Aboriginal Workforce Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of the *Aboriginal Workforce Policy (Policy)* is to increase representation of Aboriginal people at all levels of the workforce to improve Aboriginal health outcomes and achieve the WA Public Sector Commission’s Aboriginal employment target of 3.2 per cent.

The Policy supports the *WA Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Framework 2015-2030* strategic direction to have a strong, skilled and growing Aboriginal health workforce and aligns to the *WA Health Aboriginal Workforce Strategy 2014-2024* (Strategy). The Strategy highlights a set of guiding principles and key priority areas that underpin our approach to developing our Aboriginal workforce.

The Policy reflects the broader commitment of the WA health system to promote equity and diversity in its workforce and address Aboriginal people as a priority diversity group in accordance with the *WA Health Equity and Diversity Strategy 2015-2020*.

Growing the Aboriginal workforce is essential for the WA health system to deliver culturally safe and responsive health services. Aboriginal employees bring a diverse range of skills to the health sector including a cultural perspective, the ability to break down barriers and provide culturally appropriate care for Aboriginal Western Australians.

The Policy specifies the mandatory policy requirements that Health Service Providers must comply with to attract, recruit and retain Aboriginal people and increase the number of Aboriginal employees at all levels including clinical, non-clinical and leadership roles.

This Policy is a mandatory requirement under the *Employment Policy Framework* issued pursuant to section 26(2)(c),(d) and (f) of the *Health Services Act 2016*.

This Policy supersedes Operational Directive 0581/14, *WA Health Aboriginal Workforce Policy*.

2. Applicability

This Policy is applicable to all Health Service Providers unless specified as an exemption under Section 3 Policy requirements.
3. Policy requirements

Health Service Providers are required to implement the following strategies to strengthen and grow the Aboriginal workforce. Implementation of the strategies is based on the workforce development needs of the Health Service Provider.

1. Apply Section 51 of the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 to recruitment processes.
2. Apply Section 50d of the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 when Aboriginality is a genuine occupation requirement for the position.
3. Establish employment pathways for Aboriginal people, including but not limited to Aboriginal cadetships, internships, graduate programs and/or traineeships.
4. Offer employment opportunities to Aboriginal cadets, interns, graduates and/or trainees who complete an Aboriginal employment program, where possible.
5. Offer graduate positions to applicant Aboriginal nurse and midwife graduates eligible for registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia by applying Section 51 of the Equal Opportunity Act 1984.
6. Offer junior medical officer positions to applicant Aboriginal medical graduates.

Exemption

Health Support Services is not required to implement strategies 5, 6 and 7 and PathWest is not required to implement strategies 5 and 6.

Reporting

Health Service Providers are required to complete a report for the previous financial year using the Aboriginal Workforce Policy Report Template (the Report) provided in Section 5 Related documents. The Report must list the actions taken to address the strategies and indicate the results achieved against the specified measures.

Health Service Providers must consult with their Aboriginal Health Strategy unit in the development of the Report, where applicable.

The Report is to be endorsed by the Health Service Provider Board Chair or the Chief Executive (for chief executive governed Health Service Providers).

The endorsed Report needs to be submitted to the Assistant Director General, Public and Aboriginal Health Division at the Department of Health by 31 August each year via aboriginal.health@health.wa.gov.au.

4. Compliance monitoring

Health Service Providers are responsible for complying with this Policy.

Policy compliance will be monitored by the System Manager through analysis of the completed Aboriginal Workforce Policy Report received for the previous financial year.

Ensure you have the latest version from the Policy Frameworks website.
The System Manager may request further information from Health Service Providers in order to evaluate the effectiveness of this Policy. This information may include Aboriginal workforce strategies provided in the endorsed Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Policy Action Plans.

5. Related documents

The following documents are mandatory pursuant to this Policy:

- Aboriginal Workforce Policy Report Template

6. Supporting information

The following information is not mandatory but informs and/or supports the implementation of this Policy:

- WA Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Framework 2015-2030
- WA Health Aboriginal Workforce Strategy 2014-2024
- WA Health Equity and Diversity Strategy 2015-2020
- Public Sector Commission’s Attract, appoint and advance: An employment strategy for Aboriginal people
- Australian Government Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework 2016-2023
- Overview of Section 51 Recruitment
- Recruitment, Selection and Appointment Policy and Procedure

7. Definitions

The following definitions are relevant to this Policy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sections 50(d) and 51 of the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (Act)</td>
<td>Specific sections of the Act to provide genuine occupational qualification and measures intended to achieve equality:</td>
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<tr>
<td>50(d) Genuine occupational qualifications</td>
<td>Nothing in this Part applies to or in respect of any work or employment where that work or employment involves any one or more of the following - (d) providing persons of a particular race with services for the purpose of promoting their welfare where those services can most effectively be provided by a person of the same race.</td>
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51. Measures intended to achieve equality

Nothing in Division 2 or 3 renders it unlawful to do an act a purpose of which is -

(a) to ensure that persons of a particular race have equal opportunities with other persons in circumstances in relation to which provision is made by this Act; or

(b) to afford persons of a particular race access to facilities, services or opportunities to meet their special needs in relation to employment, education, training or welfare, or any ancillary benefits.

Aboriginal

Within Western Australia, the term Aboriginal is used in preference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, in recognition that Aboriginal people are the original inhabitants of Western Australia. No disrespect is intended to our Torres Strait Islander colleagues and community.

8. Policy contact

Enquiries relating to this Policy may be directed to:

Title:        Director
Directorate:  Aboriginal Health Policy Directorate
Email:        aboriginal.health@health.wa.gov.au

9. Document control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
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<th>Effective from</th>
<th>Review date</th>
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<td>29 May 2019</td>
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10. Approval

| Approval by                                      | Dr David Russell-Weisz, Director General, Department of Health |
| Approval date                                    | 13 November 2018                                              |