

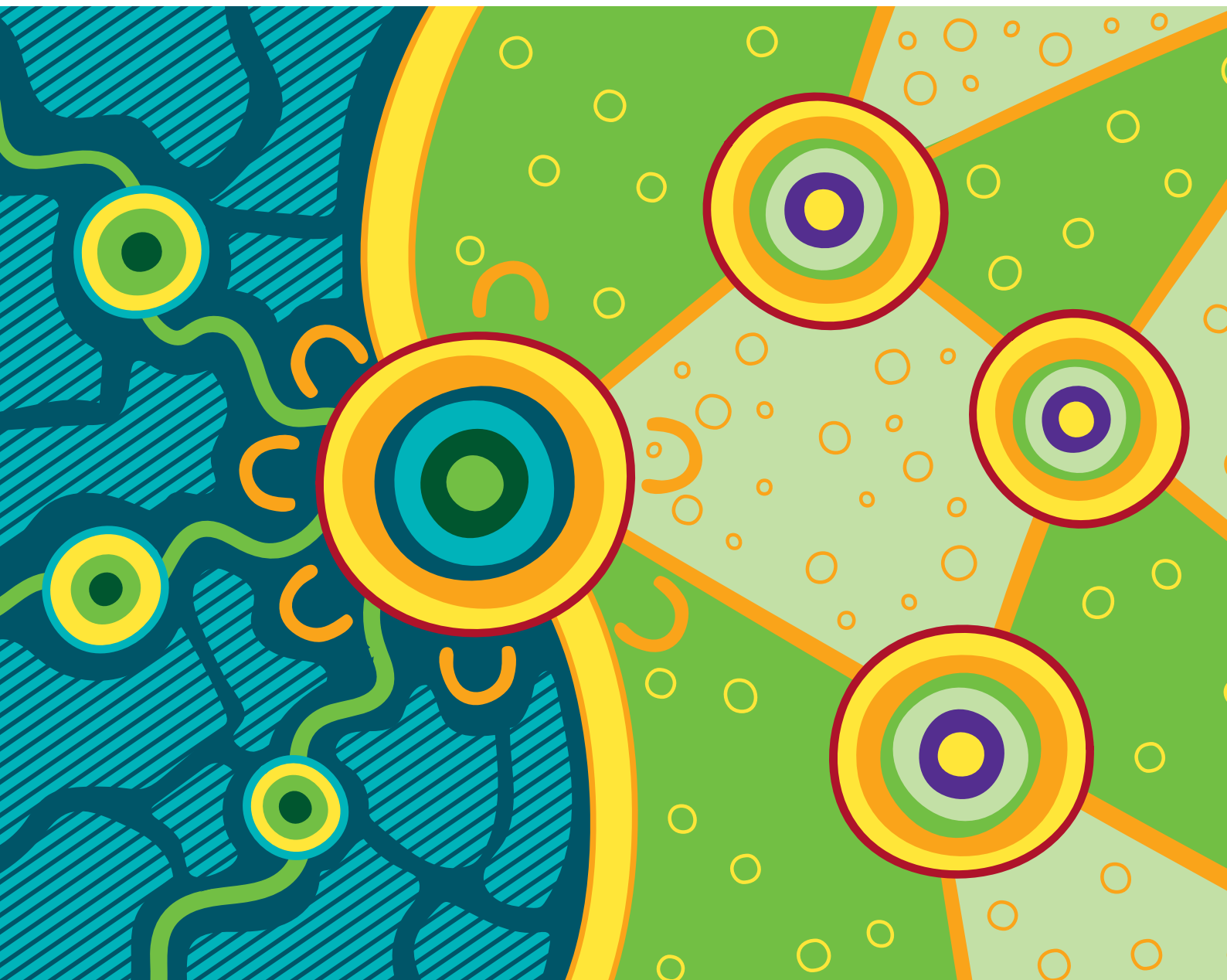


Australian Government



Australian Government Plan to Improve Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People with Disability

Easy Read version





Who wrote this plan?

This plan was written by the Australian Government.

The editing and design was done by the Information Access Group.

The front cover artwork was created by an Indigenous artist called Jordan Lovegrove.

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How to use this document



This information is written in an easy to read way.
We use pictures to explain some ideas.



It includes photos of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It may contain images of people who have passed away.



Australian Government

This document has been written by the Australian Government.

When you see the word 'we', it means the Australian Government.



Some words are written in **bold**. We explain what these words mean.

There is a list of these words on page 25.



This Easy Read document is a summary of another document.



You can find the other document on our website at www.dss.gov.au

You can ask for help to read this document.



A friend, family member or support person may be able to help you.



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What is this document about?



It's important that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability can live the life they want.

We need to make sure that people:



- have better ways of getting services



- can be part of the community.



We've written a plan to help us do this.

It's called the *Australian Government Plan to Improve Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People with Disability*.



It's the first time a plan like this has been written.



The plan explains the 5 areas that we should focus on in the future:



- housing



- human rights – and the criminal justice system



- education



- employment



- health and wellbeing.



It also explains what we will do to improve the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability.

The plan aims to:



- improve services, like health and education, to better meet the needs of people



- connect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).



We have written the plan with help from:



- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability



- organisations that speak up for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability



- researchers



- community organisations.



The plan will only work if we keep working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability and their communities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability



The **Australian Bureau of Statistics** says that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are 1.8 times more likely to have a disability than other Australians.



However, they don't use disability services as much as other Australians with disability.



Some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people don't see that they have a disability.



Their life is centred on culture and community. Culture is a way of life.

It causes problems if Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are disconnected from their cultures.



It's important that we respect and understand the cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.



Communities are all different, with different needs.



This means we need to find ways of doing things that are right for each community.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can experience different types of discrimination.

Discrimination is when people are treated unfairly because of their:



- cultural background



- disability



- gender identity.



Sometimes, along with other reasons, this can lead to:



- poor health



- low levels of education



- less people in good jobs.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, their families and carers, may face difficulties with taking part in the community.



This can be worse if they live in places far away from the city.



Some of the problems they face include:



- not enough disability services



- not knowing about the disability services that are available in their community



- not being able to access the same level of services as other people



- staff that don't understand how culture is important.

Important areas to focus on



The people who helped us write this plan have told us what we need to focus on.



They have also suggested what we could do to fix these problems.

Housing



Housing should meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability.

What we already do

We help organisations to:



- design houses



- build houses



- repair houses.



These houses are made:



- for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability



- to be safe



- to meet the needs of the community.

What else could we do?

We could offer housing or shelter that takes into account:



- the need to connect to country



- kinship – mob connections



- cultural needs



- spiritual needs.



It should also help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability to connect with their community.

Human rights

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability have the right to:



- be free from racism and discrimination



- have their rights supported



- a criminal justice system that takes disability into account.



The criminal justice system includes:



- courts



- prisons



- juvenile institutions – prison for young people



- treatment services.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may not understand their rights.



And the criminal justice system sometimes doesn't realise that someone has disability.



What we already do



In 2016 the Council of Australian Government wrote a report about people who leave prison and look for work.



It is called the *Prison to Work Report*.

The report includes ways that we could:



- be better at working out if a prisoner has disability



- help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people find work when they leave prison.



We are working with every Australian State and Territory to write action plans for how to do this.



What else could we do?



We could provide training for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities about human rights.



This could be done by training volunteers who speak to people in the communities.



If a person enters the criminal justice system we should work out if they have:

- an intellectual disability
- mental health issues.



Education

Often, we may not know that an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child or young person has a disability.

This may lead to:



- learning problems at school



- trouble moving into employment.

What we already do



Treatment or therapy for children with disability is called **early childhood intervention**.



This is being developed as part of the NDIS.



In 2008, we set up the Positive Partners program.



It helps teachers and families support students with autism.

What else could we do?

We could make sure there are stronger ties between:

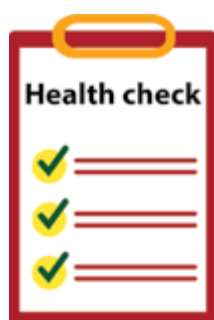


- early childhood health

- schools



- disability services.



Set up basic health checks in schools.



Employment



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability are employed less than other people with disability.

This could be because:



- when services help them get a job, it doesn't lead to ongoing employment



- there aren't many jobs



- opportunities in local businesses aren't very good.



What we already do



The Disability Employment Services (DES) program helps people with disability find and keep jobs.

We make sure that DES providers have a plan for giving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability:



- training



- employment opportunities.



People who live far from cities can get employment help through the Community Development Programme.



What else could we do?



We could help employment providers give better support.



We could help school leavers to find jobs.



We could increase business opportunities.



We could change the attitudes of employers.



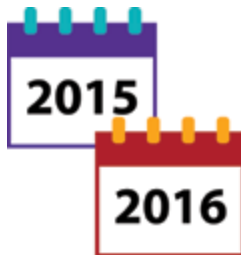
Health and wellbeing



There aren't enough disability services that meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability.



This may be worse in places far away from cities.



What we already do

In 2015-2016 we gave money to Aboriginal community controlled health services.



This was so organisations could provide health care services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Australia.



We also have health programs that meet the specific needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability.



What else could we do?



Primary Health Networks are organisations that coordinate different health services.

They could help coordinate services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, including:



- helping them manage their disability



- improve physical, mental and social wellbeing.

Word list



Australian Bureau of Statistics

The Australian Bureau of Statistics is an organisation that provides statistics about Australia.



Early childhood intervention

Treatment or therapy for children with disability.

Contact us



nationaldisabilityst@dss.gov.au



National Disability Strategy
PO Box 9820
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www.dss.gov.au/nds



Australian Government

