

SHARING THE GIFT OF CARING

Graduating with a Certificate III in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care (HLT30113) has given proud Kamilaroi woman Terri Winters the confidence to help the next generation better care for themselves and each other.

The mother-of-two is now so inspired to make a difference for First Nations people that she is furthering her studies with a **Certificate IV in Crime and Justice Studies** (10283NAT), focusing on Indigenous health.

"At the end of my studies, I intend to put my new skills to work by creating health-focused corrections workshops for Indigenous women who are suffering from substance abuse," Terri said.

"I have enjoyably spent the majority of my life working within the beauty

industry however, as I've gotten older, I've become passionate about becoming a valuable member of my community through helping others to create positive change.

"I'm very proud of my culture and take very seriously the responsibility of being someone that my children and others in my community can respectfully look up to and follow," she said.

Having previously

completed a **Diploma of Beauty Therapy** (SHB50115) in
2013, Terri is again returning to the
TAFE Queensland Toowoomba campus
to study.

"I feel incredibly supported as a First Nations' student at the Toowoomba campus. My current studies are not set out like the Indigenous health studies are, however thanks to the above and beyond support provided to me by the Indigenous Student Support Officer and crime and justice faculty, I'm continuing to thrive within my chosen studies," she said.

"Through my TAFE studies, I was also able to make connections with likeminded community members, which in turn has created many opportunities for me to learn even more about my culture.



Terri Rose Ann Winters with her children Piper and Marcel

"As a future Elder, I feel strongly about developing the skills to become an active participant in supporting the closing the gap initiatives within my community."

TAFE Queensland is proud to be the largest and most experienced Vocational Education and Training (VET) provider in the state. Every year more than 4,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students study with TAFE Queensland.

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ZILEACHE'S DESIRE TO HELP OTHERS

Zileache Fujii is taking advantage of an opportunity to kick start her dream career as a health worker, enrolling in TAFE Queensland training while completing her senior high school studies.

AFE at School student Zileache said she wants to follow in the footsteps of her grandmother and pursue a career helping others.

"My grandma passed away, but she was a nurse for a very long time and she's my big inspiration. I really looked up to her and she always encouraged me to strive to succeed and to never give up," Zileache said.

"It's just amazing seeing nurses and health workers saving lives or helping people who need it."

Zileache, 17, grew up on Badu Island. On her mother's side, Zileache belongs to the Argan tribe from the Torres Strait and her totems are thupmul (stingray) and thabu (snake). On her father's side, Zileache's cultural connections extend to the Gaidai tribe from the small village of Old Mawatta in Papua New Guinea, which recognises sible (crocodile) and gera (sea snake) as totems.

Zileache is completing Year 12 on Thursday Island, studying a Certificate II in Health Support Services (HLT23215) through TAFE at School.

"Listening to my grandmother and the Elders' stories, they didn't have the same opportunities like we have today. I'm glad that TAFE has given me the opportunity to study health."

"I want to finish Year 12 and get my certificate II and one day become a primary health worker," she said.

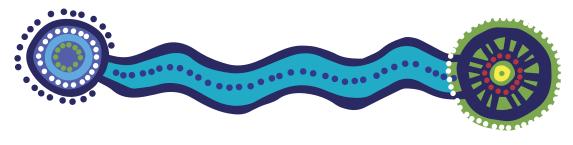
Zileache said she liked participating in practical training at TAFE Queensland. "The TAFE teachers treat you like you're an adult and they're basically training you for the real world."

"I've been learning a lot about health care including how to perform CPR and how to handle asthma and strokes." she continued.

"It's good to learn those things because by gaining that knowledge I'll be qualified and will know what to do in emergencies if someone needs help."

Zileache said she wanted to set a good example for others.

"I want to make my family proud and encourage other Indigenous kids to not give up, to try their best and give it their all. If you put your mind to it, you'll reach your goals."



CLAYTON'S READY FOR THE NAVY

TAFE Queensland has partnered with the Royal Australian Navy to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to overcome barriers and pursue a career with the Australian Defence Force.

Graduate Clayton Anderson knows firsthand the positive impact of the Navy Indigenous Development Program (NIDP).

Clayton is from the Aboriginal Garawa and Yanuwa people, and grew up in the small community of Borroloola in the Gulf of Carpentaria region in the Northern Territory. At the age of 30, he gave up his job at a mine and relocated to Cairns to participate in the NIDP.

"It was hard to leave my family and my mother was sad, but very proud at the same time," Clayton said.

The five-month-long program is for young Indigenous adults who want to join the Australian Defence Force, but who may be challenged by reading and writing, or fitness. As part of the NIDP, recruits participate in military skills, physical fitness activities, and cultural appreciation and leadership exercises.

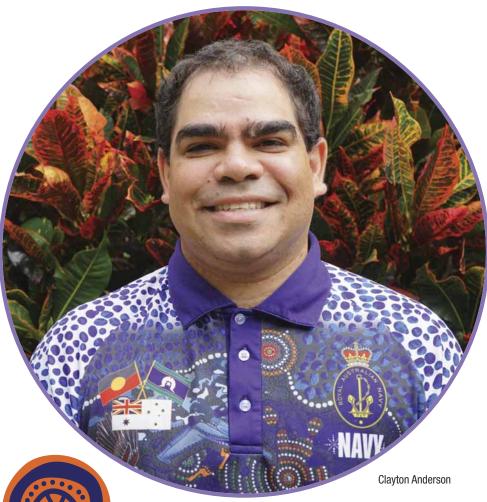
Participants also undertake language, literacy and numeracy training at the TAFE Queensland Cairns campus and attend the Great Barrier Reef International Marine College to complete a Certificate I in Maritime Operations (General Purpose Hand Near Coastal) (MAR10318).

Clayton said he valued the opportunity to further his education.

"It was challenging to return to studying, but it has broadened my knowledge. The English, mathematics and communication skills I learned at TAFE are helping me to better myself in everyday life," Clayton said.

"I have always encouraged people to take in all the knowledge that they can. Education is one of the most important things that you can ever attain and the more education you get the easier you will track down your path in life. "The facilities at TAFE are great.
The teachers and mentors have been amazing, they're very experienced and very knowledgeable. They put so much time into supporting everyone in the program. It was the most impressive display of teaching that I have seen," he said.

Education is one of the most important things that you can ever attain... 11



Now a graduate of the program, Clayton is more determined

than ever to pursue a career in the Australian Defence Force.

"I want a long, successful career in the Navy, possibly in navigation. My studies at TAFE gave me the opportunity to improve my knowledge of mathematics and I'd like to use those skills and take them with me to get into navigation." Clayton said he hopes his journey inspires others.

"One of my goals is to share my experience with my community. It would be a great thing for me to be able to share the challenges I faced and my achievements. I want to inspire others to learn and develop themselves as much as they can, whether it be through TAFE, the Navy or other opportunities."

EASING THE FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN

Sarah Baker knows what it is like to step into the unknown. That's why she has made supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at TAFE Queensland's Townsville (Pimlico) campus her lifelong career.

s a 12-year-old, Sarah was sent to Aboarding school in the outback Queensland town Charters Towers, thousands of kilometres from her water-skirted home of Erub (Darnley Island) in the Torres Strait.

For Sarah, the school might well have been on the moon.

"I was so home sick. They didn't speak my language, they didn't eat my food. Even walking past the kitchen made me feel sick from the smells," Sarah said.

"I know what it is like to fear the unknown. And that is why I think it is so important that we do everything we can to make TAFE Queensland a safe place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students," she said.

Sarah is an Indigenous Student Support Officer (ISSO) at TAFE Queensland - she's worked in multiple roles in her two-decade long career but it is the past eight years as an ISSO where she has really felt able to make a difference.

ISSOs are located across TAFE Queensland, and help support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with enrolment to graduation, and everything in between.

"I always wanted to do something to be able to give back and help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people," Sarah said.

"I want Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to be comfortable when they walk in the door and feel like this is a safe place and a place where they deserve to be," she said.

For the past year, Sarah has been actively engaged in TAFE Queensland's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) working group.



The second RAP is currently under review, with Sarah keen to continue implementing the goals across the whole organisation.

"I am in a position where I clearly see the challenges we have and I am surprised how differently reconciliation is viewed across the state," Sarah said.

"There are improvements to be made and in some places there is lots of catching up to be done, but we can do it. It is about understanding and working together.

"I am so pleased that the conversation has been started, now everyone needs to participate," she said.

Sarah is encouraging her colleagues to take a moment to learn about TAFE Queensland's RAP and find ways to integrate its objectives into their daily work.

"For example, anyone can say an Acknowledgement in a meeting. It doesn't have to be an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person. This is part of understanding. Reconciliation is everyone's business."







PIPE DREAM CHANGES LACHLAN'S LIFE

For Lachlan Blow, school was tough. He often skipped class, got expelled numerous times and moved from school-to-school hoping to get on the right track.

didn't like school at all. I felt like I wasn't good enough to do anything. I had no confidence or direction," Lachlan said.

This was concerning for his loving and supportive family, who encouraged Lachlan to try a TAFE at School course to keep him busy and perhaps ignite a love for learning.

Lachlan's mother Deb Blow said it was hard to see her son disengaged and lacking enthusiasm for school.

"As a mother, it's heartbreaking when your child has little sense of self-worth, but I knew I just had to help him find something he enjoyed while building his skills and confidence." Deb said.

While still in high school, Lachlan enrolled into a **Certificate II in Plumbing** (52700WA) at TAFE
Queensland's Ashmore campus and, for the first time, he enjoyed learning and felt like he belonged.

With his newfound thirst for knowledge, Lachlan enrolled in more training and

went on to complete a **Certificate III in Plumbing** (CPC32413).

"Since starting at TAFE Queensland my life has changed, and through encouragement from my teachers I found the confidence to pursue an apprenticeship. I now have goals and dreams that I once never thought were possible," Lachlan said.

Compared to his high school experience, Lachlan said TAFE Queensland's learning environment was supportive and inspiring.

"I always struggled to ask for help, but my TAFE Queensland teachers gave me reassurance that no question was too silly and I gained the confidence to speak up when I needed guidance," he said.

Lachlan was taken on as an apprentice by Todd's Plumbing and Electrical under the State Government's free apprenticeships for under 25s funding.

"Todd has made me the best plumber possible with his wealth of experience and patience to show me the ropes on general and specialised jobs," Lachlan said.

"As a plumber, each day is different and it's a great feeling to work closely in a team of likeminded people," he said. Lachlan is a Mununjali
Aboriginal man and in the future plans to share his knowledge with his community.

"I will definitely one day start my own plumbing business. I want to do what Todd has done for me and provide a supportive working environment for young people to get into a trade and start earning money and turn their life around in a positive way," Lachlan said.

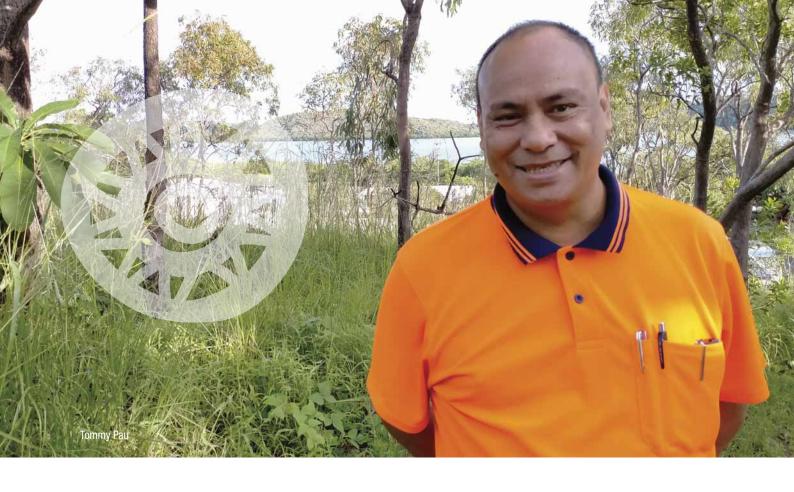
"I really want to give back to my community and help others who were like me and did not see a future for themselves. I want to be able to show them what is possible and that they can do it if they are willing to work hard and commit."

Lachlan hopes his journey inspires others to consider enrolling in TAFE at School or taking up an apprenticeship.

"An apprenticeship is the best thing in the world to do – you will never look back. It will open up possibilities you may not have thought were possible," Lachlan said.

"Believe in yourself, take opportunities, don't be scared, and give it all you've got to reap the rewards."





SUPPORTING CULTURAL ARTISTS

Robert 'Tommy' Pau has come full circle, transitioning from student to teacher to help more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people explore and celebrate their culture through art.

ommy, a Torres Strait Islander man, grew up on Thursday Island and spent his early career working as a school teacher and in security before he decided to focus on his art.

"I've been drawing since I was a little boy and I was influenced by comics. Growing up, that was the only reading material we had. I started reading comic books and copying the art and I've been drawing ever since," Tommy said.

"I was doing art at home as a hobby and I thought it was good art. I then decided that I wanted to test myself out in the real world, so I took all my stuff and went around Cairns to various places to promote myself," he said.

Tommy said in the early days, it was hard to have his work recognised.

"I didn't have formal art training when I started out and it was challenging to network and sell my art," Tommy said.

In order to succeed, Tommy turned to TAFE Queensland, completing numerous artistic qualifications including a Certificate IV in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Arts (CUA40615) and a Diploma of Visual Arts (CUA51115).

Tommy said his TAFE Queensland training helped him improve his

> technique and make strong connections with the art community.

> > "My training got me into the arts industry and I started getting recognised and building my profile," he said.

"During my studies, our class was encouraged to put in works for the Telstra

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Awards. None of us got in, but it gave us inspiration and the courage to put our work out there."

Tommy admits sharing work publicly can be a vulnerable time for some artists.

I want people to know that the career opportunities available in cultural arts are immense. 33

"The main thing artists, especially emerging artists need to remember is they shouldn't be scared or frightened or ashamed to share their work with others," Tommy said.

"Art is a personal thing and can be really subjective. So the way I look at is if 100 people come and see my artwork, I only need that one person to like my work and purchase it. As long as my work is connecting with that one per cent, I'm happy.

"As my career progressed, I kept putting my work forward for art awards and eventually I was shortlisted and even ended up winning a Telstra National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Award," he said.

Accolades and countless exhibitions later, Tommy wanted to give back and share his technical skills with others.

"I started a teacher internship program at the TAFE Queensland Cairns campus and completed a **Certificate IV in Training and Assessment** (TAE40116)."

Now, Tommy is teaching cultural arts studies across northern Queensland and said it's incredibly rewarding.

"I would say most Indigenous people have some art skills and some are very good, but talking about materials, techniques or elements and principles can be challenging. It's one thing to create art, but to talk about art in technical terms is a whole other thing and you need that knowledge out in the industry," Tommy said.

"I want to give that knowledge to people and give them the ability to know the materials they're working with. For example, a pencil is not just a pencil. You've got different grains and they work differently. How to hold a pencil matters and there are different ways to hold it. Sharpening a pencil is also a really important skill and then there's paint, which is a technology in itself.

"That's my passion at the moment: to bring the technical know-how to cultural arts and help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists talk about their work on a whole new level," he said.

Tommy said he wants to inspire his students to be part of a movement in their own communities to encourage and empower more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to use art to express themselves.

"If more people use art to tell stories the industry will become more vibrant and creative. From that, innovation and new styles will emerge and more art centres will open up, creating more job opportunities in communities," Tommy said.

"Thanks to the internet, people can stay in their communities and promote and sell their art online. They don't need to leave the Torres Strait or where they live and move to a city.

"Selling art or working in an arts centre aren't the only job opportunities for cultural artists. Art is everywhere, it's in industrial design, computer graphics, gaming, public works and so many other avenues. I want people to know that the career opportunities available in cultural arts are immense."

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Everyone's journey is different and sometimes you need some extra support. We're here to help.

Our student support services are available for all of our students, making your learning experience just that little bit easier.

Student Support Officers can offer advice and help on topics, including:

- career options and employment opportunities
- choosing the right course or pathway
- enrolments, financial assistance, Centrelink ABSTUDY enquiries, and funding opportunities
- accommodation, travel and welfare
- government department, community service providers and advocacy services referrals
- learning and study support
- enrolment into 'Away from Base' courses

Counselling Support

Short-term counselling services are available to all students. Counselling sessions are free and completely confidential.

AccessAbility Support

If you identify with having a disability, our staff can work with you to develop a support plan.

RESIDENTIAL BLOCK TRAINING

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students don't need to live near one of our campuses to study a course with us.

Depending on your location, TAFE Queensland north region and south west region deliver a number of courses via residential study blocks. These courses are registered as Away from Base courses, which means you may be able to have your travel, accommodation and a meal allowance paid when you attend residential blocks. Students must be registered with ABSTUDY to be eligible for Away from Base funding.

LIBRARY SERVICES

All students are able to access the TAFE Queensland library network. The library network offers a range of physical and digital services and resources to support you throughout your study.

tafeqld.edu.au/library

CONTACT US

For more information on the range of student support services available or to make contact with a Student Support Officer, visit

tafeqld.edu.au/student-support-services



ROTHANNA'S COMMITMENT TO BEING A ROLE MODEL

Rothanna Ahwang

As the eldest of five children, it's no surprise that Rothanna Ahwang is making a career in caring for children, and all the while she's striving to be a role

model within her community too.

ith a strong connection to family and community, Rothanna has made it her mission to educate herself to help shape the future of the children she works with.

> The dedicated Torres Strait Islander woman has completed her Certificate III in Early Childhood **Education and Care** (CHC30113), and is now enrolled in a Diploma of Early Childhood **Education and Care** (CHC50113).

"I am passionate about children and giving them the best start in their early childhood journey," Rothanna

Thanks to the Queensland Government's free apprenticeships for under 25s funding, Rothanna was able to choose TAFE Queensland to help her reach her career goals while mostly remaining within the community and her workplace.

"Culture and family is a very important part of being an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person, and connecting with community is a top priority for me. Some people go to uni, I chose to stay, work and study through a traineeship pathway. I am connected to my family

and this was an important decision for me staying on Thursday Island," Rothanna said.

"The certificate III has impacted my life by inspiring me to study further for a better career.

"My training has really helped me to grow in this industry and I am thankful for the opportunity, and thankful for the teachers who have been such an inspiration," she said.

Not one to shy from a challenge, Rothanna, who also has a serious medical condition, managed to study and work full time throughout the pandemic.

"We were cut off from the rest of Queensland - my teacher was grounded and missed two visits. But we found a way to study through FaceTime," Rothanna said.

"It was difficult, but I was confident that I would be able to complete my study and assessment," she said.

Rothanna's commitment to learning and being a great role model in her community earned her a regional 2021 Queensland Training Award nomination.



STAGE YOUR COMEBACK FREE AND LOW COST TRAINING Our JobTrainer funded courses are for school-leavers and job seekers looking to develop new skills. Over 70 free or low cost courses available* Visit tafeqld.edu.au/jobtrainer for the variety of study areas. *Eligibility criteria applies for students to access funding. Training is delivered by TAFE Queensland and jointly funded by the Australian Government and Queensland Government.



RUSSELL PROVES IT'S NEVER TOO LATE

At age 65, Indigenous man Russell Humble was apprehensive about returning to school and studying with TAFE Queensland. But after some encouragement from his family and support from his classmates, he's now training towards his dream job in disability support.

working with the disabled through helping them feel human, teaching them to do everyday things and just help them enjoy their life,"

Russell said.

"I haven't got the patience for a lot of things, but when it comes to the disabled, I've got all the patience in the world. It's the most satisfying work I've ever done. I love seeing them do something for the first time and watching them light up is amazing for me," he said.

Due to the pandemic, Russell decided to make helping those in need his main job. But every prospective employer told him to get work he needed to get qualified. "I hadn't studied since high school, so the idea of training at my age was very daunting," Russell said.

While apprehensive about enrolling to study at 65-years-of-age, his wife and daughter encouraged him to reach out to TAFE Queensland and enquire.

"When I contacted TAFE to get more information, I was surprised at how supportive the staff were and how easy it was for me to enrol, age really wasn't a barrier at all," he said.

Russell went on to enrol in a **Certificate III in Individual Support – Ageing, Home and Community** (CHC33015).

"Learning to use computers has been a challenge, but my classmates and I go to the library between classes and they teach me how to make the most of them," he said.

Russell also loves learning hands-on in a state-of-the-art health lab and he credits his TAFE Queensland teachers for making the course content easy to understand.

"Every day here is a step closer to getting the job I really want. This is the right place for me to learn and the lab is like a small hospital and it'll help me easily transition to placement," Russell said.

"My training is going so well that I was able to have a chat in medical terminology with the nurse who gave me a flu jab. I was surprised at how quickly I'm developing," he said.

Russell, who belongs to the Kamilaroa Aboriginal tribe, can see how the skills he's learning will benefit his community by helping those in need, whether that's in a hospital or an aged care facility.

"Thanks to the quality of my training, I know I'll get a job once I finish because there is so much need for carers out there at the moment," Russell said.

"I may have taken the long road to get here, but this is my calling and I'm looking forward to helping others in need.

"Training at my age can be daunting, but if I can do it, anyone can. Everyone at TAFE Queensland has really looked after me and been so helpful in helping me to achieve my overall goal."



CULTURAL CONNECTION COMES FULL CIRCLE



Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage is something that is very personal, you might feel strongly about the culture, customs, or the history may resonate with you in a particular way. Maybe the country is calling you.

his was the case for Glenn Barry, who in 1997 was a 25-year-old studying Aboriginal art as part of a literacy and numeracy program at TAFE Queensland's Coolangatta campus however, at the time, he didn't identify as Indigenous.

"It was my Aboriginal art teacher, Aunty Joyce Summers who asked me where I came from," Glenn said.

"For as long as I can remember my grandfather identified as Maori however after he passed away we learned he only said this to protect himself from being the stolen generation.

"Aunty Joyce picked my Aboriginal heritage before I even knew it myself and it was through her stories that took me on a purifying experience, where

the country called me to the land in north-west New South Wales, helping me understand my identity and

ancestral history," he said.

> Glenn said his time at TAFE Queensland helped him establish who he was and where he belonged, something he is truly proud of.

"Since the day I found out I was Aboriginal I have done everything in my power to connect to my culture and I've invested everything

Maybe the

country

you."

is calling

Glenn, who now identifies as a Gamilaraay man, went on to complete a Bachelor of Fine Art and Bachelor of Digital Media with Honours and returned to TAFE Queensland in 2017 as the Indigenous Support Officer for the Gold Coast

"Becoming comfortable with my culture later in life inspired me to keep that going for myself and other people, and I have come full circle back to TAFE Queensland where my connection first began." Glenn said.

"My role at TAFE Queensland provides a platform to engage with staff and students to help them understand their history and see things with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lens.

"I enjoy being of service and having the opportunity to draw on things that are not typically taught in the classroom and to use my ancestral knowledge and connection with culture to embrace all kinds of people," he said.

Recently, Glenn was in a room of 70 TAFE Queensland staff at the Southport campus and one person put their hand up to say they are Aboriginal for the very first time in their life.

"These experiences, where people are finding their Indigenous ancestry late in life happen in many classes where I support the cultural safety classes we deliver at TAFE Queensland Gold Coast," Glenn said.

"It's heart-warming to be part of these cathartic moments and to be the bridge that helps people connect to culture, just like Aunty Joyce once did for me," he said.

Glenn's job is to not only support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students, but also to work with those who don't identify and educate them about Indigenous ways and culture.

To anyone who wants to learn more about the culture, their own identity, or

is apprehensive about having that conversation Glenn said his door is always open.

"Email me, give me a call or just drop into my office at the Southport campus, I am here to listen and connect TAFE Queensland staff and students to the spirit of this country," he said.

Glenn said when the voice inside is so loud and you can't ignore it, that's the time to start tapping in and connect with people who can help and guide you.

"Our identity is not measured by the shade of our skin, but by something stronger found within."



WORKING TOGETHER TO KEEP COMMUNITIES SAFE

INFORMATION ABOUT VACCINATION AGAINST COVID-19

The COVID-19 vaccines are now available for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 12 years and over.

COVID-19 vaccines remain our best way out of this pandemic as they can help keep you from getting really sick and needing to go to the hospital.

The vaccines are most effective when you've received two doses of the same vaccine within the recommended timeframe. The first dose of your vaccine will begin to build up a protective response against COVID-19 in your system.

The second dose will boost your immune response to give you long-term protection against COVID-19. Without the second dose, your body will not be able to fight the virus as effectively.

At your first vaccination appointment, your healthcare worker will tell you when you should book your appointment for your second dose.

COVID-19 vaccines are just one part of keeping the community safe and healthy. People and communities should all continue keeping COVIDSafe by regularly washing your hands and keeping two big steps away from others.

You can access the vaccine at Queensland Health locations across the state, or from your local General Practitioner or pharmacy.

Go to health.qld.gov.au/vaccinelocations

and the 2014 Australian of the Year

ADAM GOODES

" I think it's very important that all of us here in Australia should get vaccinated to protect our family and friends.

To my Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander brothers and sisters, it's just as important for us to know the risks of COVID-19 but more importantly the benefits of being vaccinated and the benefits to our mob and all of us going out there and getting that jab."



Sourced from the Australian Government's COVID-19 vaccination real people stories (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples) resources and materials.



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