

## **The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nutrition Strategy and Action Plan (NATSINSAP)—the story so far**

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At the last Nutrition Networks Conference in Cairns, 1999, participants were influential in defining the most important actions required to improve nutrition and health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across Australia. With further consultation across the country these issues were set down in the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nutrition Strategy and Action Plan 2000–2010, more fondly known as NATSINSAP. In 2001 the NATSINSAP was signed off by the Health Ministers and became an agreed framework for action across all levels of government, in conjunction with partners from industry and the non- government sector. While there has been significant progress in implementing key areas, this conference will provide another important opportunity for all participants to reaffirm or identify new actions that will contribute towards directing the NATSINSAP beyond 2010.

The seven priority areas outlined in the NATSINSAP remain as relevant and critical today. This presentation will outline the achievements and challenges of implementing the NATSINSAP with a focus on the efforts to build the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nutrition workforce.

Across Australia there continues to be an insufficient specialist workforce focused on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nutrition. This remains a crucial mechanism to maximise community ownership, control and the uptake of ‘good practice’ program delivery. Building the nutrition workforce requires a multi-layered approach, including accredited nutrition training, position creation, ‘two way’ learning partnerships, leadership, organisational development and resource allocation. To drive this process at a national level, the NATSINSAP has successfully advocated for the inclusion of ‘nutrition’ as a core unit for generalist Aboriginal Health Workers (practice stream) in the recently released Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care qualification, as well as creating the opportunity for specialisation in nutrition through nationally accredited training programs. Significant progress has been made across Queensland to increase and support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nutrition workforce, which provides key learnings and a model for action for other jurisdictions.