

Torres and Cape Health Service Investigation

Communique – January 2025

Health Service Investigation progress

On 30 August 2023, the former Director-General commissioned an Investigation under the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011*, into the management, administration, and delivery of public sector health services in the Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service (TCHHS).

The Terms of Reference required the Investigators to assess the health services provided by the TCHHS to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (Part A), and whether these services are delivered in a culturally safe environment (Part B).

The Final Report for Part A was publicly released in full on the Queensland Health website on 9 August 2024. Part B of the investigation (determining whether services are delivered in a culturally safe environment) is underway.

The final report for Part B is due to be delivered in mid-2025.

Amendments have also been made to Part B of the Terms of Reference to clarify that the purpose of this part of the Investigation is to assess the cultural safety systems and processes and that it was not intended that any analysis is undertaken at an individual staff or patient level.

Advisory Group

Efforts are now focused on implementing the recommendations from the first report and preparing for the anticipated recommendations from Part B.

To assist with this process, the Director-General, Queensland Health has asked the TCHHS Chief Executive to establish a time-limited (12 months) Advisory Group with the specific purpose of providing guidance on the implementation of actions in response to the recommendations from the Investigation. The Advisory Group will include community representatives from the Cape, the Northern Peninsula Area, Torres Strait; representatives from TCHHS, the Department of Health, the Health Minister's Office, and other key stakeholders.

The Advisory Group will replace the Torres and Cape Roundtable, which was established in mid-2023, to support Part A of the Review, and comprised union groups representing members employed at the TCHHS, the Chair of the TCHHS, the Director-General, and other key representatives from the Department of Health.

The Roundtable served as a platform for stakeholder engagement and consultation on the Policy Evaluation and Recruitment Review led by the Department of Health's Human Resources Branch. The Evaluation and Review reports have been provided to the TCHHS and Investigators for consideration and recommendations are being implemented.

The Advisory Group will serve as a channel for ongoing feedback, ensuring that actions meet stakeholder expectations, support continuous improvement, and address the investigation's key findings within TCHHS. It will guide the development of a comprehensive approach for implementing the Investigation recommendations, ensuring alignment with local priorities, resources, and community needs in TCHHS.

The Advisory Group's focus will be on ensuring that the recommendations are culturally appropriate, practical, and reflect the lived experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Additionally, it will collaborate with stakeholders and community members to strengthen partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health services that align with TCHHS goals.

The establishment of the Advisory Group ensures that community and other stakeholder voices continue to be heard during the implementation of recommendations.

The Chief Executive TCHHS will provide updates on the progress of the recommendations during the quarterly Performance Review Meetings between the TCHHS and the Department of Health.