

COLLABORATION AGREEMENT 2008 – 2011

Principles

The Australian Indigenous Doctors Association (AIDA) and Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand (Medical Deans), through this *Collaboration Agreement*, confirm their strong commitment to work together, under the following principles:

- Acknowledgement of the sovereignty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their self determination, ongoing relationship with land and cultural continuity
- Mutual regard and respect
- Inclusive consultation and decision making processes
- Valuing each others unique contributions
- Cultural safety for all peoples in all spheres, with an understanding of the issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Background

This *Collaboration Agreement* builds on the *Agreement for Collaboration between the Committee of Deans of Australian Medical Schools (CDAMS) and AIDA*, signed in October 2005. During the time of the previous agreement a number of ground breaking milestones were achieved.

These include:

- Completion of the *CDAMS Indigenous Health Curriculum Framework*
- Publishing of AIDA's report - *Healthy Futures : Defining best practice in the Recruitment and retention of Indigenous Medical Students*
- Revision of the Australian Medical Council's *Assessment and Accreditation of Medical Schools : Standards and Procedures*
- Establishment of the Leaders in Indigenous Medical Education (LIME) Network
- Holding the LIME Connection 2 and the inaugural LIMELight Awards, co-auspiced by AIDA and the Medical Deans

The relationship between AIDA and Medical Deans and the successes in relation to the joint work program have been widely recognised within Australia and abroad.

Context

This *Collaboration Agreement* has been signed within an environment of potentially transformative political and policy change. Respectful partnerships that deliver outcomes are what this *Collaboration Agreement* is about.

In late 2007/early 2008, Australian society actively participated in a number of important events that will impact on the future health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, such as:

- the Council of Australian Government's (COAG) commitment to Close the Gap in life expectancy, infant mortality and literacy and numeracy
- Prime Minister's National Apology
- new partnership between the Australian Government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health leaders via the Indigenous Health Equality Summit's Statement of Intent.

The challenge, as well as the potential, of this *Collaboration Agreement* is for AIDA and Medical Deans to jointly lead the way in realising the potential of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students embarking on a career in medicine, and non-Indigenous medical graduates practicing with cultural competence and confidence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health settings.

The compelling need for tangible long term improvements in the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as well as the need to adequately address health workforce shortage, provides AIDA and Medical Deans with key opportunities to influence the national health and education policy and program agendas.

Program of Collaboration for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Equality

AIDA and Medical Deans commit to working together on a *Program of Collaboration for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Equality* that will aim to deliver the following:

Increasing the recruitment, support, retention and graduation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students
Implementing the Medical Deans' Indigenous Health Curriculum Framework
Enhancing pathways into medicine for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
Advocating for the vertical integration of Indigenous Health Curriculum along the education and training continuum
Strengthening the network of medical educators in Indigenous health content, including offering lessons learned to other health disciplines
Providing leadership within the medical community on priority matters for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
Sharing our knowledge routinely and through specific initiatives such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural experiences

Specific priority outcomes over the next three years are:

Complete a Review of the Implementation of the Indigenous Health Curriculum Framework and Healthy Futures Report
Identify and implement specific initiatives that best contribute to the Closing the Gap agenda
Develop a proposal to establish Chairs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health in all jurisdictions within Australia
Share information and data including from the Critical Reflection Tool and Medical Schools Outcomes Survey Database
Continue the Indigenous Knowledge Initiative for Deans, to be held every second year
Provide leadership in the LIME Network
Co-auspice the biennial LIME Connection
Establish, with CPMEC and CPMC, a commitment to vertical integration of Indigenous health curriculum along the education and training continuum

In implementing the *Program of Collaboration for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Equality*, AIDA and Medical Deans will consult with each other in the exchange of ideas; notice of meetings; development of joint meetings; and the development of joint policy papers, media statements and funding submissions.

This Collaboration Agreement does not specifically bind AIDA or Medical Deans to act in any prescribed manner (including financial commitments) on any matter.

Operational

To optimise our shared understandings and continuing dialogue, the following operational arrangements will be implemented:

- Invitation for the AIDA President and Medical Deans Chairperson to address the Board of the partner organization once per year
- CEOs to meet six monthly to review the work program
- Review of the work program at the mid point of the agreement
- Consider the potential for joint events/initiatives, for example alignment of annual conferences

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