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Meeting and Exceeding Cultural Safety in the Workplace

Resources Toolkit

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Please note: this document contains images of people. All necessary permissions have been obtained, and our best efforts have been made to ensure it does not contain images of people recently passed, however please be warned that this may be a possibility.

Introduction

PricewaterhouseCoopers Indigenous Consulting (PIC) was engaged by the Office of Disability (OoD) and Department of Health (DoH) Northern Territory (NT) to deliver a series of workshops and to develop a resource toolkit for mainstream disability service providers. The purpose of this engagement was to raise awareness and increase understanding of cultural safety, security and competence.

As a part of the transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) service providers were required for the first time to become accredited using the *Northern Territory Quality and Safeguarding Framework*. ([Link to Quality and Safeguarding Framework](#)). The NT accreditation scheme places particular emphasis on culture through *Domain 5 Cultural Safety, Security and Competency*. This document provides some recommended resources for service providers and includes some good practice examples shared through the workshops held in all regional centres of the NT. A companion document summarises the workshop approach and key learnings.

PIC worked with the OoD as an Implementation Partner to deliver a number of projects to support the role out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in the NT. This comprised Community Planning across all regions, facilitating an Innovation Grants Program and activities to engage Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) to encourage their participation in the disability sector. Work for all projects was undertaken between April 2017 through to July 2018.

The Aboriginal population of the Northern Territory accounts for about one third of the population, a proportion 10 times higher than the national average. There have been long standing challenges for service provision to Aboriginal people with disabilities in remote communities, with distance, climate, culture, and language impacting the quality, frequency, certainty and cost of service delivery, and the achievement of positive outcomes for those most in need. A recently released publication by the First Peoples Disability Network estimates that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Australians have 2.1 times the likelihood of experiencing severe and profound disability compared to other Australians. The resources selected reflect the need for disability service providers in the NT to develop a culturally safe workplace so that their clients can receive person centred care.

Cross cultural connection and training



Disability service providers should connect with local Traditional Owners/Elders, Aboriginal Land Councils and ACCOs to seek their guidance about who are the appropriate people to deliver cross cultural training in their particular location. There are numerous cultural awareness programs and facilitators available but the best outcomes are delivered where long term relationships are built. Where national programs are used by the disability service provider these are best contextualized at the local level.

Some key suggestions:

- Use these Traditional Owners/Elders, Land Councils and ACCOs to help build an Aboriginal voice in your service. These Aboriginal organisations and individuals can help you identify appropriate cultural advisors.
- Employ a Cultural Adviser who can provide advice to the Board and Executive Team on a part time basis.
- Advertise and connect individually with identified Aboriginal people to fill Board positions. Think outside the box, including approaching young people who may benefit from the experience and exposure.
- Establish a formal relationship with the Aboriginal Interpreter Service and assist staff to learn some key words for the major language groups you serve.
- In many cases clients may come from a range of communities so researching their backgrounds and reaching out to family and community groups is vital and organisations within their community.



Photo credit: MJD Foundation used with permission. A culturally safe environment is built on awareness and respect and can fundamentally change how services are shaped and delivered.

Selection of cultural resources

PIC compiled the following selection of useful cultural resources for the 'Meeting and Exceeding Cultural Safety in the Workplace' workshops as a starting point for disability service providers. This selection includes a mix of guidance materials, videos, documentaries and Northern Territory based examples of good 'two way' practice.

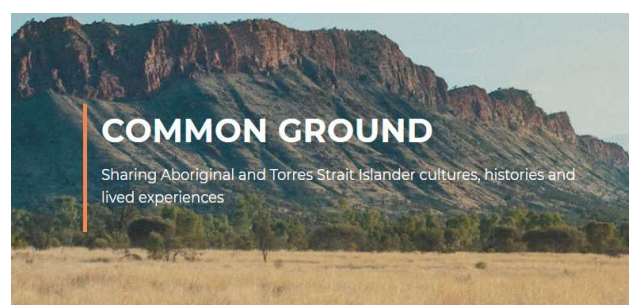
Reconciliation Australia has supported countless organisations to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) framework to help develop practical actions that contribute to reconciliation for the organisation internally and in the community in which it operates. RAPs are designed to support organisations' business plan and contribute to developing respectful and meaningful relationships and opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

(<https://www.reconciliation.org.au/resources/>)



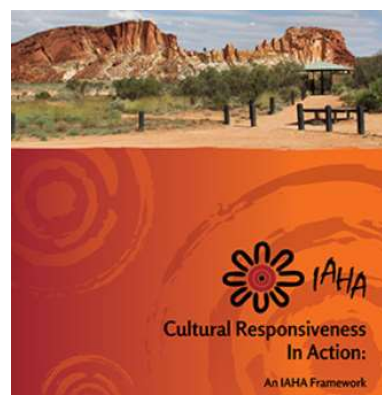
Common Ground is an online cultural awareness resource with the purpose of providing people with the opportunity to build foundational level knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. Common Ground's mission is to be an online resource to access content but also a place where people wanting to learn more can connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to enhance their cultural understanding.

(<https://www.commonground.org.au/>)



Indigenous Allied Health Australia has developed a *Cultural Responsiveness In Action Framework* to help organisations who have identified the need for 'practical strategies to build cultural safety using strengths-based and action-oriented approaches'. The framework aims to provide guidance on what organisations need to know and do, in order to improve their capability to meet the health and wellbeing needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

(<http://iaha.com.au/policy/cultural-responsiveness/>)



Selection of cultural resources

SBS Series, First Australians is a documentary series that explores the history of the *First Australians* from the perspective of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The documentary explores true stories and events across seven different States and Territories. This online resource provides an insight into some of the most traumatic policies and decision making of past Australian States and Territory governments which have been the cause of intergenerational trauma experienced in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

[SBS First Australians](#)



MJD Foundation- Disability Service Delivery Model 2018

This paper provides a review of the MJD Foundation's disability service delivery model: contrast and comparison to traditional disability service models.

MJD Foundation is a specialist disability support organisation operating across remote Northern Australia. The bi-cultural service model known as 'Two Ways' puts the clients as the driver of the service. The report shares some important learnings and is an inspiring read regarding how services can be delivered differently in remote Australia.

[MJD Foundation](#)



Bicultural Practice in the Northern Territory Children and Families Sector: Practitioners' reflections of working two-ways. 2013

This collaborative project between the Centre for Child Development and Education at Menzies and Strong Aboriginal Families, Together the NT peak body for children, youth and families outlines a two-way practice framework that can be used by a range of government and non government organisations. It outlines how developing effective working partnerships involves understanding the process of developing cross cultural competence as a two way street

[Menzies School of Health](#)



Selection of cultural resources

SBS Cultural Competence Program is an online training resource that aims to develop organisations in order to maximize the benefits and opportunities of cultural diversity in the workplace, with programs designed for businesses and for individuals. A common theme across all the workshops was that the mainstream service provider workforce is very diverse in its cultural make up. This is a online tool designed to help train people in cultural competence, diversity and inclusion.

(<http://cultural-competence.com.au/>)

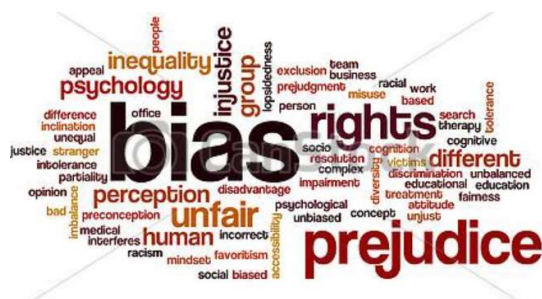


Selection of videos on Unconscious Bias:

[What is Unconscious Bias](#)

[Beyond Blue: The Invisible Discriminator](#)

[Google, Unconscious Bias@Work - Making the Unconscious Conscious](#)



Good practice examples from the NT

A key outcome of the workshops was the opportunity to share examples of good practice that contribute towards a culturally inclusive workplace. Disability service providers, during the workshops, shared stories and examples of how they are connecting into the local Aboriginal community and ways they are maintaining Aboriginal clients' connection to their family, culture and community.

Organise trips to collect bush medicine and visit country

What: Day visits to country to engage in traditional practices

Purpose: Helps people to remain connected to their country and provides opportunities for them to share knowledge. It empowers the client and allows the service provider to learn more about the client and Aboriginal culture

Credit – ARRCs Tennant Creek

Use technology to reconnect with family and country

What: Utilizing modern technology and 'apps' to connect people back to their culture, family and community. For example, Facebook, Skype or a digital photo frame with pictures of country and family

Purpose: Maintaining a connection to culture, family and community

Credit – Darwin Workshop



Investing time in building relationships between staff and clients is very important. Photo credit MJD Foundation used with permission.

Put up a map... where in the world do we come from....

What: Have a map of the world displayed with pins showing where clients and staff come from and host a multi-cultural morning tea

Purpose: To highlight the organisation's diversity and give people something to connect with and discuss about each other

Credit – Darwin Workshop

Use Aboriginal multi-media in common areas

What: Playing NITV, Imparja TV or Aboriginal radio channels like Larrakia or CAAMA radio

Purpose: Used when Aboriginal clients are in the TV room using these platforms, those clients can engage and connect with culturally relevant stories and music

Credit – ARRCs Tennant Creek

Pay for a language allowance

What: Employ a local Aboriginal community member who can come in for a few hours a week and converse in Aboriginal language with residents who also can speak the same Aboriginal language.

Purpose: Provides the opportunity for residents to communicate in their native tongue and will build better communication with clients

Credit – Darwin Workshop

Good practice examples from the NT

Build a culturally inclusive workplace

What: Include cultural advisors in case reviews of difficult/complex/challenging clients so staff develop a deeper understanding of cultural issues

Purpose: To develop staff's knowledge of cultural practices and issues that may impact on delivery of care

Credit – Katherine workshop

Learn some key words of our participants' languages

What: Learn a few key words in the local and Aboriginal languages of clients

Purpose: This demonstrates to clients that people respect their culture and are willing to learn and engage

Credit – Alice Springs workshop

Create a 10 minute activity box

What: A box of activity cards that staff can use to engage clients, for example calling and connecting to family on the phone. The cards are self explanatory and include the purpose of each activity written on the back having set questions or that clients can interact and engage in

Purpose: Guided enrichment activities that can be used by staff or volunteers when there are small windows of opportunity

Credit – ARRCs Alice Springs

Invite singers and entertainers

What: Singers, choirs, schools, service groups and churches are often willing to visit and perform for residents. Offer use of activity rooms to community groups in exchange for cultural programs.

Purpose: Connecting people with their heritage and providing entertainment

Credit – ARRCs Alice Springs

Build a fire pit

What: Creating a space where people can sit and light a fire

Purpose: It allows Aboriginal residents the opportunity to continue to engage in activities that they enjoy and cook traditional foods like fish or kangaroo tails on the fire

Credit – Calvary Care Tiwi Islands



Photo credit PIC. The fire-pit is used regularly by residents at the Aged Care Centre on Tiwi.

Good practice examples from the NT

Create internships and holiday work opportunities

What: Offer holiday internships to local or visiting university students to undertake small projects. Relationships can be built with universities or through local schools and family networks. This could be a way of attracting skilled talent and giving an opportunity for young people to engage in practical hands on work experience

Purpose: To bring additional resources into an organisation to undertake key projects

Credit – Alice Springs Workshop

Have a fridge and freezer made available for clients to use to store bush foods

What: Have a fridge and freezer made available to clients for them to store traditional foods such as fish, kangaroo tails or goannas to cook on the fire pit

Purpose: This allows people to continue to practice and engage in their traditional culture but cooking the foods they like and makes them feel respected and valued

Credit – Calvary Care Tiwi Islands

Provide local Aboriginal people with employment opportunities

What: Provide opportunities for local Aboriginal people to try the work environment and use flexible working arrangements tailored to the individual

Purpose: To have a workforce that reflects your client group is the ideal outcome

Credit – ARRCs Alice Springs

Create a Diversity Coordinator role

What: Formally identify a position (even in a part time capacity) that builds cultural connections and understanding within the organisation

Purpose: This role can work to build cultural diversity within the workplace and can assist in implementing RAPs and activities to build cross cultural capacity

Credit – Darwin Workshop

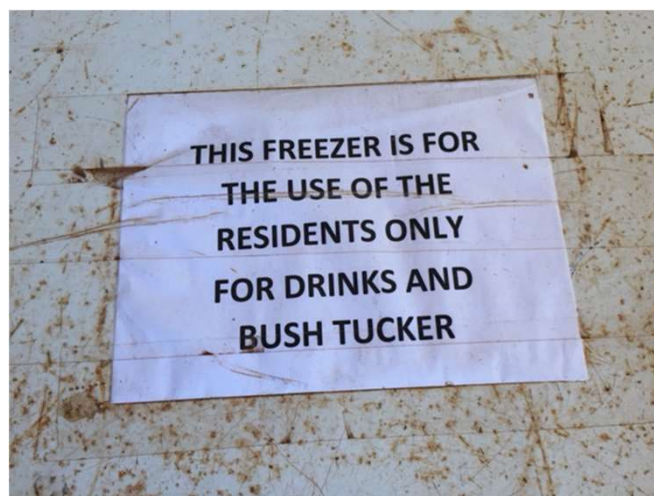


Photo credit: PIC Creating an environment that helps clients maintain traditional activities

Organise community visits and reverse respite

What: Coordinating visits and working with partner organisations to take people home for visits to their community or country

Purpose: Keep people connected to their country and family

Credit – ARRCs Tennant Creek

Good practice examples from the NT

Commission some artwork

What: Commission art work through an Art's Centre or family member or display photography from clients' home communities

Purpose: Creates employment and helps client to feel more at home in a residential facility

Credit – Alice Workshop

Have some cultural conversations

What: Invite a knowledgeable Aboriginal elder to meet with key staff over coffee and cake in an informal arrangement so they can share knowledge and staff can build a relationship where they can ask questions

Purpose: Build rapport and cross cultural understanding

Credit – Darwin Workshop

Create meal plans and activity plans with pictures

What: Developing meal and activities plans using visuals

Purpose: This engages clients with their nutritional program and the activities planned for the week. This communication methods ensures all clients can understand what is being communicated to them

Credit – ARRCs Tennant Creek

Celebrate other multi-cultural and Aboriginal significant events

What: Learning about the different cultures of all people in the organisation and creating a culturally inclusive workplace through a calendar of multi cultural events.

Purpose: Builds a respectful culture within the organisation and demonstrates they value diversity in the workplace. Generally gets people learning about one another

Credit – Darwin Workshop

	 						
	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Breakfast	Porridge, Baked Beans, Toast	Weetbix, Toast, Strawberry	Porridge, Toast, Spaghetti	Weetbix, Toast, Fruit, Spag, Yoghurt	Porridge, Bacon & Eggs, Toast	Weetbix, Toast	Scrambled Eggs, Toast
Morning Tea	Fresh Fruits, Yoghurt	Yoghurt	Scones & Jam	Fresh Fruit	Biscuit or Fresh Fruit	Muffins	Cake
Lunch	Sausages & Vegetables	Cottage Pie, Vegetables	Lamb, Chump, Chops, Vegetables	Roast, Chicken, Vegetables	Beef, Strogan, Vegetables	Beef Chow Mein	Diced Lamb Casserole
Afternoon Tea	Fresh Fruit	Fresh Fruit	Fresh Fruit	Fresh Fruit	Fresh Fruit	Fresh Fruit	Fresh Fruit
Dinner	On Tail, Bread & Butter	Chicken wings, Damper, Impossible Pie	Rib Bone	Egg Ham & vegetable bake	Cooktail Frankfurts, Bread & butter, Mousse	Pies, Bed & Butter, Casserole	Pizza Fingers, Casserole & Veg for Vitas, Fruit
Supper	Corn Bread	Pikelets	Raisin Bread	Cake	Muffins	Scones with jam	Cake

Using pictures is helpful to communicate with clients who may not be literate in English.
Photo credit: ARRCs used with permission.