

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

Improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health is a national priority.

Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOS) build on a strong connection to community to enable a holistic and culturally appropriate approach to health and wellbeing through meeting identified needs of individual communities.

Health is defined as:







“Not just the physical wellbeing of an individual but the social, emotional and cultural wellbeing of the whole Community in which each individual is able to achieve their full potential as a human being, thereby bringing about the total wellbeing of their Community. It is a whole-of-life view and includes the cyclical concept of life-death-life.”



An estimated 5,207 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live in Gippsland.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population	Bass Coast	South Gippsland	Baw Baw	Latrobe	East Gippsland	Wellington	GIPPSLAND
Number of people	318	285	628	1,438	1,855	802	5,207
Per cent of total population	1.0%	1.0%	1.3%	2.0%	4.2%	1.9%	2.0%

Total hospital admissions for indigenous people are almost three times as common compared to the non-indigenous population, including for the following conditions:

-  Cardiovascular diseases (1.9)
-  Diabetes (3.9)
-  Hospitalisations attributable to alcohol (3.9)
-  Hospitalisations attributable to tobacco (3.9)
-  Mental and behavioural disorders (4.1)
-  Renal dialysis (8.8)

Data on workforce indicate that there are no registered Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners in Gippsland.

Total indigenous presentations to emergency departments are more than twice as common than for non-indigenous people, including for the following conditions:

-  Asthma (3.1)
-  Influenza and pneumonia (2.8)
-  Mental and behavioural disorders (4.1)
-  Injuries (1.8)

Local indigenous people identified things that are working well, including educational community activities and praise for staff at local services.

Main barriers stopping indigenous people in Gippsland accessing health care (compared to all survey respondents)



Cost
44% (32%)



Didn't understand how to access the service
8% (4%)



Didn't feel comfortable accessing the service
18% (6%)




Long wait for appointments
41% (24%)



Couldn't get there
15% (10%)

The top-rated health issues for local indigenous people in a community survey were:


Work and study opportunities


Heart and lung health


Mental health

The role of Gippsland PHN specifically targeted to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Gippsland:

Integrated Team Care | Indigenous Dual Diagnosis | Place Based Suicide Prevention Project | Early Detection and Screening including Tobacco Initiative | Black Pages | Education and Training

For more information on The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013-23 please visit:

[https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/B92E980680486C3BCA257BF0001BAF01/\\$File/health-plan.pdf](https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/B92E980680486C3BCA257BF0001BAF01/$File/health-plan.pdf)

Version 1 April 2020 For more information about health planning, visit Gippsland PHN website at www.gphn.org.au