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CLOSING THE GAP VITAL TO ENSURE HEALTH EQUITY
National Close the Gap Day

The disparities between the health status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians continue to fall by the wayside and closing the gap is vital to ensure health equity in this country, AMA President Dr Omar Khorshid said today.

On National Close the Gap Day, the AMA encourages all Australians to take meaningful action in support of achieving health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by 2032.

The AMA has actively called on the Government to address health inequities experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, that stem from the social and cultural determinants of health.

“Closing the life expectancy gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous people is everyone’s business: it is a national issue in which every individual, organisation and group in Australia can play a role,” Dr Khorshid said.

“Every person’s health is shaped by the social, economic, cultural, and environmental conditions in which they live.

“Addressing the social and cultural determinants of health is vital if we want to see vast improvements in the health and well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

“This is a national priority.

“All levels of government must take a more proactive role in addressing the social determinants of health, including regular public reporting on progress,” Dr Khorshid said.

There are significant numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with undetected, treatable, and preventable conditions which have a significant impact on life expectancy.

The leading contributors to the health gap directly relate to diet – obesity, high blood cholesterol, alcohol consumption, high blood pressure, and low fruit and vegetable intake.

“Many of the health outcomes in Indigenous communities are completely avoidable,” Dr Khorshid said.

“Every effort must be made to ensure no one misses out on access to health care – no matter where they live.”

The AMA believes good policy to close the gap must start today.

The Close the Gap campaign – a coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous health and organisations, including the AMA, calls on governments to take real, measurable action to achieve Indigenous health equity by 2032.

The AMA Position Statement on Social Determinants of Health 2020 is available [here](#).

The AMA Federal Council's endorsement of the Uluru Statement from the Heart is available [here](#).

The AMA Report Card on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health is available [here](#).

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