



Consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and representative organisations

This guideline is designed to outline a set of principles to assist the ANMF elected officers and staff to work in a positive and respectful way with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The guideline acknowledges the importance of autonomous decision-making of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and assists ANMF staff, elected officers and representatives to consult effectively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and representative organisations.

The Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation recommends the adoption of the following principles:

1. Acknowledgement

It is common practice within the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (ANMF) to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land at public events or federal office activities. This involves recognising local custodianship through an official acknowledgment at any event where possible. Leaders from local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander organisations should be invited to give a welcome to country at formal events.

2. Respect

Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and knowledge is shown through a commitment to being aware and 'culturally safe' with regard for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols. This also means working in a way that demonstrates an understanding of the unique perspective and history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It involves understanding that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture may require certain protocols, and that advice should be sought about the appropriate protocol/s in various circumstances.

3. Consultation

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should be consulted and their advice sought over issues that affect them directly or indirectly. The views of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples need to be sought in the development of ANMF policy or position statements on issues affecting them. Permission should be gained from the custodians of the country where projects involving ANMF are taking place. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should be consulted about the use and representation of their heritage.

4. Partnerships

Partnerships between ANMF and organisations representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are important and should be established wherever possible. The ANMF will continue to work closely with the Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives (CATSINaM).¹

5. Autonomy

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the right to self-determination in their choices about health and wellbeing. In order to make informed decisions regarding health, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should be given the information they require in a culturally safe and culturally sensitive manner, and with respect for their decisions.

6. Attribution

The unique perspectives and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples must be respected and attribution provided during consultation and in the development of materials. Representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in materials may affect perception and perpetuate negative



stereotypes. Cultural awareness and consultation is essential to understanding these sensitivities and accurately reflecting the unique perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples must be given appropriate acknowledgment for their role in the development and use of their own materials.

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Reference

1. Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives (CATSINaM). 2014. Cultural Safety Position Statement. Available at: <https://www.catsinam.org.au/static/uploads/files/cultural-safety-endorsed-march-2014-wfginzphsxbz.pdf>