

Position Statement

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

Jewish Care has one clear vision: **Together, building and supporting a healthy, resilient, and inclusive Jewish community.** Our values are universal and enduring in nature, but are also particular to the Jewish approach to creating a meaningful life, and a strong, cohesive community.

Our foundational values define who we are and underpin everything we do. The values, **Respect** (*derech erez*), **Community** (*kehilla*), **Inclusion** (*hachlala*) and **Social Responsibility** (*achrayoot chevratit*), are about people - they provide a moral compass for the way we respond to challenges and the decisions we make.

These values pervade every aspect Jewish Care, informing relationships between colleagues, staff and clients, and our organisation and the wider community.

The Board of Jewish Care seeks to demonstrate our commitment to these values by clearly stating Jewish Care's position on important issues that are contextual to the Jewish community's rich history or because it frames the way we will conduct ourselves and our engagement with members of the community.

Preface

Jewish Care recognises and acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as traditional owners and custodians of lands and waters across Australia. In doing so, it acknowledges and pays respect to all elders past and present connected to the lands that Jewish Care buildings and services currently occupy and utilise.

Jewish Care acknowledges that there is embedded prejudice and discrimination against members of many minority groups within Australian society. Similar to the Jewish experience, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders have experienced atrocities, persecution, marginalisation and dislocation.

Indigenous Australians are especially vulnerable. According to the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, the unemployment rate for Indigenous people in 2014-15 was 20.6%ⁱ. Indigenous people are over-represented

דרך ארץ
derech erez
respect

קהילה
kehilla
community

הכללה
hachlala
inclusion

אחריות חברתית
achrayoot chevratit
social responsibility

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ⁱ ABS 2008: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, 2008. Available: <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/4714.0~2014-15~Main%20Features~Labour%20force%20characteristics~6>

clients of homelessness services; in 2016-17, Indigenous people represented 25% of homelessness services; in 2016-17, Indigenous people represented 25% of homelessness clientsⁱⁱ. In 2014-15, the median equivalised gross weekly household income for Indigenous adults was \$542 compared with \$852 for non-Indigenous adultsⁱⁱⁱ.

Health outcomes are lower than the general population; welfare dependency is proportionately greater and educational outcomes poorer^{iv}.

Position Statement

Jewish Care:

- Recognises The United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*^v;
- Respects the right to inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, on the basis of their free, prior and informed consent, in any partnership or collaborative work that Jewish Care undertakes with or for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
- Will acknowledge and pay respect to all elders past and present connected to the lands that Jewish Care buildings and services currently occupy and utilise at any formal events;
- Commits to strengthening cultural competency and responsiveness across our workforce through professional development, including on the specific needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; and
- Advocates where appropriate on behalf of, and with the ATSI community, to ensure appropriate representation and consultation on matters relating to education, employment, housing, healthcare, welfare and the justice system.

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This Position Statement was reviewed and approved by the CEO in August 2021.

ⁱⁱ Health and Welfare (AIHW) (2018). Specialist Homelessness 2015-16 report. Available: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-2016-17/contents/client-groups-of-interest/indigenous-clients>

ⁱⁱⁱ Health and Welfare (AIHW) (2017). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework, 2017 report. Available: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/indigenous-health-welfare/health-performance-framework/contents/tier-2/income-measure-2-08>

^{iv} Australian Human Rights Commission. A statistical overview of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia, 2008. Available: <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/publications/statistical-overview-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-peoples-australia-social>

^v United Nations (2008). United Nations Declaration on the Right of Indigenous People.

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