

## **Living Strong: a healthy lifestyle program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities**

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Living Strong is a healthy lifestyle group-based program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults. Living Strong uses a behaviour change approach to improve health and wellbeing and to help prevent chronic disease. Participants of the program are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle through improved nutrition and increased physical activity.

The program was previously known as the Healthy Weight Program. It was renamed to Living Strong in 2006 to more accurately reflect the objectives of the program and to encourage greater participation by community people.

The program underwent redevelopment in 2006–2007 to ensure consistency with best practice health messages, recent strategies and guidelines. The redevelopment of the Living Strong program has involved developing PowerPoint presentations for the workshops, updating the flipcharts and the development of a healthy cookbook to complement the healthy cooking session. Therefore the program has a new look and layout with updated graphics and artwork. The new resources were extensively trialled in several remote and rural locations throughout Queensland in 2007 and will be available in early 2008.

The program includes activity-based learning and practical sessions on cooking, shopping, budgeting and reading food labels. Workshops address healthy eating, physical activity, diabetes awareness, self-esteem and behaviour change. The program is flexible and can be structured to suit community and local group needs.

Population Health Nutrition teams across Queensland offer training to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers including generalist health staff, community health service staff and staff from other non-government health services. Trained facilitators are offered ongoing implementation and evaluation support by Population Health Nutrition staff in Queensland Health.