



# Acknowledgement of Country

# **‘Good practice’ engagement and consultation processes: Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.**

By

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# NATSIOTN

- Founded in 2013
- Members include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander occupational therapist and occupational therapy students.
- The aim of this network is to:
  1. To support and mentor each other
  2. To lead the development of occupational therapy practice and knowledge that is respectful and encompassing of Indigenous research and perspectives.
  3. To provide strategic occupational therapy advice in relation to policy, practice, research and curricula.

# Presentation aims



This presentation aims to provide you with multiple approaches for consultation, engagement and partnerships.

The most appropriate ways of working should be negotiated with individuals and communities that you work with.

This presentation will not provide you with one answer or one way of working with communities.

# Presentation objectives

This presentation will:

1. Define the functions and purpose of engagement, consultation and partnerships.
2. Introduce human rights as a tool for approaching good practice engagement, consultation and partnership.
3. Emphasise the principles for working with multiple and diverse voices
4. Highlight “good practice” theoretical frameworks
5. Use the person, environment and occupation model to highlight the best practice and evidence available.

# Concepts and identity of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person

## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

- There is not one preferred terminology. According to the Human Rights Commission (2012), the most preferred terminology is: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; First Nations, and First Peoples.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples often choose terminology that is meaningful to themselves and/or their communities.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' identity may be linked to and described in relation to connections and/or belonging to family, country, communities, culture and/or ancestors. These connections and belonging are often linked to kinship obligations and are reflected in our life experiences.

## Government

- Over 60 different terminologies are found in official government documents. Also, remember the context of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity and political agendas in Australia – past & present.
- Currently, the preferred and official government terminology is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- The government defines an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person as someone who identifies as being an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person and is accepted as such by the community in which the person lives or has lived.

## Resources

- NSW Health: Communicating positively: A guide to appropriate terminology (2008).
- QLD Government: Protocols for consultation and negotiation with Aboriginal people (1999)
- The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners: An introduction to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols and perspectives (2012).

# Concepts and identity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities** may include but are not limited to:

- ❖ Cultural and language groups
- ❖ A shared lived experience
- ❖ A similar life phase
- ❖ A shared social justice interest
- ❖ An Aboriginal agency or organisation
- ❖ Geographical contexts



# Why are consultation, representation and partnerships important?



To develop, implement and evaluate:

- occupational therapy services
- health promotion activities
- policy, strategies etc
- OT curricula
- research

# The difference between consultants, representatives and partners

	<b>Consultants</b>	<b>Representatives</b>	<b>Partners</b>
<b>Definition</b>	Consultants will often hold expert advice or have extensive experience that is relevant.	Representatives are best selected by the communities they represent. They hold expert knowledge in relation to the community. They may also hold expert knowledge in relation to the work or know how to attain the knowledge in a respectful manner.	Partners are integral in the relationships and processes developed in the partnership. May include consultants and representatives.
<b>Aim of input</b>	Provide (expert) advice on service, program, policy, project etc	Represent a community or communities, to provide expert advice from the communities' perspective.	Co-creation of a service, program, policy, project etc

# What is the evidence for good practice?



There is abundant literature and research informing good practice, such as:

- The United Declaration of Human Rights for Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).
- Indigenous leadership, research, practices and literatures.
- Embedded in key underpinnings of our profession, such as strength-based approaches.

# How do human rights inform practice?

Human rights are a tool that that occupational therapists can use:

1. to inform our practice and partnerships.
2. to understand the influences of health, wellbeing and occupations.
3. to promote social justice activities and advocacy.



# UNDRIP: Key principles for OT

Diversity, truths,  
experiences &  
knowledge

Community &  
professional  
representation

Use good  
consultation  
practices

Form good  
partnerships

Occupation


Impact of economic,  
social and physical  
exclusion

Ways of being,  
knowing and doing

Self-determination

Institution design,  
structure &  
processes

# UNDRIP: Self-determination



Determining how our lives are governed and our developmental pathways

Participation in decisions that affect our lives

Control over our lives and future including economic, social and cultural developments

# Working with diverse and multiple voices?

**Principle 1:** Expect that there are multiple voices, perspectives and opinions.

**Principle 2:** Find ways to value the multiple voices, perspectives and opinions.

**Principle 3:** Work toward holistic solutions instead of one agreement.

**Principle 4:** Connect with communities.

**Principle 5:** Understand that not all members or communities will work together.

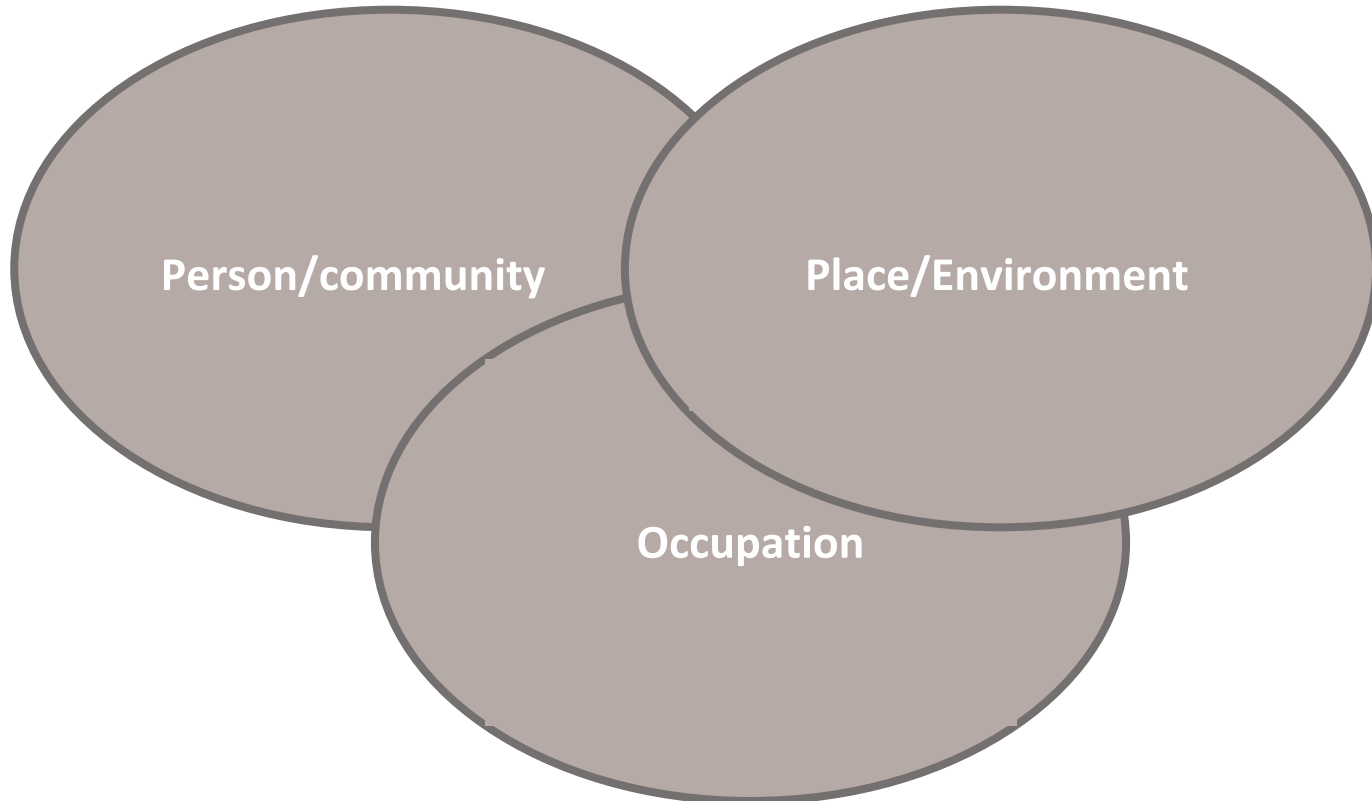
# Theoretical frameworks



Frameworks that can inform practice include:

- Critical theories
- Transformative theories
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership, research, literature and perspectives.
- Strength-based & human-rights based.

# What factors influence the processes for consulting, engaging and partnering?



# Summary



There are multiple good practices that you can use and consider when developing consultation, engagement and partnerships with communities.

Importantly, work with communities to determine which way will work.

# In reflection

Following this presentation, can you identify:

- Examples of good practice that you are already using
- Some examples of good practice that you can now articulate
- At least three things that you may now consider in practice
- The challenges in your workplace for implementing good practice... and some possible solutions
- Some questions that we can further explore in the on-line discussion.

# Key references

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