



# Media release

Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services  
The Honourable Cameron Dick

## **B.strong training program to help close the gap**

Health professionals will receive training on how to provide culturally-appropriate healthy-lifestyle advice to their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients with the launch of the B.strong training program.

Minister for Health and Ambulance Services Cameron Dick today launched the Palaszczuk Government's \$2.24 million three-year Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Brief Intervention Training Program (the B.strong training program) which will be delivered by Menzies School of Health Research over 2017-2019.

"The B.strong training program will build the capacity, skills and confidence of Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers and other health and community professionals," Mr Dick said.

The program is of particular importance to the Member for Inala, Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk, after campaigning for further Indigenous health services in the area.

"The program will enable health professionals to deliver appropriate nutrition and physical activity interventions to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and to help them stop smoking," Ms Palaszczuk said.

"I am excited that the Menzies School of Health Research has been working collaboratively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and Queensland Health to develop the B.strong training program.

"The Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Health Service and Inala Indigenous Health Service worked in partnership with Menzies to test and pilot the face-to-face and online training program."

Inala Indigenous Health Service Clinical Director Professor Noel Hayman said working in partnership with Menzies for the B.strong training program was crucial for its success.

"We worked together to develop, design and test the B.strong training program and online materials," Prof Hayman said.

"The shared goal was to produce a best-practice training program in smoking cessation, nutrition and physical activity for health professionals to work more effectively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

"The face-to-face B.strong training program will be delivered flexibly to fit the operational needs of health services to ensure all staff receive training."

Menzies School of Health Research Director Prof Alan Cass said Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders have a high prevalence of known risk factors for chronic disease.

"Smoking rates amongst Indigenous Queenslanders are high, including maternal smoking rates, and Indigenous Queenslanders are also more likely to be obese," Prof Cass said.

"The B.strong training program aims to address the risk factors that significantly contribute to the burden of disease and injury for Indigenous Queenslanders."

To find out more about the B.strong program see [www.bstrong.org.au](http://www.bstrong.org.au) (external site) ( <http://www.bstrong.org.au/> ) or to organise a training workshop contact the B.strong team at: [b.strong@menzies.edu.au](mailto:b.strong@menzies.edu.au) ( <mailto:b.strong@menzies.edu.au> ) or Ph: 07 3169 4208.

**ENDS**

**Media contact:** Catherine Palmer, 0424 823 424