



Inquiry into annual and financial reports 2024–2025

Answer to question taken on notice

Asked by: Mr Thomas Emerson MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Health

In relation to: ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement and ACT Health Cultural Integrity Commitment Statement

Hearing: 11 November 2025

Uncorrected Proof Transcript p 27-28

Transcript provided: 14 November 2025

Answer Due: 21 November 2025

THE CHAIR: Okay. Thank you. During estimates hearings in July, the former Director-General indicated that there is a cultural integrity statement. I have been trying to find that document. I think it is also mentioned in the ACT Health Annual Report.

Ms Arthy: So we commenced work towards a cultural integrity plan. That may well be the reference point, and I believe it was led by one of our directorate and directorate executive and included Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous representatives across the directorate, and it is fully articulated on page 171 of the annual report, if that is what you are referencing.

THE CHAIR: Just trying to find that. I believe that there is a reference to—it says, “The group developed”—and this is page 167—“The group developed an ACT Health cultural integrity commitment statement.

Ms Arthy: Yes. So that was the work of this group, the cultural integrity group that came together.

THE CHAIR: So I am assuming the plan will be built on the basis of this statement, but that is just an assumption?

Ms Hudson: That is a reasonable assumption to have, but as Ms Arthy just said, because now we are a combined directorate, we are waiting to have a singular step forward rather than continue to offer ...(indistinct)... [10.16.59] health and community services, and we will try and learn from each other’s various strengths.

THE CHAIR: Okay. And so that cultural integrity commitment statement that has been prepared, is that available somewhere or could that be provided to the committee on notice?

Ms Hudson: We can take that on notice. Yes.

RACHEL STEPHEN-SMITH MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

The Commitment to Cultural Integrity Statement was endorsed by the former ACT Health Directorate Executive Board in December 2024, for further consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff who had not been directly involved in its development (Attachment A).

This consultation commenced in the first half of 2025, with staff generally supportive of the approach, and some identifying areas where language in the document could be strengthened or clarified.

In the lead up to the formation of the Health and Community Services Directorate (HSCD), it became clear that the work ACT Health had been doing needed to join up with the work of the former Community Services Directorate, rather than continue in isolation. As such, a final version of the Commitment Statement was not progressed and this work, including the feedback received from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, will be incorporated into the work now underway in HSCD to strengthen cultural safety and cultural integrity and have a meaningful approach to addressing Closing the Gap Priority Reform Three.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Social Policy

Signature:



By the Minister for Health, Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA

Date:

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