

Community-led action – the key to Close the Gap

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The 2021 Close the Gap Campaign report, released today, highlights the importance of strength-based, community-led approaches to improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

‘While Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to show resilience in the face of poorer health outcomes, the effectiveness of strength-based, community-led action could not be clearer,’ says Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association spokesperson, Dr Chris Bourke.

‘The case studies in this year’s report showcase the leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations throughout some of the biggest challenges of 2020, from bushfires to pandemics.

‘Community Controlled Organisations and Health Services successfully kept Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities safe during the COVID-19 pandemic and the rate of COVID-19 cases in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples was six times lower than the rest of the population. These community-led organisations will have a significant role to play in rolling out the COVID vaccine this year.

‘In July 2020, the new National Agreement on Closing the Gap, signed by all Australian governments and the Coalition of Peaks, signified a new way forward with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in control at the decision-making table for the first time.

‘The recommendations in this year’s report call for structural reform, self-determination and ongoing investment in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-led initiatives.

‘This year’s report solidifies the importance of the power of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations, to deliver culturally safe care and localised solutions,’ says Dr Bourke.

AHHA is a member of the Close the Gap campaign, an Indigenous-led movement calling for action on health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Close the Gap Campaign report is available [online](#). More information on AHHA is available at ahha.asn.au. This media release is available [online](#).

The Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association is the national peak body for public and not-for-profit hospitals, Primary Health Networks, and community and primary healthcare services.