



Terms of Reference – National Hypertension Taskforce Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Advisory Group

Background / Context

This document outlines the Terms of Reference for the National Hypertension Taskforce Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Advisory Group (the Advisory Group) which has been established as part of the National Hypertension Taskforce (the Taskforce). The Advisory Group will be co-chaired by Taskforce steering committee member Dr Andrew Goodman and Taskforce member Professor Tim Usherwood.

In response to the 2022 Call to Action (Schutte *et al*, 2022) the Taskforce was established with the remit to improving hypertension control rates in Australia from 32% to at least 70% by 2030 (Schutte *et al*, 2024). Successful hypertension control programs require multi-sector governance and stakeholders to guide the design and implementation of the program and ensure quality, patient safety, timely scale up, and adequate monitoring. The Advisory Group will provide culturally relevant advice, guidance and governance to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, doing and being are included in the Taskforce remit.

Purpose

The purpose of the Advisory Group is to have critical oversight, governance over, and to provide strategic advice to ensure cultural relevance to the remit of the Taskforce.

Role and Responsibilities

- To advise the National Hypertension Taskforce Steering Committee regarding the impact of hypertension and gaps in its management, and the consequent priorities for intervention in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- To provide strategic guidance and advice to member organisations of the National Hypertension Taskforce on addressing the burden of hypertension Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in projects specifically designed to advance the Taskforce's mission.
- To inform Working and Project Groups about the specific needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and culturally safe and appropriate strategies for addressing these.
- To assist the Taskforce in engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, provider organisations, and policy makers to address the impact of hypertension and gaps in its management.



Membership

- Appointment to the Advisory Group is on an honorary basis.
- Key influential stakeholders concerned with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and hypertension control will be invited to be representatives. The individual representatives would be senior, influential within their constituencies, and advocates for implementing the Taskforce's recommendations.
- The Advisory Group will be led by Co-Chairs from the National Hypertension Taskforce, including one member of the National Hypertension Taskforce Steering Committee.

Membership Term

- The Advisory Group is effective from Q1 2025 and will exist until the goal of reaching 70% control rates is achieved or until termination by agreement between collaborating partners.

Meetings

- There will be quarterly meetings where relevant Project Leads will present to and seek the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Advisory Groups strategic advice.
- Correspondence may be required between meetings and will be managed via email and/or teleconference at the discretion of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Advisory Group Co-Chairs.

Reporting to Taskforce Steering Committee

- The Co-Chairs will report high-level strategic advice to the Steering Committee quarterly during Steering Committee meetings and Hypertension Taskforce biannually.

Governance

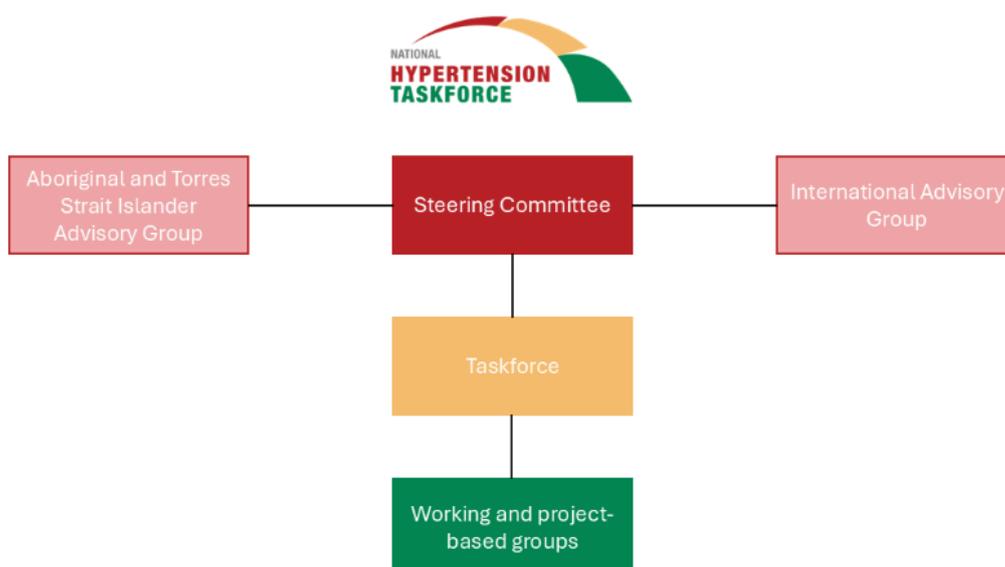


Figure 1. Governance structure of the National Hypertension Taskforce.



Deliverables

- Contributing to a long-term Taskforce strategy and comprehensive Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander action plan for working across identified focus areas with strategies for implementation.
- Provide strategic guidance and advice to Project Leads, including during meetings, as well as through ad hoc correspondence and document review between meetings at the discretion of the Advisory Group Co-Chairs.

Amendments to Terms of Reference

- These Terms of Reference may be amended at the discretion of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Advisory Group, with approval from the Steering Committee.

References

Schutte AE, Webster R, Jennings G, Schlaich M. Uncontrolled blood pressure in Australia: a call to action. *Med J Aus* 2022; 216(2):61-63; doi: 10.5694/mja2.51350.

Schutte AE, Bennett B, Chow CK, Cloud GC, Doyle K, Girdis Z, Golledge J, Goodman A, Hespe CM, Hsu MP, James S. National Hypertension Taskforce of Australia: a roadmap to achieve 70% blood pressure control in Australia by 2030. *The Medical Journal of Australia*. 2024 Jul 12;221(3):n-a; doi:10.5694/mja24.00174.