

# ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURAL COMPETENCY TRAINING

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

### Purpose

The Australian Physiotherapy Council (the Council) is seeking to provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competency training to overseas trained physiotherapists wanting to practice in Australia. We are pleased to invite organisations with expertise in this area to submit proposals for a cultural competency module for use by the Council.

The purpose of this request for proposal (RFP), is for the creation of an accessible, online education module. The module will be included as a mandatory component in the qualification assessment process for candidates applying to have their qualifications assessed against Australian qualifications. It should provide guidance to physiotherapists with little or no knowledge of the health and cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The module will allow candidates to meet the thresholds that Australian physiotherapy graduates must attain.

### Background

The Australian Physiotherapy Council (the Council) firmly believes that Australia needs a culturally responsive health workforce to provide equitable and accessible health services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. As part of our commitment to making this workforce a reality, we are committed to upskilling overseas trained physiotherapists applying for equivalency to register in Australia. The module will provide the foundations of a lifelong learning process on their journey to culturally safe and sensitive practice.

### What we do

The Council has several functions, including assessment and accreditation of entry to practice physiotherapy programs, advice to regulatory and other bodies, and liaising with other international regulatory and physiotherapy organisations.

We assess the qualifications and skills of overseas qualified practitioners for General Registration with the Physiotherapy Board of Australia (the Board), as well as for migration under the Skilled Migration Framework. As part of the assessment for the Board, we are now seeking to provide select resources to upskill candidates for assessment in areas specific to the Australian health system.

### **Our commitment to improving the health system for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples**

As part of the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (NRAS), the Council is a strong supporter of the NRAS statement of intent for the National Scheme Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Strategy. We share a joint commitment and vision that patient safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples be the norm, not the exception. We have committed to work together to close the gap by 2031. Included in the statement is a commitment to apply the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law to ensure a culturally safe health workforce is in practice in Australia.

In addition to the Statement of Intent, we are close to finalizing our first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). Our RAP will set out a series of achievable actions to move us forward on our journey to becoming a culturally safe organisation.

## Cultural competency in the Council's accreditation and assessment processes

Australia and New Zealand share a single set of physiotherapy practice thresholds (the Thresholds). The Thresholds describe the minimum level of competency required for a physiotherapist to be eligible for registration in Australia and New Zealand. This means that graduates from Australian entry level physiotherapy programs must meet these Thresholds, and so must overseas physiotherapists applying for registration in Australia.

The Thresholds specify that physiotherapists in Australia require a working knowledge of factors that contribute to and influence the health and well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. The online module is intended to facilitate overseas physiotherapists to meet this requirement for practice in Australia.

## Project Scope

### Audience

The online module will be targeted to physiotherapists qualified overseas. Most candidates for assessment come from India and the Philippines, followed by physiotherapists from the UK, Egypt, Brazil, and then the rest of the world.

Regardless of cultural background, candidates must attain a level of seven under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) so language will need to be tailored to this level of proficiency.

Once registered by the Physiotherapy Board of Australia, it is expected that physiotherapists would continue to develop knowledge about the health needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in their local area of practice.

### Length and delivery

The module should follow sound pedagogical principles and have interesting and varied delivery and engagement methods. It should utilise relevant real world situations, and should not solely rely on a text and quiz presentation. Practice examples should be primarily of physiotherapy practice, and should include a variety of settings.

Video and audio content may be included, but such content need not be created specifically for the module.

We envisage that the 'seat time' for the module would be approximately 5 hours. This excludes optional further learning resources.

### Module assessment

Learning assessment should be included in the module – both formative and summative. These could be in the form of quizzes, games and scenario based assessments. Other assessment types such as personal logs and reflections may be appropriate for inclusion.

## Content

### The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Curriculum Framework

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Curriculum Framework (the Framework) is the key document that governs the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content in tertiary health programs. It provides five key elements that form the basis of education on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health. The five elements are:

- I. Respect
  - I.1. Historical context
  - I.2. Cultural knowledge
  - I.3. Diversity
  - I.4. Humility and lifelong learning

2. Communication
  - 2.1. Culturally safe communication
  - 2.2. Partnerships
3. Safety and quality
  - 3.1. Clinical presentation
  - 3.2. Population health
4. Reflection
  - 4.1. Cultural self and health care
  - 4.2. Racism
5. White privilege
  - 5.1. Advocacy
  - 5.2. Equality and human rights
  - 5.3. Leadership

It is expected that these areas will be viewed through the lens of a health provider with a particular focus on the interaction between allied health providers and their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients.

Candidates who complete the module should have developed at least 'novice' capabilities in each of the five elements. A novice capability is defined in the Framework, and includes receiving information about matters relating to each theme, and remembering and comprehending the information provided.

The full Framework with detailed information on can be accessed at

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-health-curriculum-framework>.

## **Practical learning**

As well as understanding the reasons for the health inequities experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, it is important for candidates to get a sense of the practicalities of working with this population. The module will need to take a balanced approach to providing historical and cultural context, and imparting skills for practical application across the range of settings in physiotherapy practice (eg. community, acute and rehabilitation settings).

It would also be helpful to provide information on resources for further learning for candidates who have a particular interest in working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations.

## **Technical requirements**

### **Hosting and support**

The module should be easily accessible to candidates, and ideally will be hosted on the Council's LMS. (Module files to be SCORM compliant). The Council would consider other hosting options provided there is a seamless experience for candidates to access the online module from the Council's website.

### **Intellectual property**

We do not seek exclusive use of the module, and are open to proposals from organisations wishing to use the module for dual purposes – for example for an introduction to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health for university allied health students.

## Project costs

The Council anticipates that we will recover the costs of the module's development within 12 months of its implementation. We encourage responses that feature innovative proposals that will help keep these development costs down.

Depending upon the terms of the final agreement, we anticipate charging candidates approximately AU\$150 for access to the module, with around 250 – 300 candidates expected to complete the module each year.

If the module is not to be exclusively used for the Council's purposes, pricing should reflect any shared IP or hosting arrangements.

## How to submit a proposal

Proposals should be submitted to Leanne Percy, General Manager, Accreditation at [accreditation@physiocouncil.com.au](mailto:accreditation@physiocouncil.com.au). Leanne would welcome a discussion of your proposal prior to submission. Please email Leanne to arrange a time.

Proposals should include the following:

- a description of the organisation, including details of expertise in culturally safe delivery of health care services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This should include the organisation's ABN and details of public liability insurance,
- the proposal addressing the criteria outlined in this document, including details of the proposed content, learning and assessment methods,
- details of the hosting and technical arrangements,
- a full budget for the proposal, and
- a timeline for the development and launch of the online module.

We welcome joint proposals. In addition to the points listed above, joint proposals should include a separate schedule outlining the responsibilities of each partner. They should also nominate a lead organisation who will be the primary contact for the Council, and will receive payments for the module.

As we anticipate rolling out the project early in the financial year 2019-20, proposals must be received no later than **12 April, 2019**.

## Assessment of the proposal

The evaluation criteria include:

- a) Value for money and potential to recover costs within the first 12 months of implementation.
- b) The expertise and experience of the organization in adult education.
- c) The expertise and experience of the organisation in the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander topics to health students.
- d) Content that covers the five elements in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Curriculum Framework, as relevant to the practice of physiotherapy.
- e) Learning outcomes to allow candidates to meet the Physiotherapy Practice Thresholds in Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand.
- f) The use of adult learning principles and varied content delivery and assessment methods.
- g) Ability to deliver the module within the Council's timelines.
- h) The balance of contextual and practical content.
- i) Use of appropriate language and pitch for overseas trained physiotherapists, particularly for candidates from India and the Philippines.

We will notify the successful organisation of the acceptance of their proposal by **29 May, 2019**.