

## First Nations Eye Health Alliance Launches 2023 Workshop Report at the 2024 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health Conference

The First Nations Eye Health Alliance is pleased to announce the launch of its 2023 Workshop Report *“Taking Action, prioritising key activities to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health and Vision Care in Australia”*.

Launched at the 2024 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health Conference, nipaluna country (Hobart), lutruwita (Tasmania), the report was the result of 2023 consultation held at the 2023 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health Conference where over 80 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experts and community members gathered. The report amplifies their perspectives on preventative eye health and vision care and details mapped priority actions identified by the group that can build towards equitable health outcomes for vision for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

A key finding from the report was the importance of valuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural knowledge and principles by making sure they were made central to delivery of eye health and vision care services nationally. Lose Fonua, Interim CEO of the First Nations Eye Health Alliance remarked:

*“Investing in community led models of care that are culturally safe and accessible are a start to valuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, doing and being. Privileging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices in this work and building systems that are safe to access are critical to improving vision in our communities”*.

The report also highlighted the need to focus resourcing on early detection and intervention services and the necessity of building a model of sustainable local community ownership over their eye health and vision care services championing community control and their organisations where they are available. Lose Fonua, Interim CEO, First Nations Eye Health Alliance drew attention to this important finding and remarked:

*“We need strong investment from the government into preventative eye health and vision care approaches that ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the best start at life and the best possible outcomes with early detection and intervention services. Building sustainable, culturally safe and supported workforce is also a critical part of this picture, where the current and future resourcing capability of the eye health and vision care sector is well resourced to meet future focussed service gaps in this space.*

The report is available on the Alliance website on <https://fneha.com.au/docs>

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