

New strategy to support healing in the Torres Strait

Torres Strait communities will be supported to address issues like child safety and wellbeing, community safety and the lack of women in leadership under a healing strategy launched on Thursday Island today.

The *Torres Strait and Kaurareg Aboriginal People's Healing Strategy* was developed by the Healing Foundation in partnership with local healing leadership and is the result of extensive consultation with Kaurareg Aboriginal people and Torres Strait islanders.

The strategy's recommendations include:

- Support for a women's healing strategy to strengthen women's leadership in the region
- Preventative and restorative men's healing programs to help men address their issues in culturally sensitive ways
- Healing programs and services for 13 – 26 year olds who have experienced violence or abuse and are dealing with the impacts of trauma
- The development of community healing teams to support and drive healing at a local level

"This strategy is designed to address the trauma affecting Torres Strait communities as a result of colonisation," Healing Foundation Deputy Chair Leann Wilson said.

"It maps community needs and healing aspirations against existing healing work in the Torres Strait, identifies key gaps and proposes practical solutions to address them through service delivery at the local, state and federal government levels."

More than 600 people from throughout the Torres Strait have contributed to the strategy's development, including through two community healing forums supported by the Healing Foundation, along with government and non-government organisations.

"The recommendations contained in this strategy are drawn from the Kaurareg and Torres Strait healing gatherings and represent the voice and knowledge of the community," Ms Wilson said.

"We urge governments at the local, state and federal levels to acknowledge the strength of this wisdom by supporting and implementing this strategy."

The Healing Foundation is a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation with a focus on building culturally strong, community led healing solutions. More information is available at www.healingfoundation.org.au

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