



Domain 4:
**Health &
wellbeing**



Our shared commitment: 'Self-determining, healthy and safe Aboriginal people and communities.'⁶



Goal 11: Aboriginal Victorians enjoy health and longevity

Objective 11.1 Improve Aboriginal health status, quality of life and life expectancy

Enjoying good health and wellbeing is fundamental. While many Aboriginal Victorians report good health and there have been areas of improvement, government, services and communities need to take significant steps to improve

health outcomes and quality of life for all Aboriginal Victorians. Improving health outcomes and having a good quality of life will ensure all Victorian Aboriginal communities can thrive.

“We need more end-to-end and holistic support.”

Community forum participant, Sale

“Prevention is better than cure.”

Community forum participant, Geelong



Goal 12: Aboriginal Victorians access the services they need

Objective 12.1 Improve access to health and community services for all Aboriginal Victorians

Access to primary health care is essential for supporting equitable health outcomes. Primary health care also plays an important role in prevention and early detection.

The provision of services alone does not ensure equity of access. Ensuring all Aboriginal Victorians can access the services they need means responding to the diversity of clients' needs. This includes promoting the voice of and providing support services to older people, people with a disability and people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, and intersex (LGBTI).

Aboriginal Elders hold a highly valued position in Aboriginal communities. Supporting Elders and older people to access health and community services can promote greater independence, cultural and social inclusion and quality of life.⁶

Aboriginal Victorians with a disability may face additional barriers to achieving health and wellbeing. Further work is required to transform the disability service system, including through the transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme, so that it is culturally safe and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal people with a disability and their families.

It's very difficult to find housing with suitable disability access.

Community forum participant, Seymour

Aged and palliative care need looking after.

Community forum participant, Mildura



Goal 13: Health and community services are culturally safe and responsive

Objective 13.1 Increase the cultural safety and responsiveness of services

It is important that Aboriginal Victorians can access culturally safe and culturally responsive health services when they need it – whether this is from an Aboriginal organisation or a mainstream service.

A culturally safe and racism-free health and community service system is one in which people feel safe, where they can freely affirm their identity and where their needs are met.⁶

A skilled and supported Aboriginal workforce plays a key role in supporting positive outcomes for Aboriginal patients, clients and communities.

Mainstream organisations and service providers need cultural change, and a broader support of Aboriginal culture throughout the organisation, from top-down and bottom-up.

It is not enough to simply employ an Aboriginal person - they need to be valued and supported as an Aboriginal person.

Community forum participant, Seymour



Goal 14: Aboriginal Victorians enjoy social and emotional wellbeing

Objective 14.1 Improve Aboriginal mental health and social and emotional wellbeing

Most Victorian Aboriginal people and communities enjoy excellent social and emotional wellbeing and mental health. However, many Aboriginal people report experiencing high or very high levels of psychological distress.

Connection to family, kinship and community has a strong influence on social and emotional wellbeing.⁷ It is vital that all Aboriginal Victorians, including people living with a disability, have social networks they can draw upon for everyday practical and emotional support, as well as during times of need.

It is important that Aboriginal Victorians have access to Aboriginal-led services that are appropriately resourced and trained to respond to mental-health care needs, as well as culturally informed mainstream services that understand Aboriginal concepts of social and emotional wellbeing.

Health and wellbeing need to be considered holistically, with greater mental health focus.

Community forum participant, Bendigo