



Fact Sheet: 'Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Origin?'

Why am I being asked this question?

Because we ask everybody...

The question 'Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?' is one of the routine questions that we ask of everybody using this service. Whether you are a non-Indigenous person, an Aboriginal person, a Torres Strait Islander person, or both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, your response is equally important.

Because information is important...

We have a responsibility to collect data from all our patients, so we can better understand the health of all Australians. This helps us to deliver the best health services, by helping governments use data to plan services that meet the needs of different groups of Australians. Good decision-making depends on good quality information.

To make good decisions for the health of Indigenous Australians, it is important to properly collect data on non-Indigenous patients as well as on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients. This allows us to better understand how health issues for Indigenous Australians might be the same as, or different to, other Australians.

Because it's the right thing to do...

The best way to get this information right is for us to ask you the standard Indigenous status question and let you answer for yourself. It isn't right for us to guess or make assumptions about who you are, or how you should be counted - we need you to tell us.

Because we care about our patients...

From the evidence we have, we know that many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are at greater risk of some health problems. We want to make sure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients have the option to access some of the specific services that can help to reduce these risks - such as health checks, immunisations or contact with an Aboriginal health worker.

To make sure that no Indigenous Australian misses out on these opportunities to reduce their risks and improve their health, we ask every patient whether they are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Will I be treated differently depending on my answer?

Different choices for different needs...

Every patient in this service receives the same high standard of care, delivered in a way to best meet your needs. Some patients with more complex needs or at higher risk of certain health conditions - such as older patients, pregnant women, or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients - might be offered some different choices or provided with specific information.

Support for any that need it...

To allow us to the best possible care for all our patients, we encourage you to ask questions, request information, and to talk with staff about any issues and concerns you may have. Some patients may require some additional support to do this, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients, or patients from different cultural backgrounds and language groups. Support services are available for all patients to use if they need to - please do not hesitate to tell us if you are in need of some additional support.

Different needs, same rights...

All our patients have the right to be treated fairly and with respect. This service works within anti-discrimination laws, which are in place to protect all people from discrimination or harassment on the basis of age, sex, race, disability and other characteristics. Please advise us if you feel you have been treated unfairly, or if you are unhappy with the quality of service you have received.

All your personal information is protected by a strict Privacy Act. The information we collect from patients can only be used to provide the best possible service, and to improve government planning and service delivery. Your personal information cannot be used for any other purpose without your free and informed consent.