

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group on COVID-19, 5 March 2020

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group on COVID-19 (the taskforce) met for the first time today. The taskforce is co-chaired by the Department of Health and the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO). It includes Public Health Medical Officers and leaders from the Aboriginal Community Controlled Sector, Aboriginal Health Services, state and territory government public health and medical officials, Aboriginal communicable disease experts, the Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association and the National Indigenous Australians Agency.

The taskforce is fast-tracking the development of a dynamic and evolving Management Plan to implement the *Australian Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)* for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and communities. The Management Plan will complement other strategies, and will consider the practical and specific health, social and cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The principles of shared decision-making and co-design are central to this work. The management plan will focus on current containment activities as well as preparations for mitigation and treatment phases.

The taskforce will be providing input to the relevant sections of the *CDNA Series of National Guidelines for Public Health Units: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19 SoNG)* and will contribute to the development of culturally appropriate public communication materials.

The taskforce will progress work on the plan and meet again on Tuesday, 10 March 2020.