

# Making Tracks towards health equity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples—working together to achieve life expectancy parity by 2031

## Driving health equity across the health system and addressing the social and cultural determinants of health... future reforms

A wide range of ideas and proposals to achieve health equity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, address the social and cultural determinants of health and eliminate racism are being explored. Similar to the 16 socio-economic targets agreed in the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap* (2020), some of these ideas extend beyond the traditional remit of the health system.

The ideas outlined have come from many different sources including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health leaders in the public health sector and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Health Sector, various committees and governance groups within Queensland Health including the First Nations Health Improvement Advisory Committee, commissioned research and insights shared during regional visits conducted by the Chief Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Officer. **They are not government policy.**

The various reform proposals have been grouped into six themes and directly link to the **First Nations health equity working definition** and the **First Nations health equity design principles** described in Fact Sheet 1.

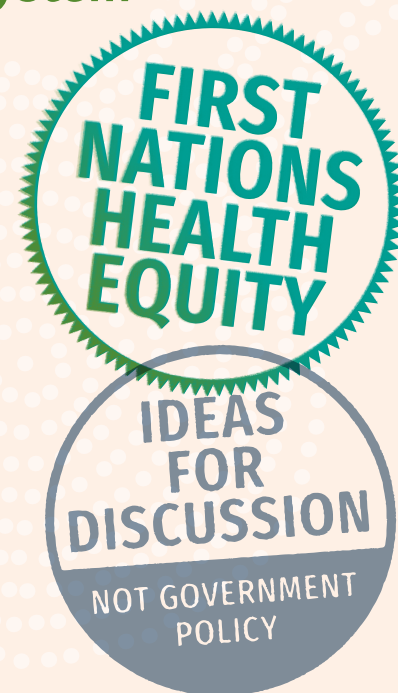
The six themes and 20 proposals are ideas to start a conversation about their relevancy and appropriateness,

The six themes are:

1. **Representation and Voice**
2. **Building First Nations health system leadership and workforce**
3. **Implementing integrated healthcare models and pathways to improve the patient journey and decrease demand on hospitals**
4. **Embedding cultural determinants into patient safety and quality**
5. **Driving state and national health funding reforms**
6. **Addressing the social determinants of health and eliminating racism.**

and to inspire other bold, innovative and progressive ideas about practical steps that can be undertaken to reform the health system and address the social determinants of health to achieve health equity.

The proposals range from systemic level reforms and whole-of-government activity to service improvements and practice changes, and everything in-between (please read pages 35 to 43 in the discussion paper for detailed information about each of the reform proposals).



THEME 1:

### Representation and Voice

1. Establish a First Nations Health Board.

THEME 2:

### Building First Nations health system leadership and workforce

2. Increase Queensland Health's First Nations employment targets commensurate to local population or hospital presentation and user rates (whichever is greater).
3. Legislate the responsibilities of the Chief Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer in the *Hospital and Health Board Act 2011*.

4. Release a biennial First Nations health equity report tabled at Parliament by the Chief Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Officer.
5. Appoint a Deputy Chief Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Officer.
6. Introduce First Nations special measures for priority consideration and preference selection in public health sector recruitment.
7. Create a capability pipeline for future First Nations Hospital and Health Service board members.

THEME 3:

**Implementing integrated healthcare models and pathways to improve the patient journey and decrease demand on hospitals**

8. Establish regional coordination care hubs and integrated care pathways.
9. Establish regional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community Controlled Health Organisations.
10. Implement funding incentives to address specific First Nations equity issues.

THEME 4:

**Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural determinants into patient safety and quality**

11. Embed cultural capability into the *Clinical Services Capability Framework*.
12. Refresh the Queensland Health *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Framework 2010–2033*.
13. Undertake annual independent institutional racism assessments across Queensland Health.
14. Amend birth notifications to acknowledge birth parents' connection to country or language groups.
15. Strengthen the functions of other health statutory authorities to drive First Nations health equity.

THEME 5:

**Driving state and national health funding reforms**

16. Factor equity into existing Queensland Health funding models.
17. Utilise the Health Equity Strategies as future health investment plans.

THEME 6:

**Addressing the social determinants of health and eliminating racism**

18. Establish pilot 'Marmot city regions' across Queensland.
19. Set statewide regional Queensland Health procurement targets to purchase goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned and operated businesses.
20. Drive an anti-racism strategy across the health system.



**Feedback questions:**

1. What are the top three changes, improvements or reforms that could contribute to improving the broader social determinants of health and achieving health equity?
2. What other health system changes, improvements and reforms are needed to achieve health equity with First Nations peoples?
3. How can the health system take a local leadership role in improving the broader social determinants of health?
4. Are 'Marmot cities' a feasible approach for local communities to tackle long-term economic and social inequities, and improve the social determinants of health?