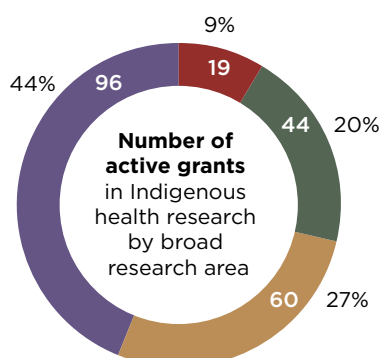


2025-26 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Report Card of Achievements

This report card details 2025-26 achievements against the 2024-2027 NHMRC-MRFF Indigenous Advisory Group workplan. NHMRC works closely with the Indigenous Advisory Group to progress all actions in the workplan.

NHMRC is committed to spending **5% or more** of the Medical Research Endowment Account (MREA) on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and medical research.



Expenditure in Indigenous health research by broad research area

Basic science	\$5,858,427.04
Clinical medicine and science	\$14,848,278.18
Health services	\$24,023,957.14
Public health	\$40,002,108.89

Public health and **Health services research** were the top fields of research in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, receiving **\$64,026,066** in funding.



219

Active grants* in Indigenous health



\$84,732,771

Spent on Indigenous health research



8.4%

of the MREA spent on Indigenous health



3.4%

of grants awarded in 25/26 were led by CIAs who identify as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent



101

Active NHMRC grants led by Indigenous researchers



250

Indigenous researchers on active grants funded by NHMRC*

*All grants being paid in 2025-26 financial year

NHMRC - MRFF Indigenous Advisory Group (IAG) 2024-2027

The Indigenous Advisory Group (IAG) provides strategic advice on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and health research issues.

The joint NHMRC and Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) committee advises NHMRC and its Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the Australian Medical Research Advisory Board (AMRAB) and the CEO of the Health and Medical Research Office (HMRO).

In 2025-2026 IAG meetings were held on 28 October 2025 and 13 March 2026.



Speaking of Science

NHMRC hosted **Associate Professor Veronica Matthews** through the Speaking of Science webinar series.



Dr Veronica Matthews (Quandamooka), Principal Research Fellow, is based at the University Centre for Rural Health, The University of Sydney in Lismore. She facilitates community-led research, embedding First Nations knowledges and rights as the original custodians to revitalise holistic health care systems centred on Country.

A/Professor Veronica Matthews presented during National Reconciliation Week on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership, research sovereignty and systems change.

Benefit question implementation



NHMRC continued implementation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health benefit question across selected grant opportunities, strengthening consideration of Indigenous health benefit within the grants program.

The benefit question introduced is *“How does your application benefit Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander health, including contributing to Closing the Gap outcomes?”*

Guidance developed with the Indigenous Advisory Group supports consistent application by applicants and peer reviewers.

Indigenous intern program

NHMRC provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander undergraduate and postgraduate students studying health, medical research and related disciplines with opportunities to gain practical experience through an 8-week internship program. In 2025–26, Nava King (Monash University) and Shenea Tipungwuti (Charles Darwin University) (pictured above) completed placements across Communications and Events and Research Collaboration, respectively, developing skills and gaining insight into the work of NHMRC.



Targeted call for research (TCR)

NHMRC developed a TCR into **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health – Addressing Violence for Safer Families and Communities**. This grant opportunity aimed to fund research that addressed the health and wellbeing needs of families and communities to be safe through an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led, and multidisciplinary approach. Successful grants awarded were:



\$1,699,076

Professor Faye McMillian AM,

Charles Sturt University,
Unsafe Workplaces,
Unsafe Care: Addressing
Structural Violence in
Regional New South
Wales Health Services.



\$4,999,993

Professor Marcia Langton AO,

University of Melbourne,
From Harm to Healing:
Strength-Based Approaches
to Family Violence for
Aboriginal and Torres
Strait Islander peoples



2025 Sandra Eades Investigator Grant Award (Emerging Leadership)

Associate Professor Belinda (BJ) Newton, University of New South Wales



Research title: Understanding systems abuse and Aboriginal resistance in child protection contexts.

A proud Wiradjuri woman, Associate Professor Newton's research examines systems abuse and Aboriginal resistance in child protection contexts, with a focus on supporting community-led reform and improving outcomes for Aboriginal children and families.

Yulang

Yulang, meaning ripple in Wiradjuri language, reflects the flow of knowledge, connection and collaboration. The artwork symbolises people coming together to share ideas, strengthen communities and create lasting positive change. Through its interconnected pathways and rippling patterns, the piece highlights the impact that research, learning and shared understanding can have across generations and Country.

About the artist

Amy Kilby is a proud Wiradjuri woman from the Riverina, New South Wales. Her passion for art began in childhood through painting and drawing and has continued to grow throughout her life. Her artwork explores the relationship between people, Country and shared knowledge, blending cultural storytelling with contemporary techniques.

