

**STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT FOR  
BUILDING AND MAINTAINING IMPROVED AND ONGOING PARTNERSHIPS**

**BETWEEN**

**THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH &  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
SOUTHERN METROPOLITAIN  
REGION**

**AND**

**ABORIGINAL ORGANISATIONS AND COMMUNITY  
ACROSS  
THE SOUTHERN METROPOLITAIN  
REGION**

**Objective/Purpose:**

The Department Health and the Department of Human Services and organisations participating in the SMR Closing the Gap Committee acknowledge and recognise the importance of Aboriginal\* culture as fundamental to their identity and developing sense of self-worth

This agreement commits the parties to work together to maintain and build new and just relationships between local Aboriginal communities, the Department of Health, the Department of Human Services and the other signatories to this Statement of Commitment.

This partnership framework aims to enhance negotiated outcomes that protects and respects the rights of Aboriginal people and to significantly improve the health and social wellbeing of all Aboriginal people.

The shared objective is to negotiate a new approach towards local Aboriginal affairs, policy, funding and administration.

**In honouring this statement, the Departments make a commitment to an ongoing process that will:**

Provide a holistic community centred approach, locally and regionally driven that includes a 'ground up' process for planning and priority setting;

The development of partnerships within and across Aboriginal services, communities and government, which foster prevention initiatives;

Joint establishment of an agreed framework for joint planning across government agencies and sectors to promote community well being;

Creating funding frameworks which are accountable but flexible in accommodating local need;

Engaging in a process of community participation that actively engages and supports community leaders and stakeholders at the local level;

Investing in the development of culturally appropriate and evidence-based prevention resources which can be implemented on an Aboriginal population-wide basis;

Supporting all prevention responses through evaluation;

Ensuring ongoing training and development of Aboriginal personnel

**Undertaking:**

Each of us in our own way will strive to build on the words of the national apology to the people of Australia with actions aimed at moving forward together to share responsibility for the future and establish a sound foundation for self determination and reconciliation.

Therefore we the undersigned commit ourselves to this partnership process and to promoting the rights and wellbeing of Aboriginal people.

*\* In this document, the word "Aboriginal" refers to the Aboriginal community and includes Torres Strait Islander people.*