's approach to tackling all forms of violence against women. The Plan will address domestic, family and sexual violence and acknowledge that violence is disproportionately experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services).
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- 31. Host a Women's Gathering and Domestic Violence Conference in the Torres Strait.** The Conference will be developed as an interagency collaboration and will seek to address the major issues affecting Torres Strait Islander women (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services).
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- 32. Support access to financial counselling and support.** Provide financial counselling, continued emergency relief, further financial literacy, and Good Money shops as an alternative to pay day lenders to vulnerable Queenslanders (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services).
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- 33. Support a range of local early years services** including long day care, playgroups, family support, outside school hours care and holiday programs in remote locations across Cape York, Northern Peninsula and the Torres Strait Islands. (Department of Education and Training).
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- 34. Identify and refer Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners with potential mental health needs in correctional centres.** There is a high prevalence of mental health problems in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offender and prisoner population in comparison to the general population and these mental health problems often contribute to offending behaviour and imprisonment. Women prisoners particularly have a much higher incidence of mental health problems. QCS is committed to reducing suicide, self-harm and other mental health concerns through assessment, support, treatment and care for those at risk including identification of suicide risk at the point of admission into custody. QCS is currently partnering with Queensland Health to deliver the Indigenous Mental Health Intervention Program (IMHIP) to female prisoners at Brisbane Women's Correctional Centre. This program provides women with social, economic and mental health support with a focus on trauma and domestic violence. QCS is focusing on increasing professional development of staff. A number of programs are currently available and others in the process of being developed which focus on mental health first aid training (including an Indigenous specific training program) and suicide assessment and awareness training (Department of Justice and Attorney-General).
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What we will continue to do

Early Action 2015–17

Support integrated early childhood development services to ensure families can access the right service at the right time.

This includes:

- a) Four early years centres.
- b) Children and Family Centres (CFC) servicing ten Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities, providing early childhood and family support services, delivered in centre-based and/or community settings. The program supports and promotes the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children within their extended family and cultural community.
- c) Child and Family Hubs in 25 communities that combine local services to improve health, education, care and safety for children and families in communities across Queensland (Department of Education and Training).

Improve outcomes for children in the statutory child protection system by developing a service model to facilitate earlier intervention and access to therapeutic services at an earlier stage of their entry in care. Services will prioritise access to culturally capable support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and continue to provide services to children and young people in out-of-home care who have severe and complex psychological and behavioural support needs (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services).

Establish seven new integrated early years services in priority locations across Queensland (Lockhart River, Gordonvale, Blackall, Barcaldine, Inala, Redlands and Tara) to support children and families to access integrated services which meet their needs and circumstances, including early childhood education and care, family support and child and maternal health services (Department of Education and Training).

Resilient people

Improving education and employment and other socio-economic factors, as well as the physical and mental health of individuals offer a good opportunity to improve social and emotional wellbeing.

Actions in this priority area will focus on:

- Providing effective, culturally capable services and supports
- Improving health and mental health particularly for those at risk
- Providing greater opportunities for education and employment.

What we will do

35. **Promote the implementation of the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Framework* across the Queensland Public Service** (Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, CEOs of all agencies and the Cultural Agency Leaders Committee).

36. **Develop and implement the *Queensland Government Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Training Strategy*** to inform the content of cultural capability training courses by setting out the overarching desired capabilities of Queensland Government officers, and to provide a flexible, consistent, and collaborative approach to the procurement and delivery of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Training across the Queensland Public Service (Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, CEOs of all agencies and the Cultural Agency Leaders Committee).

37. **Implement the *Queensland Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health Strategy 2016–2021***. The Strategy focuses primarily on improving the responsiveness of Queensland Health’s services to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders living with severe mental illness (Queensland Health).

38. **Provide presentations and information about the history of the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Queensland and the history of government control over the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to child safety staff** and those working in the non-government sector who work with children in care (Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships).

39. **Support individuals to reduce harm related to alcohol and other drug use**. A \$2 million investment over two years in Indigenous Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs (ATODS) Youth Programs targeted at youth in Cairns, Gold Coast, Cherbourg, Mount Isa and Townsville (Queensland Health).

40. **Strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander economic development, including business development, procurement initiatives and employment strategies that stimulate employment opportunities** and resulting financial, social and emotional outcomes (Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships).

41. **Improve forensic mental health outcomes for those in prison and youth detention centres** through the Enhancing Cultural Competence of Prison Mental Health Service based in Metro North Hospital and Health Service, and the Mental Health Transition Services – Brisbane Youth Detention Centre within Children’s Health Queensland (Queensland Health).

42. **Continue to invest in and review the implementation of the *Queensland Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Framework 2010–2033***. Queensland Health will continue its investment in culturally responsive health services and provide a total of \$6.8 million over two years from July 2016 to Hospital and Health Services to implement the *Queensland Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Framework 2010 – 2033*. This is the overarching framework to guide every aspect of health service delivery for and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. A review of the implementation of the framework is being conducted in 2016 (Queensland Health).

43. **Continue to develop and implement the *DJAG Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Action Plan 2015–2019***. Addressing the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are over-represented among the offending population is a major challenge. The department has an obligation to reduce the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the criminal justice system as well as make the justice system more culturally appropriate. We are committed to creating cultural capability in the way the department does business so that we are inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their families as well as our staff. This Action Plan has a strong focus on creating a workforce whose programs and practices embody the spirit of reconciliation and who recognise the significant contribution which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and people can make towards the work of the department in Youth Justice (Department of Justice and Attorney-General).

44. **Review and implement the *Cleveland Youth Detention Centre Cultural Unit***. This will enhance the provision of culturally appropriate supports, support the transition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people to the community, and enhance workforce capability to deliver culturally responsive services (Department of Justice and Attorney-General).

45. **Implement the *Making Tracks Investment Strategy 2015–18* to improve the health outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people** through a targeted investment of more than \$200 million over three years, particularly targeting mental health, chronic disease and child and maternal health services and programs. The Investment Strategy builds upon the long-term policy framework that guides the Government’s actions towards achieving the two COAG Close the Gap health targets — to close the life expectancy gap by 2033 and to halve the child mortality gap by 2018 (Queensland Health).
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46. **Deliver quality kindergarten programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children living across 35 discrete communities through 28 state schools and five non-government organisations** (Department of Education and Training).
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47. **Continue to strengthen the cultural capability of the Queensland Police Service and improve relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.** The Queensland Police Service (QPS) has developed the *QPS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Annual Action Plan 2015-16* and has committed to a number of actions to promote the safety and wellbeing of Indigenous Queenslanders. Priority areas include improving the knowledge and skills of QPS employees working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities, as well as strengthening capacity to respond to matters involving the Indigenous community through the development of long-term initiatives to improve relationships with Indigenous communities (Queensland Police Service).
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48. **Encourage more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to start a business and help established businesses to be stronger and grow.** The Queensland Government has committed to implementing the *Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy 2016-20* to create an environment in which Queensland is the place for small business to start, grow and employ. It recognises that a very small proportion of businesses, which are mostly small or micro businesses, are owned by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The *Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy 2016-20* seeks to increase the number of businesses run by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This action recognises the positive effects of economic participation on mental health and wellbeing. (Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games).
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49. **Continue to implement Project Booyah to mentor at-risk young people.** Project Booyah is a forty day community inclusive police mentoring program incorporating skills for life and employability, leadership skills, youth support, adventure-based learning and vocational pathways to support at-risk young people. While the project is delivered in several locations throughout the state, since the project commenced operations in 2012 over 20 per cent of graduates identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. These graduates have achieved successful outcomes, with links to employment and/or education pathways (Queensland Police Service).
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50. **Continue to support Indigenous Police-Citizen Youth Clubs which focus on youth development.** Police-Citizen Youth Clubs (PCYCs) are operated by the Queensland Police-Citizens Youth Welfare Association, a not-for-profit organisation focused on youth development. Five Indigenous PCYC branches operate in Queensland in: Aurukun, Mornington Island, Doomadgee, Palm Island, and Yarrabah. These branches work in partnership with community, governments, external agencies and the Queensland Police Service to deliver programs to support local young people and employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to deliver culture, music, educational and crime prevention programs. Other PCYCs also employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sport and recreation officers throughout the State (Queensland Police Service).
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51. **Improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners by strengthening the programs and services available within the correctional system.** Queensland Corrective Services (QCS) currently delivers a range of services that aim to rehabilitate prisoners, including offender behaviour programs, substance abuse interventions, industries employment, education and vocational training. QCS has finalised procurement of a new suite of re-entry services that focuses on supporting success on parole via access for all prisoners in custody to an information and referral service to assist with proactively planning for release, a service assisting with the transition to community for high risk and complex need prisoners and a support service for prisoners on parole at risk of suspension. Service providers will work with QCS staff such as counsellors and cultural liaison officers in assisting prisoners to remain connected to their communities where possible. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners have been identified as a target group for the new services. Providers in the Far Northern and Northern regions are contractually required to have staff that identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. In all regions, all staff employed by contracted providers are required to provide proof as part of key performance indicators that their staff have the relevant skills and experience in working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners (Department of Justice and Attorney-General).
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52. **Continue to support the Elders Visitation Program and implement additional culturally-appropriate support services.** QCS currently funds the Elders Visitation Program which supports Elders from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities having regular access to correctional centres to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners. From 1 July 2016, QCS also implemented a service to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander chaplains having regular access to correctional centres for both cultural and religious support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners (Department of Justice and Attorney-General).
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53. **Support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Optimal Health Project. The Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland (ADCQ) is working with health stakeholders in Cairns to identify and address barriers to closing the gap on health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.** The project is being implemented in the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service region. The ADCQ contributes to the project by providing expertise about discrimination, inclusion and diversity as well as facilitating discussions between stakeholder groups. As a result of the project, a process has commenced to establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Engagement Committee to advise the Board of the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service. The steps being taken as part of the project include improving the cultural competence of staff (Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland).
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54. **Continue to provide mens support services.** Mens services support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men affected by alcohol and domestic violence to improve the safety and wellbeing of their families and communities and enhance their health and personal wellbeing (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services).
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55. **Continue to fund public intoxication and diversion services.** Diversion services (Diversion Centre, Cell Visitor and Community Patrols) were established as a result of the *Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody*. Services target Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are homeless and have complex health issues (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services).
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56. **Support women to participate in male dominated industries.** Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services will sponsor the engagement of at least one Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander woman in the Queensland Resources Council/Women in Mining and Resources Mentoring Program (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services).
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57. **Provide funding and program support for a scholarship scheme for up to 100 young women leaving child protection care, including young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to support their access to higher education** (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services).
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58. **Support access to Vocational Education and Training by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders through the VET Investment Plan.** The VET Investment Plan contains various programs and subsidies targeted to all Queenslanders. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are a priority cohort under the Plan, which provides:
- subsidies paid at a higher (concessional) rate for qualifications funded under the Certificate 3 Guarantee and Higher Level Skills programs;
 - a location loading, in addition to eligible training subsidies, to support the costs of training delivered in Cape York and Torres Strait communities;
 - full subsidy (100 per cent) for the cost of training delivered under the User Choice program for eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander apprentices and trainees;
 - additional tailored support and assistance to participate in training and achieve training and employment outcomes funded under the Indigenous VET partnership with Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships; and
 - the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative, which supports Queenslanders who are under-utilised or under-employed in the labour market, as well as building the skills of young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with disability, mature-age job seekers, women re-entering the workforce, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds into work through a suite of targeted skills and training programs (Department of Education and Training).
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59. **Provide additional psychological and other supports to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students.** In addition to existing school-based allied health services, allied health specialists will deliver Psychology, Clinical Psychology, Occupational Therapy and Speech Pathology services to identify and treat behavioural and learning issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Schools include: Doomadgee State School, Kowanyama State School, Lockhart River State School and Northern Peninsula Area College (Department of Education and Training).
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60. **Better link autism support services for children and young people through the Department of Education and Training's Autism Hub.** The Autism Hub is working closely with Autism Queensland to link with their Early Intervention Indigenous Liaison Officers and tailor engagement strategies for Indigenous families for these services (Department of Education and Training).

61. **Implement Deadly Kids, Deadly Futures: Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Ear and Hearing Health Framework 2016–2026.** Deadly Kids, Deadly Futures outlines the commitment of the Queensland Government, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled health sector and other government and non-government service partners to prevent and manage the impacts of middle ear disease for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people across the health, early childhood and education sectors (Department of Education and Training).

62. **Support Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders to register their births.** A birth certificate is an important document and is needed for many reasons such as getting a drivers licence. DATSIP provides evidence to the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages to assist with the retrospective registration of births enabling birth certificates to be provided (Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships).

What we will continue to do

Early Action 2015–17

Support the mental health and wellbeing of children in out-of-home care over their life course by:

- implementing comprehensive health and developmental assessments to identify and develop responses to children and young people's physical and mental health and wellbeing needs
- improving priority access to health care services for young people who are leaving, or have left, the care system (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services).

Engage with young people and youth services to establish whole-of-government and community priorities to improve social and economic opportunities for young Queenslanders (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services).

Fund and coordinate actions to build individual and community resilience by delivering arts and cultural services to identified communities at risk, such as regional and remote Queenslanders, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse communities and young people (Arts Queensland).

Support wellbeing centres in Aurukun, Coen, Hopevale and Mossman Gorge which provide a range of social and emotional wellbeing services (Queensland Health).

Suicide Prevention Plan 2015–17

Provide mental health training for school staff to identify individuals at risk and respond appropriately, including utilising school-based resources such as youth support coordinators, school nurses and Indigenous community liaison officers. This work is supported by existing state-wide departmental procedures and guidelines including those that focus specifically on suicide prevention, intervention and post-intervention support (Department of Education and Training).

Scope current service models, barriers for accessing services and options for improvement, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people at risk of suicide within the Townsville region. This will particularly focus on the need for after-hours support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people who are at imminent risk of harm, in consultation with local service providers and community representatives (Queensland Mental Health Commission).

Develop and implement a Data and Information Sharing Network to enhance the collection, analysis and dissemination of suicide mortality and attempt data. This includes developing an approach that builds upon existing data collection systems such as the Queensland Suicide Register. There will also be a specified focus on improved data collection for those populations that continue to experience higher rates of suicide including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (Queensland Mental Health Commission).

Provide training, support and resources to assist staff, as well as foster and kinship carers, to understand and respond to the mental health needs of children and young people (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services).

Alcohol and Other Drugs Plan 2015–17

Continue to invest in public intoxication services to respond to adults affected by alcohol, targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services will continue to invest \$14.4 million in 2015–16 for services which provide immediate and ongoing support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women affected by alcohol, and are either in police custody or able to be diverted from police custody (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services).

Increase access to alcohol and other drug treatment and support services by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. Approximately \$1 million over two years to June 2017 through the Indigenous Youth Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Program, for two non-government organisations to provide inreach/outreach alcohol and other drug treatment services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people aged 12–17 years with substance misuse problems in Central Queensland and the Brisbane local government area. Funding primarily targets the priority area of “Healthy Transition to Adulthood” under The National Partnership Agreement on *Closing the Gap in Indigenous Health Outcomes* (Queensland Health).

Continue to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander discrete communities to improve the effectiveness of Alcohol Management Plans (AMPs) and reduce sly grog in the communities. AMPs are a combination of supply reduction and demand reduction strategies. Supply reduction strategies implemented as part of AMPs include alcohol restrictions, dry place declarations, and home brew bans. There is also a communication strategy providing education on the harmful effects of home brew and sly grog and promoting a hotline. Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships is partnering with Department of Justice and Attorney-General on a strategy to promote dry place declarations using a fact sheet, website and regional strategy (Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships).

Monitoring and reporting

Improving social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders will take time. To ensure that outcomes are achieved, the implementation of this Action Plan will be monitored and reported annually by the Commission as part of the Strategic Plan's Annual Implementation Report, scheduled for public release each December. The first report outlining implementation of this Action Plan will be publicly released in December 2017.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders indicated during community forums that data about their lives are overly collected and reported. However, there was also a call for greater accountability and for meaningful and sustained outcomes to be achieved. With this in mind, the Commission will use already available data to monitor levels of social and emotional wellbeing based on the National Social Survey and other sources.

Data reported in the *National Social Survey* every seven years will form a baseline for improved social and emotional wellbeing including survey results regarding:

- life satisfaction
- cultural safety through survey results relating to levels of unfair treatment and avoidance of situations due to past unfair treatment
- cultural identity and connections through survey results on identification with a cultural group, participating in cultural activities and speaking an Australian Indigenous language.

As the next *National Social Survey* is not due to be conducted until 2021, the Commission will also monitor and report other outcomes directly related to this Action Plan, when relevant data becomes available including:

- psychological distress
- suicide rates
- levels of alcohol and other drug use including risky alcohol consumption
- educational attainment
- employment
- child protection orders and children in out of home care
- incarceration rates
- victimisation rates.

Governance

The Reference Group established to support the Action Plan's development will continue with a new role focused on monitoring the Action Plan's implementation through regular reports from agencies, and identifying emerging issues and good practice. The Reference Group will meet twice per year. It will be convened by the Commission and include representatives from:

- Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
- Queensland Health
- Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services
- Department of Education and Training
- Department of Justice and Attorney-General
- Queensland's Primary Health Networks
- Representatives from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander non-government organisations
- Members of the Queensland Mental Health and Drug Advisory Council.

The Commission will also host two Roundtables during the life of this Action Plan to seek the views of community members and leaders.

Continuing reform

This Action Plan is one of many steps that need to be taken to support social and emotional wellbeing. It is important that improvements and reforms continue over time and are able to adjust to changing circumstances and need.

To ensure that progress continues to be made this Action Plan will be in place for 18 months and reviewed by the Queensland Mental Health Commission after 12 months. Actions may be implemented over a longer period. This will provide flexibility to adjust to new or emerging issues and take into account progress being made at both the State and national level, as well as the views of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders, the Roundtables, the Reference Group and the Queensland Mental Health and Drug Advisory Council.

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Translation

The Queensland Government is committed to providing accessible services to Queenslanders from all culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. If you have difficulty in understanding the Action Plan, you can contact us on **1300 855 945** and we will arrange an interpreter to effectively communicate the report to you.



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Published by the Queensland Mental Health Commission, 2016

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