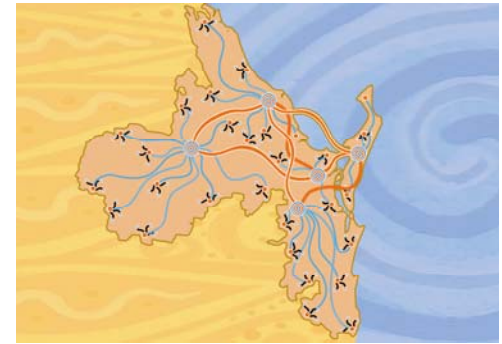


Closing the Gap

Information Sheet



What is “Closing the Gap”?

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a shorter life expectancy than non-Indigenous Australians of up to 17 years. “Closing the Gap” is about closing the gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people by improving the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This gap is largely due to chronic disease.

Many general practices (medical centres) have made a commitment to improving the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by joining a Medicare Australia program called the **Indigenous Health Incentive** also called the **Closing the Gap program** (see over page for a list of registered practices).

What is Chronic Disease?

A **chronic disease** is an ongoing illness you have had, or are likely to have for at least six months. Many chronic diseases can be **prevented** or **better managed** by a **healthy lifestyle** and by **professional health care**. Some chronic diseases include: asthma, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, arthritis and stroke.

Who can join the program?

Patients of participating practices can register for Closing the Gap if they meet the following **eligibility criteria**:

- Identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander;
- Be 15 years or older;
- Hold a current Medicare Card; and
- Have been diagnosed as having a chronic disease or at high risk of developing a chronic disease.

What do I get if I join the program?

If your doctor knows you are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, has diagnosed you as having a chronic disease and you have joined the program, he/she can then write you an individual care plan to closely manage your specific health care needs. This may include referrals to specialists and to an Indigenous Care Co-ordinator if you have complex chronic conditions.

Specialist treatment together with a healthy lifestyle can help reduce symptoms, slow the progress of the chronic disease and potentially give you a better quality of life with a longer life expectancy.

How do I join Closing the Gap with a registered practice?

1. You must **identify** as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander with your practice—let your doctor or the practice staff know.
2. Ask your doctor for a **health check**, this will help your doctor to determine if you have a chronic disease or if you are at high risk of developing a chronic disease.
3. If eligible, you will need to complete a **Patient Registration Form** and a **Patient Consent Form** (every 12 months), both forms will be available from your doctor’s practice.

How do I get free or discounted medications?

To get free or discounted medications, you will need to be eligible for the **PBS Co-Payment Measure** which is another Medicare Australia program and part of the Closing the Gap program. Eligibility is as follows:

- Identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander;
- Hold a current Medicare Card; and
- Have been diagnosed as having a chronic disease or at high risk of developing a chronic disease.

To join this Measure you will need to complete the same forms as for the Indigenous Health Incentive and tick the box for the PBS Co-Payment Measure.

If you hold a concession card you will get your prescription medications for free. If you don’t hold a concession card, you will get your medications at the concession rate (Pharmaceutical Benefits Schedule (PBS) medications only).

Please ensure that your doctor writes CTG at the top of your script, you can take these prescriptions to any pharmacy or chemist except for hospital pharmacies.

Any eligible patients can join either programs or both.



Registered Practices Wide Bay

Here is a list of practices in the Wide Bay region that have registered for the **Indigenous Health Incentive**:

Galangoor Duwalami Primary Health Service 5 Tavistock St, Torquay Ph 07 4194 5554	Hillyard St Medical Surgery 11 Hillyard St, Pialba Ph 07 4128 1400
Monsour Medical Practice 8 Main St, Pialba Ph 07 4124 1588	Fraser Shores Medical Cent Shop 15, 79-81 Boat Harbour Drv, Pialba. Ph 07 4124 6333
Ikram Family Practice 61 Main St, Pialba Ph 07 4128 1930	Torquay Family Practice 418 Esplanade, Torquay Ph 07 4125 2422
Main St Medical Centre 71 Main St, Pialba Ph 07 4128 3644	Primary Care Medical Centre Melroy Place, 53-55 Torquay Rd, Pialba. Ph 07 4124 3881
Murphy St Medical Centre 2/36 Murphy St, Point Vernon Ph 07 4194 1099	Fraser Coast Medical Centre 32 Taylor St, Pialba Ph 07 4124 1122
The Monsour Clinic 74 William St, Howard Ph 07 4129 0333	Kent St Medical Centre 254 Kent St, Maryborough Ph 07 4122 1688
Queens Park Medical Centre 5/264 Bazaar St, Maryborough Ph 07 4123 1200	The Monsour Clinic 297 Kent St, Maryborough Ph 07 4123 1544
Childers Medical Centre 66 Churchill St, Childers Ph 07 4126 2922	Isis Medical Centre 3 Ashby Lane, Childers Ph 07 4126 1635
Aspire Medical Centre 53B Watson St, Bundaberg Ph 07 4151 2255	Crofton Medical Centre 30 Crofton St, Bundaberg Ph 07 4151 2701
Jacaranda General Practice 35 Crofton St, Bundaberg Ph 07 4153 0660	Aberdovy Clinic 26 Crofton St, Bundaberg Ph 07 4152 2888
Eastside Medical Centre Millaquin Markets, 135 Bargara Rd, Bundaberg Ph 07 4154 2466	Woodgate Beach Med Cent Shop 1 Central Plaza, 14 Frizzells Rd, Woodgate Beach Ph 07 4126 5155
Takalvan Medical Centre 50 Takalvan St, Svensson Heights, Bundaberg Ph 07 4153 6066	Family Practice at Sugarland Sugarland Shoppingtown, Takalvan St, Bundaberg Ph 07 4154 4000
Aspire Medical Centre 538 Watson Street, Bundaberg Ph 07 4151 2255	Burnett Medical Centre 15 Barolin St, Bundaberg Ph 07 4151 2608
West Bundaberg Med Cent 294 Bourbong St, Bundaberg Ph 07 4152 2266	Grace Family Practice & Skincare Suite 10, Bargara Central, 699 Bargara Rd, Bundaberg Ph 07 4130 5607
See Street Surgery 10 See St, Bundaberg Ph 07 4159 1511	Currajong Clinic 59 Mulgrave St, Gin Gin Ph 07 4157 2922
Eidsvold Medical Centre 19 Moreton St, Eidsvold Ph 07 4165 1288	Dr Henry Ung's Practice 4 Queen St, Gayndah Ph 07 4161 1666
Gin Gin Family Medical Cent 6 Mulgrave St, Gin Gin Ph 07 4157 2625	Millbank Medical Practice 286 Bourbong St, Bundaberg Ph 07 4131 9090

What if my doctor's practice is not registered for the Indigenous Health Incentive?

If your doctor's practice is not registered with the Indigenous Health Incentive you can **tell your doctor that you would like join Closing the Gap** and ask him/her to register their practice for the Indigenous Health Incentive, however it is not compulsory for practices to register for the Incentive. You could also **call us** at GP Links Wide Bay (contact details below) to talk to your doctor on your behalf.

If your doctor's practice has chosen not to register for the Incentive and you would like to join Closing the Gap, unfortunately this means you will need to change to see another doctor at a practice that is registered for the Incentive (see list on this page).

Who can I contact for help with these programs?

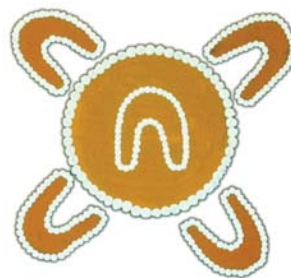
At GP Links Wide Bay we have **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff** to help you join these Programs. Please contact your nearest office:

GP Links Wide Bay (Fraser Coast Office)

Shop 9, Fraser Shores Shopping Centre
79 Boat Harbour Drive, Hervey Bay Qld 4655
PO Box 702, Hervey Bay Qld 4655
Phone: 07 4124 8311 | Fax: 07 4124 1899

GP Links Wide Bay (Bundaberg Office)

Level 1, 6 Barolin Street, Bundaberg Qld 4670
PO Box 2178, Bundaberg Qld 4670
Phone: 07 4151 0814 | Fax: 07 4151 0794



Supports and enhances general practice and primary health care by collaborating with health service providers and the community
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