Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples - Preferred Terminology to be Used

Document Number PD2005_319
Publication date 27-Jan-2005
Functional Sub group Clinical/ Patient Services - Information and data
Clinical/ Patient Services - Records
Summary "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples" should always be printed in full and terms such as "ATSI" should not be used.
Author Branch Aboriginal Health
Branch contact Centre for Aboriginal Health 9391 9497
Distributed to Public Health System, NSW Ambulance Service, Ministry of Health, Public Hospitals
Review date 30-Jun-2014
Policy Manual Not applicable
File No. 03/173-3
Previous reference 2003/55
Issue date 23-Jul-2003
Status Active

Director-General

This Policy Directive may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Compliance with this directive is mandatory for NSW Health and is a condition of subsidy for public health organisations.
PREFERRED TERMINOLOGY TO BE USED WHEN REFERRING TO ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES

The Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW (AH&MRC), the peak body representing Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services in NSW, has provided advice that the use of the shorthand term “ATSI” to describe Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is not appropriate. This advice is consistent with NSW Health Circular No 94/1 issued on 7 January 1994.

In line with this advice, it is requested that “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples” should always be printed in full and that terms such as “ATSI” should on no account be used.

Please also note that, although reference to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples may be required at times, within NSW Health, the term “Aboriginal” is generally used in preference to “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander”, in recognition that Aboriginal people are the original inhabitants of NSW.

Robyn Kruk
Director-General