

## Hunter New England Local Health District

# Sorry Statement

Hunter New England Local Health District acknowledges and expresses deep regret that policies and actions of our health services have affected the human dignity and spirit of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

We accept that these policies were inappropriate and inequitable and that their implementation over many years significantly contributed to the current health status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

We acknowledge the marginalisation and dispossession of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to experience lingering effects on health status as a consequence of health management practices.

We regret the hurt and harm caused by the forced removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families and acknowledge that many have spent their lives not knowing traditional country, culture or family.

Hunter New England Health is committed to 'Closing the Gap', and improving the health outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We are committed to the development of culturally safe partnerships with local Aboriginal communities, organisations, Community Controlled Health Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff of Hunter New England Health.

We commit to the provision of culturally safe and respectful services and a culturally safe environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accessing our services, their families and community, and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people working within our service. We are committed to the elimination of racism in all its forms. We aim for all our health services to offer equity of access and contribute to improved health status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



Michael DiRienzo  
Chief Executive



Apology