



# Alcohol and drug treatment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have taken **successful steps** to prevent or reduce harms from alcohol and other drug use over many years.

But, **alcohol and other drug use remain among the top factors** contributing to the burden of disease for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



## Effective treatment approaches include:

- » counselling
- » brief intervention
- » medicines
- » peer support
- » residential rehabilitation.

## Barriers to treatment include:

- ! transport difficulties
- ! lack of support for both mental health issues and substance use dependence
- ! chronic health conditions occurring with substance use dependence.



It is important that these services are welcoming, accessible and culturally secure.

## Aboriginal community controlled health services (ACCHS)

- » improve outcomes for communities
- » deliver holistic health care.

## Mainstream treatment approaches can be adapted to be more culturally secure by:

- ✓ planning and tailoring services in partnership with communities to meet local needs
- ✓ employing, listening to, and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff across services
- ✓ providing a friendly and flexible approach that allows time for yarning
- ✓ building trust and engagement
- ✓ providing holistic treatment that values connecting to Country, culture, family and kin.

## Access to alcohol and other drug services can be increased by:



- » creating partnerships between community-controlled and mainstream health services
- » long-term, reliable funding
- » employing appropriate clinical and other staff.

