

## 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

**Applies to** Area Health Services/Chief Executive Governed Statutory Health Corporation, Board Governed Statutory Health Corporations, Affiliated Health Organisations, Affiliated Health Organisations - Declared, Public Health System Support Division, NSW Ambulance Service, Ministry of Health, Public Hospitals

**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This Policy Directive may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time.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.

**CIRCULAR**

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>File No</b>     | 03/173-3  |
| <b>Circular No</b> | 2003/55   |
| <b>Issued</b>      | 23 July 2003  |
| <b>Contact</b>     | Policy and Planning Unit<br>Aboriginal Health Branch (02) 9391 9497 |

**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**

---

Distributed in accordance with circular list(s):

|             |          |             |          |             |   |
|-------------|----------|-------------|----------|-------------|---|
| <b>A</b> 55 | <b>B</b> | <b>C</b> 43 | <b>D</b> | <b>E</b>    | 73 Miller Street North Sydney NSW 2060            |
| <b>F</b>    | <b>G</b> | <b>H</b> 43 | <b>I</b> | <b>J</b> 20 | Locked Mail Bag 961 North Sydney NSW 2059         |
| <b>K</b>    | <b>L</b> | <b>M</b>    | <b>N</b> | <b>P</b>    | Telephone (02) 9391 9000 Facsimile (02) 9391 9101 |

---

In accordance with the provisions incorporated in the Accounts and Audit Determination, the Board of Directors, Chief Executive Officers and their equivalents, within a public health organisation, shall be held responsible for ensuring the observance of Departmental policy (including circulars and procedure manuals) as issued by the Minister and the Director-General of the Department of Health.