



NATSIAACC position on the Voice to Parliament Referendum

As the national peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ageing and aged care in Australia, NATSIAACC believes that having an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice enshrined in Australia's Constitution is critical to addressing the health and wellbeing inequalities that continue to devastate Australia's First Nation's peoples.

The impact of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people has been devastating. Intergenerational and ongoing trauma have created and perpetuated disadvantage - and resulted in significant inequalities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

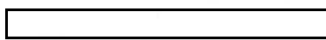
Despite the [National Agreement on Closing the Gap](#), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people still have more chronic diseases¹ and shorter life expectancy² than the rest of the Australian population. The Productivity Commission recently noted that the more recent data provide a concerning indication that the life expectancy gap may widen in future.³ It's not enough - we need something to change to start making a real impact.

The [Uluru Statement of the Heart](#) was developed after years of meaningful consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities. An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament will be a powerful mechanism that will ensure the Australian Government hears from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people about issues that impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Having an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice enshrined in Australia's Constitution is about providing hope for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities - and hope for future generations. Hope that the world's oldest living culture can be truly empowered to have a real say and standing in their Country, which they have nurtured for thousands of years.

We stand on the shoulders of our ancestors - in the 1967 Referendum Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were counted - in the 2023 Referendum your 'Yes' vote will empower our people to be heard.

Jill Gallagher AO
NATSIAACC Chair



Lisa Ogolo
Chief Executive Officer

¹ Status and determinants of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health | Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care, <https://www.health.gov.au/topics/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-health/status-and-determinants>, accessed 27 August 2023.

² Deaths in Australia, Life expectancy - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (aihw.gov.au), <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports-data/health-conditions-disability-deaths/life-expectancy-deaths/overview>, accessed 27 August 2023.

³ Productivity Commission, 2023, *Review of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap*, Draft Report, p6.