

First Australian health - through OT and allied health

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Indigenous Allied Health Australia is the peak Allied Health body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia – the First Australians. Indigenous Allied Health Australia is governed by a board of directors, who are First Australian allied health professionals – from ten allied health professions.

Indigenous Allied Health Australia's vision is "to achieve the same quality of health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples" and is working towards this through three key objectives which will be explained and current projects and strategies designed to meet these objectives will be outlined during the presentation.

The significant contributions which occupational therapists have made in these early days of Indigenous Allied Health Australia will be outlined, including the Koori OT Scheme's successful application for start-up funding; OT as Project Officer of Indigenous Allied Health Network; OT as inaugural Vice President; OT as Executive Project Officer of Indigenous Allied Health Australia; the high percentage of OTs as members.

Many OTs want to know what they can do to help achieve equality in health for First Australians and their communities. Participants will be encouraged to:

- remember - First Australians' history of care for the land their people and the impact of: colonization; suppression of languages and lores; removal of children; loss of human rights and meaningful occupations; inadequate education; inadequate housing; inadequate health services and; racism
- reflect - what would it be like if these things happened to them
- recognise the strength and resilience of the First Australian culture and ways
- listen and learn and be guided by First Australian community members and leaders