Australian Government

Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

First Nations transplantation equity – Working Group to develop an Action Plan

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Roundtable on 3 September 2026 considered disparities in access to kidney transplantation and barriers experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the transplantation pathway. On 4 September 2026, the Health Minister's Meeting noted inequity in access to kidney transplantation and asked the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Collaboration to develop options to improve access for consideration in early 2027.

In response, the Jurisdictional Organ and Tissue Steering Committee (JOTSC) supported the establishment of a time-limited First Nations Transplant Equity Working Group to develop a practical Action Plan to improve access and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people requiring a transplant. The Working Group brings together Commonwealth, state and territory government representatives, including the Organ and Tissue Authority. Its membership also includes the National Indigenous Kidney Transplantation Taskforce (NIKTT), the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO), and representation from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living with a kidney transplant. Members bring expertise in renal health, transplantation, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health equity and lived experience of kidney failure.

The Working Group held its first meeting on 26 October 2026. It will build existing initiatives and identify practical actions across areas including national governance and coordination; service delivery and workforce; culturally safe engagement and patient support; and data, monitoring and accountability. The Working Group may consider how commitments under the National Health Reform Agreement can be utilised to support implementation of appropriate services.

The Working Group recognises the significant work and evidence developed by the collective leadership of the NIKTT and its broad network that has contributed to this work over many years. This network includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living with kidney failure, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors and health practitioners, and non-Indigenous nephrologists, government stakeholders, and other health workers. The Action Plan will draw on the evidence developed throughout this collective effort, alongside jurisdictional initiatives and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and consumer perspectives.

The Working Group will continue to refine the Action Plan, with outcomes to be considered by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Collaboration before progression to Health Ministers in early 2027.