Australian Government
National Health and Medical Research Council



Action Plan 2024–2027 Triennium

Linked to *Road Map 3: A Strategic Framework for improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health through Research* (Road Map 3)

Introduction

Road Map 3 is NHMRC's strategic framework for improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health through research. Action plans will be published each triennium, based on the strategies outlined in Road Map 3, which will set out specific commitments by NHMRC relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and researchers. This is the Action Plan for the 2024–2027 triennium.

The NHMRC–MRFF Indigenous Advisory Group (IAG) will help direct, provide advice and assist with actioning the commitments below.

Actions address all three focus areas of Road Map 3.

- Strengthen the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and medical research workforce
- Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- Support research in high-priority areas

Annual report cards will be published to monitor performance and impacts of the Action Plan and Road Map 3.

This action plan aligns with key activities in the:

a. Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care Corporate Plan 2024–2025
b. Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities 2024–2026
c. Australian Medical Research and innovation Strategy 2021–2026
d. MRFF 3rd 10-year Investment Plan (2024–25 to 2033–34)
e. NHMRC Corporate Plan 2024–2025, and
f. Road Map 3 – A strategic framework and National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

Actions for the 2024-2027 Triennium to implement Road Map 3

NHMRC will continue to:

1	Monitor progress and advise on strategies to meet the Medical Research Endowment Account investment targets, and consider whether updates to the targets are required: a. At least 5% on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and medical research and b. 3.4% chief investigators of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent.
2	Maintain an NHMRC/MRFF advisory group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (the Indigenous Advisory Group) reporting to the CEO. Assist with holding at least one Indigenous Advisory Group meeting on Country.
3	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on Council of NHMRC and Principal Committees.
4	Advise on the Tripartite Agreement to improve Indigenous peoples' health, with the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the Health Research Council of New Zealand.
5	Profile the diverse pathways into research taken by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health researchers and outcomes of research to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.
6	Develop and actively implement our organisational Reconciliation Action Plan, Innovate III.

Over the 2024-2027 Triennium, NHMRC will:

7	Advise on up to two research calls annually into priority areas of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health: a. the IAG will guide the process for determining the priority areas for research calls b. where calls are Targeted Calls for Research, the application time will be increased to ensure sufficient time for community consultation.
8	Advise on a new funding opportunity in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.
9	Advise on a National Public Call for Research Priorities in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health to inform the calls for research.
10	Work with OCHRe (Our Collaborations in Health Research) network to further strengthen capacity and capability amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health researchers.
11	Advise on the implementation of the recommendations of the review of the Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria and their implementation, including: a. Revision of the IREC, the 20% threshold and implementation in NHMRC schemes b. The question of benefit to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.
12	Advise on issues relating to NHMRC's grant schemes, such as impact and peer review.
13	Hold at least one workshop, consultation or event relating to a priority area of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and/or researchers.

To monitor and evaluate progress, NHMRC will:

14	Advise on a financial year report card of achievements against the Action Plan, including reporting against key performance indicators: a. achievement of the 5% target b. achievement of the 3.4% target for the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health researchers who are lead Chief Investigators on NHMRC grants c. number and value of grants funded each year that address Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research d. number and values of grants funded each year that include and are led by Chief Investigators of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent.
15	Publish a new Action Plan each triennium over the life of Road Map 3, identifying specific actions relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and researchers.
16	Advise on the evaluation of Road Map 3 and the impact of the Action Plans by 2028.

Artwork: Yulang, Indigenous artist Amy Kilby

The artwork reflects the National Health and Medical Research Council's mission of *Building a Healthy Australia*, particularly in the knowledge, research and community connection to improve health outcomes. It has strong parallels between Aboriginal ways of knowing and the work.