



## Media release

6 December 2019

### Improving digital health literacy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders people

The Australian Digital Health Agency met with representatives from state and territory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health services on 4 December to support improvements in digital health literacy.

The national partnership of Affiliates meets quarterly to progress strategic digital health priorities that contribute to Closing The Gap.

This meeting was held in Tasmania and was hosted by the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre, and was attended by representatives from:

- Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre (TAC)
- Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO)
- Aboriginal Health Council of SA (AHCSA)
- Aboriginal Health Council of WA (AHCWA)
- Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC)
- Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance NT (AMSANT)
- Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health and Community Services (WNAHCS)
- Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW (AH&MRC)
- National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO)

Each jurisdiction showcased the progress of their local initiatives and received an update on the Agency's 2020 community engagement work.

Heather Sculthorpe, CEO of the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre, said "It's vital that Aboriginal health services are involved in the work of the Digital Health Agency as our holistic approach to the health of our people ensures those who will benefit most from engaging with digital health have the information to enable them to do so."

Professor Meredith Makeham, Chief Medical Adviser for the Australian Digital Health Agency, said "Australians living outside of cities experience lower quality health outcomes. Digital health initiatives such as the My Health Record can help bridge the health care gaps for people living in regional and remote areas."

"It is essential that the Agency hear from and work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health services."

"Their frontline work to improve health care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders people is integral to ensuring their communities can access and benefit from digital health technologies and services," Professor Makeham said.

**ENDS**

#### Media contact

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### **About the Australian Digital Health Agency**

The Agency is tasked with improving health outcomes for all Australians through the delivery of digital healthcare systems, and implementing [Australia's National Digital Health Strategy](#) – *Safe, Seamless, and Secure: evolving health and care to meet the needs of modern Australia* in collaboration with partners across the community. The Agency is the System Operator of [My Health Record](#), and provides leadership, coordination, and delivery of a collaborative and innovative approach to utilising technology to support and enhance a clinically safe and connected national health system. These improvements will give individuals more control of their health and their health information, and support healthcare providers to deliver informed healthcare through access to current clinical and treatment information. Further information: [www.digitalhealth.gov.au](http://www.digitalhealth.gov.au).