



**SNAPSHOT
2017**

Preventive Health Programs:
Aboriginal Health



Health

INTRODUCTION Aboriginal people are the first peoples of Australia and have strong cultures and communities. NSW Health is committed to working with Aboriginal people to close the gap in health outcomes. Multiple inter-related factors contribute to the poorer health status of Aboriginal people including historical, social, cultural and economic factors. Understanding these factors is key to closing the health gap.

Addressing lifestyle risk factors such as smoking, poor diet, physical inactivity and alcohol use can prevent disease and improve health and well-being.



This Snapshot provides an overview of current NSW Health activities in the areas of tobacco control, healthy eating, active living, alcohol prevention and harm reduction.

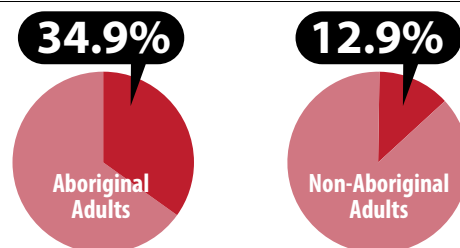
These activities are guided by the vision of the *NSW Aboriginal Health Plan 2013–2023* which is health equity for Aboriginal people by working in partnership to achieve the highest level of health possible for individuals, families, and communities.

TOBACCO CONTROL

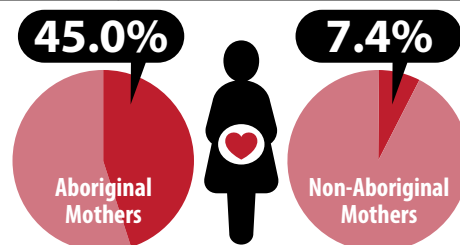
Population wide strategies under the *NSW Tobacco Strategy 2012–2017* include:

- public education campaigns;
- cessation services to support smokers to quit;
- regulating the advertising and promotion of tobacco products with high levels of compliance achieved with sales to minors (94 per cent compliance) and point of sale (84 per cent) legislation;
- efforts to reduce exposure to second-hand smoke in indoor and certain outdoor public settings, with high levels of compliance achieved with smoke-free legislation (98 per cent); and
- efforts to reduce smoking in groups with high smoking prevalence which include Aboriginal communities.

Smokers in 2015¹



Pregnant smokers in 2015¹



Aboriginal Specific Initiatives

- **Quit for New Life** is a best practice smoking cessation program for women having an Aboriginal baby that aims to address the high rate of smoking during pregnancy and prevent relapse to smoking after birth.
- **The NSW Aboriginal Quitline** provides an individually tailored and culturally sensitive service to support Aboriginal callers to quit smoking.
- **Can't Even Quit** is a mobile app being developed to support smoking cessation in Aboriginal communities.
- The NSW Aboriginal Tobacco Resistance and Control Framework has been developed to support best practice approaches to reducing smoking amongst Aboriginal people in NSW.

Current Status

Between 2011 and 2015, the rate of smoking among pregnant Aboriginal women in NSW

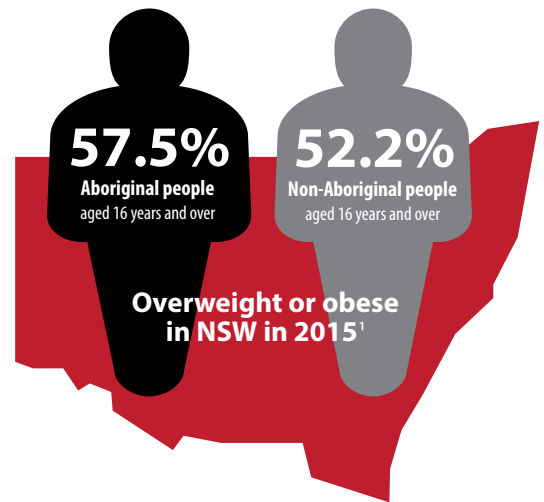


- The number of calls from Aboriginal people to the Quitline service has significantly increased each calendar year from **116 in 2011**, to **546 in 2015**.
- In 2016 a pilot study commenced to evaluate the acceptability and feasibility of using the app within NSW programs and services.
- Between 2015/16 a range of community smoke-free events have been undertaken in partnership with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services, including Yarban, NAIDOC, Koori Knockout and World No Tobacco Day.

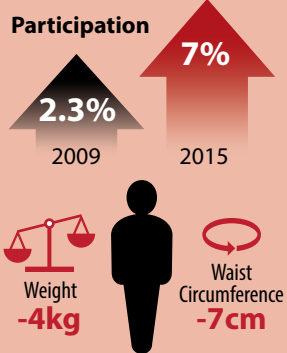
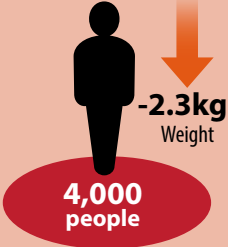

HEALTHY EATING ACTIVE LIVING

Population strategies that address overweight and obesity under the *NSW Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) Strategy* include:

- healthy lifestyle choices through health-focused planning, built environment and transport initiatives, improved access to healthier foods and improved food labelling.
- the **Make Healthy Normal** campaign aims to encourage new healthy eating and active living behaviours and make healthy the new normal: www.makehealthynormal.nsw.gov.au. An Aboriginal strategy for this campaign has been developed;
- **Get Healthy at Work**, a program which aims to improve the health of working adults by giving businesses the tools, resources and support, including brief health checks to workers, to address healthy weight and healthy eating, physical activity, active travel, smoking and harmful alcohol consumption.



- Healthy Children Initiatives, which continue to have excellent reach into children's settings across NSW, including Live **Life Well @ School**, **Crunch & Sip**, **Munch and Move**, and **Go4Fun**.

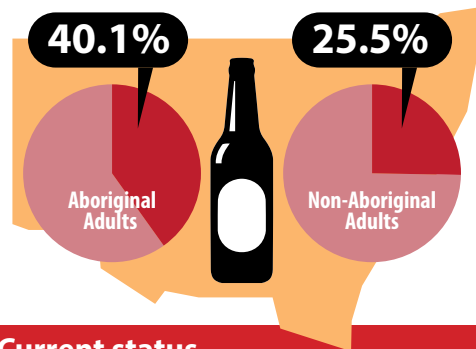
Aboriginal specific Initiatives to support the HEAL Strategy	Current status
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Get Healthy Information and Coaching Service (GHS) – Aboriginal program encourages lifestyle changes in physical activity, healthy eating, and achieving and maintaining a healthy weight. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation by Aboriginal people in the GHS has increased from 2.3 per cent of total participants in 2009 to 7 per cent in 2015. • Since 2009 Aboriginal participants who completed the GHS program lost an average of 4kg, reduced their waist circumference by 7cm and made significant improvements to their healthy eating and physical activity levels. 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Aboriginal Knockout Health Challenge started in 2012 and aims to improve lifestyles by targeting physical activity, healthy eating and overweight and obesity in Aboriginal communities in NSW. The Challenge is run by NSW Health through a partnership with Rugby League. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since 2012 almost 4,000 Aboriginal people have participated in the Aboriginal Knockout Health Challenge, with an average weight loss for participants of 2.3kg. • In 2016, there was an average weight loss of 2.4 per cent of body weight across all teams participating in the Challenge. 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go4Fun is a healthy lifestyle program for children aged 7-13 years who are above a healthy weight and their families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From July 2011 to September 2016, 843 Go4Fun programs have been delivered across NSW, reaching 8,212 children and their families. • 9 per cent of children participating in Go4Fun are Aboriginal. • Aboriginal Go4Fun, a culturally adapted version of the program, was piloted in 2015 with four Aboriginal communities across regional and metro NSW. the Aboriginal Go4Fun will be further expanded from January 2017. • As of December 2016, 90 per cent (595/663) of schools with a high proportion Aboriginal Children are participating in the Live Life Well@ School Program. • As of December 2016, 97 per cent (191/197) of centre-based early childhood services with high proportion of Aboriginal children are participating in the Munch & Move program. 

ALCOHOL PREVENTION AND HARM REDUCTION

Population wide strategies and initiatives that address alcohol prevention in NSW include:

- statewide Community Drug Action Teams,
- provision of advice on alcohol in the Get Healthy Service and the Get Healthy at Work Program,
- an Alcohol and Drug Information telephone line, and
- an information website on alcohol prevention (www.yourroom.com.au).

While more Aboriginal people abstain from alcohol compared to non-Aboriginal people, the rates of risky drinking were higher in NSW in 2015¹



Aboriginal specific Initiatives

- **Stay strong and healthy – it's worth it** Program includes resources, community engagement activities and social media communication for pregnant Aboriginal women, their families and health care workers.

Current status

In 2015/16 the program has delivered the following across NSW:

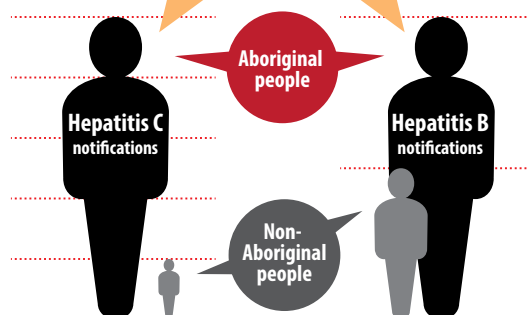
- **7 community launches**
- **2 health professional education sessions**
- **4 youth education sessions**
- over **36,000 education resources** to Aboriginal communities
- more than **74,000 views** of alcohol and pregnancy health messages www.Facebook.com/StayStrongandHealthy.

BLOOD-BORNE VIRUSES AND SEXUALLY TRANSMISSIBLE INFECTIONS

Population wide strategies that address blood-borne viruses (BBVs) and sexually transmissible infections (STIs) include:

- *The NSW Hepatitis C Strategy 2014-2020;*
- *The NSW Hepatitis B Strategy 2014-2020;*
- *The NSW HIV Strategy 2016-2020;* and
- *The NSW STI Strategy 2016-2020.*

In 2014, hepatitis C notifications among Aboriginal people in Australia were almost **five times higher** and hepatitis B notifications were about **two times higher** compared to non-Aboriginal people^{2#}



Aboriginal specific Initiatives

The NSW Aboriginal BBV and STI Framework 2016-2021 articulates the following priority areas for Aboriginal people:

- **Prevent:** establish a more focused and integrated BBV/STI prevention response
- **Test, Manage and Treat:** improve the accessibility, quality, cultural appropriateness and continuity of care
- **Enable:** strengthen health systems enablers.

Current status

In 2015/16 Aboriginal people accounted for:

- **18 per cent of people** accessing NSW Needle and Syringe Programs
- **9.7 per cent of clients** provided with STI testing and management services in publicly funded sexual health services
- **3.0 per cent of clients** provided with HIV testing services and **3.6 per cent of clients** provided with HIV treatment and management services in publicly funded sexual health services
- **5 per cent of clients** who initiated hepatitis C treatment in publicly funded Hepatitis C related services were Aboriginal people.

¹ HealthStats NSW at www.healthstats.nsw.gov.au

² The Kirby Institute: Blood borne viral and sexually transmissible infections in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people: Annual Surveillance Report 2015.

Notification data for hepatitis C and B comes from Australian Jurisdictions which had more than 50% of Aboriginal status reported in their notifications in 2014: for hepatitis C this includes Western Australia, Northern Territory, South Australia and Tasmania; and for hepatitis B this includes Western Australia, Northern Territory, South Australia, the ACT and Tasmania.