

**Submission
No 1**

**EXAMINATION OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL'S PERFORMANCE AUDIT
REPORTS AUGUST 2019 - JUNE 2020**

Organisation: NSW Health
Date Received: 20 October 2021



Health

Mr Greg Piper MP
Chair, Public Accounts Committee
Parliament of New South Wales
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Our ref H20/103124

Dear Mr Piper

Implementation of Audit Recommendations - Performance Audit - Mental Health Services Planning for Aboriginal People of NSW

I am writing in response to your request for a submission from NSW Health to outline our progress toward implementing the recommendations made in the Auditor-General's performance audit report *Mental Health Services Planning for Aboriginal People of NSW*.

I am pleased to inform you that significant progress has been made on the implementation of the recommendations. Attached to this letter is NSW Health's submission in response to your request.

A key activity for NSW Health has been the development of the *NSW Aboriginal Mental Health and Wellbeing 2020-2025* policy. This policy establishes the framework for the delivery of holistic, culturally safe and coordinated health and mental health services for Aboriginal people and communities in NSW. Development of the policy has considered the findings of the Auditor-General's report and content which responds directly to the recommendations is provided in the attached submission.

The policy is currently undergoing its final stage of consultation and is planned for publication in November 2020. Consultation to date has been extensive, including activities involving Aboriginal staff, consumers, carers, those with lived experience, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs), peak bodies and service delivery leads at NSW Health Organisations.

A copy of the *NSW Aboriginal Mental Health and Wellbeing 2020-2025* policy will be provided to the PAC once published in November 2020.

If you require further information, please contact [REDACTED] Director, Corporate Governance and Risk Management, via email to [REDACTED] or on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]
Elizabeth Koff
Secretary, NSW Health

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IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

NSW Health – Mental Health Service Planning for Aboriginal People in NSW

RECOMMENDATION	RESPONSE	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN (AS INCLUDED IN THE ORIGINAL RESPONSE TO THE AUDIT)	DUE DATE	STATUS AND COMMENT	RESPONSIBILITY
By December 2020, in partnership with Aboriginal mental health clinicians and policy experts, NSW Health should:					
1. Research, develop and publish evidence-based models of culturally appropriate Aboriginal mental health care for use in Local Health Districts.	Accepted in principle	<p>NSW Health has focused on ensuring that the mental health clinical support and models of care available to all people of NSW is of world class standard.</p> <p>NSW Health ensures that mental health services are culturally appropriate for Aboriginal people by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that all programs and policies that are developed have undertaken an <i>Aboriginal Impact Statement</i> assessment. • Continuing to implement and continuously improve the mandatory <i>Respecting the Difference</i> training for all NSW Health employees • Achieving actions outlined in the <i>NSW Strategic Framework and Workforce Plan for Mental Health 2018-2022</i> including actions specific to Aboriginal people • Fulfilling commitments in relation to the mental health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people outlined in the <i>Fifth National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan</i> 	December 2020	<p>Partially completed</p> <p>A recent review by the NSW Mental Health Commission titled <i>Aboriginal Social and Emotional Wellbeing Models of Care Literature Review</i> is referenced in the draft revised policy NSW <i>Aboriginal Mental Health and Wellbeing 2020-2025</i> (policy).</p> <p>The draft policy will specifically address this recommendation through the following content:</p> <p>Strategic Action 3.7 <i>Build the evidence base for effective, culturally appropriate high-quality models of care and service delivery for public mental health services.</i></p>	Ministry of Health - Mental Health Branch and Centre for Aboriginal Health

RECOMMENDATION	RESPONSE	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN (AS INCLUDED IN THE ORIGINAL RESPONSE TO THE AUDIT)	DUE DATE	STATUS AND COMMENT	RESPONSIBILITY
2	Finalise and publish an Aboriginal mental health policy framework that includes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing to implement the <i>NSW Aboriginal Health Plan 2013-20</i>; and Publication of the revised Aboriginal Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy. <p>Further opportunities to strengthen NSW Health's efforts in this area will be researched and incorporated into planning for 2020-21.</p> <p>The <i>NSW Health Aboriginal Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy</i>, which will replace the current policy, is on schedule to be launched in November 2019.</p> <p>The policy will provide overarching guidance to Local Health Districts and provide best practice examples. It will complement the existing <i>NSW Aboriginal Health Plan 2013-2023</i>, the <i>NSW Strategic Framework and Workforce Plan 2018-2022</i> and the <i>Fifth National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan</i>.</p> <p>The policy has been developed with extensive community consultation. Any revision to consider additional content will require a similarly wide-reaching and planned consultation process. The individual points contained in the recommendation will be considered as appropriate after the launch of the new policy.</p>	December 2020	<p>Partially completed</p> <p>The Ministry has incorporated all of the recommended actions from the 2019 Audit Office of NSW report <i>Mental Health Services Planning for Aboriginal People in NSW</i> into development of the revised policy.</p> <p>This revision requires extensive consultation with Aboriginal staff, consumers, carers, those with lived experience, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs), peak bodies and NSW Health branches, pillars and local health districts and networks.</p> <p>This has delayed publication from the planned date of November 2019 to November 2020, but it means that individual points from the audit report are being comprehensively addressed. The policy is on track to be published by November 2020.</p>	Ministry of Health - Mental Health Branch and Centre for Aboriginal Health

Attachment A

RECOMMENDATION	RESPONSE	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN (AS INCLUDED IN THE ORIGINAL RESPONSE TO THE AUDIT)	DUE DATE	STATUS AND COMMENT	RESPONSIBILITY
a) a timeline and plan for full implementation of the Framework	Accepted in principle			<p>Partially completed</p> <p>Local Health Districts (LHDs) and Specialty Health Networks (SHNs) will be required to develop local implementation plans for the policy to provide specific, operational guidance to enable the implementation of the policy. ACCHOs and other stakeholders including Aboriginal consumers and carers will be invited to partner in the development of the local implementation plans. These plans may draw on existing regional planning being undertaken as part of the implementation of the <i>Fifth National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan</i>.</p> <p>Implementation plans will be due for submission to the Ministry of Health by 30 June 2021.</p> <p>The Ministry will also implement a monitoring framework for the policy and implementation plans in partnership with LHDs and SHNs. ACCHOs, Aboriginal consumers and carers and those with lived experience will be invited to inform this framework.</p>	Ministry of Health - Mental Health Branch and Centre for Aboriginal Health
b) a communication strategy to improve the visibility and priority of Aboriginal mental health care across the mental health sector	Accepted in principle		December 2020	<p>Partially completed</p> <p>The draft policy addresses this through the following content:</p>	Ministry of Health - Mental Health Branch and Centre for

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				<p>Strategic Action 5.4 <i>Invite ACCHOs, Aboriginal consumers, carers and communities to partner on the development of a culturally appropriate targeted Aboriginal mental health promotion strategy and communication plan. The communication plan will be designed to raise mental health literacy and destigmatise mental illness, and to improve the visibility and priority of mental health care across the mental health sector.</i></p>	Aboriginal Health
c) methods, roles and responsibilities for collecting detailed information and data about Aboriginal service use and service demand by location	Accepted in principle		December 2020	<p>Partially completed The draft policy addresses this through the following content: Strategic Direction 6 <i>Strengthen performance monitoring, management and accountability</i> Strategic Action 6.1 <i>Collect detailed information and data about Aboriginal peoples' service use and service demand by location.</i></p>	Ministry of Health - Mental Health Branch and Centre for Aboriginal Health
d) a process for Local Health Districts to map services with Primary Health Networks and non-government providers to identify service gaps and duplications and plan for	Accepted in principle		December 2020	<p>Partially completed The draft policy addresses this through the following content:</p>	Ministry of Health - Mental Health Branch and Centre for Aboriginal Health

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<p>the equitable distribution of services across locations</p>				<p>Strategic Direction 1 Co-design mental health service planning, evaluation and delivery with Aboriginal people and communities.</p> <p>Strategic Action 1.1 Establish and maintain policies and processes to include Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal people with a lived experience of mental illness and their carers in policy development, service planning, evaluation and assessment of services, pathways and partnerships, and models of care design.</p> <p>Strategic Action 1.2 Partner with Aboriginal communities, consumers and carers, to map services with Primary Health Networks and community managed organisations to identify service gaps and duplications and plan for the equitable distribution of services across locations.</p>	
<p>e) a strategy to increase services for Aboriginal patients requiring high levels of clinical support in the community and clarification of mental health case management roles and responsibilities to ensure accountability and continuity of patient care across the different service providers and service types</p>	<p>Accepted in principle</p>		<p>December 2020</p>	<p>Partially completed</p> <p>The draft policy addresses this through the following content:</p> <p>Strategic Action 5.3 Develop strategies to increase services for Aboriginal people requiring high levels of clinical support in the community and clarification of mental health case management roles and responsibilities to ensure accountability</p>	<p>Ministry of Health - Mental Health Branch and Centre for Aboriginal Health</p>

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RECOMMENDATION	RESPONSE	ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN (AS INCLUDED IN THE ORIGINAL RESPONSE TO THE AUDIT)	DUE DATE	STATUS AND COMMENT	RESPONSIBILITY
				<p><i>and continuity of patient care across different service providers and service types.</i></p>	
<p>f) actions to increase the numbers and types of Aboriginal workers across all levels and positions in the mental health workforce</p>	<p>Accepted in principle</p>		<p>December 2020</p>	<p>Partially completed The draft policy addresses this through the following content: Strategic Direction 4 <i>Build and sustain the Aboriginal mental health and wellbeing workforce and create safe work environments.</i> Strategic Action 4.1 <i>Increase the numbers and types of Aboriginal workers across all levels and positions in the mental health workforce (including management, clinical leadership, clinical service delivery and peer support roles).</i> Strategic Action 4.6 <i>Build the Aboriginal peer workforce.</i></p>	<p>Ministry of Health - Mental Health Branch and Centre for Aboriginal Health</p>
<p>g) new key performance indicators and performance reporting on follow-up actions that: – support information sharing and referrals of Aboriginal people to community-based mental health services</p>	<p>Accepted in principle</p>		<p>December 2020</p>	<p>Partially completed The draft policy addresses this through the following content: Strategic Direction 6 <i>Strengthen performance monitoring, management and accountability</i></p>	<p>Ministry of Health - Mental Health Branch and Centre for Aboriginal Health</p>

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<p>– ensure follow up actions to support mental health patients on release from prison so that they receive seven days of medication, referrals and discharge summaries.</p>	<p>Accepted in principle</p>		<p>December 2020</p>	<p>Strategic Action 6.3 <i>Develop new key performance indicators and performance reporting on follow up actions that support information sharing and referrals of Aboriginal people to community based mental health services.</i></p>	
				<p>Partially completed The draft policy addresses this through the following content: Strategic Action 6.4 <i>Develop strategies to ensure follow up actions to support mental health patients on release from prison so that they receive seven days of medication, referrals and discharge summaries.</i></p>	<p>Ministry of Health - Mental Health Branch and Centre for Aboriginal Health</p>