



Culturally Safe Employment in NTGPE

1 Scope

1.1 Application

This policy applies to all of NTGPE¹'s employment activities.

1.2 Limitations

Nil

1.3 Related Standards, Policies and documents

Employment contracts and Position Descriptions

National and NT anti-discrimination and EEO² Acts, Regulations and Statutes

1.4 Effective from

14th April 2005

2 Purpose

NTGPE will achieve culturally safe employment for all staff.

3 Principles

- 3.1 NTGPE is committed to medical education and training that is equitable, socially just and culturally safe³.
- 3.2 NTGPE's training has a focus on Aboriginal health because of the NT's population mix and the nation's Aboriginal health demographics. We provide this focus through partnerships with Aboriginal people and groups, and ensuring Aboriginal cultural safety training and medical training are integrated.
- 3.3 Aboriginal contributions are an essential part of the continuity and sustainability of NTGPE's training programs. We benefit from the diversity, expertise and cultural enrichment that people with deep Aboriginal cultural knowledge and authority provide to our working environment.
- 3.4 NTGPE supports greater participation by Aboriginal people in management of Aboriginal health and training Aboriginal staff. We support Aboriginal people taking leading roles in the provision of health and associated cultural services.
- 3.5 For leadership in health provision to be achieved, a period of development is required. This includes increased participation by, and support for Aboriginal people in all levels of health training, including in NTGPE.

¹ Northern Territory General Practice Education Limited, NTGPE

² Equal Employment Opportunity, EEO

³ We describe cultural safety to be where there is appreciation shown of another's culture, sensitivity is shown to it, and behaviours are shown that are regarded by the person from the other culture as not damaging to that culture in any way.

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3.6 NTGPE recognizes that there have been, and are barriers to equality of employment outcomes for Aboriginal people. These include barriers coming from under-recognition of English as a second or other language in Aboriginal communities, Aboriginal cultural preferences for oral rather than formal written English language, and (consequent) under-representation of Aboriginal people in Australian school systems and the health and medical professions.

4 **Policy**

Identifying staff establishment positions requiring cultural knowledge and authority

4.1 NTGPE will identify duties and positions related to cultural orientation and education where staff must have Aboriginal cultural knowledge, hold appropriate authority to transmit this knowledge, and be skilled in training.

In general recruitment, appointment and job preparation processes

4.2 For general positions, which require merit-based appointment, NTGPE will:

- 4.2.1 seek to identify, and use processes that do not discriminate against Aboriginal applicants or appointments;
- 4.2.2 consider the use of traineeships to prepare Aboriginal staff for application to establishment positions;
- 4.2.3 ensure that criteria for employment include capability in providing a cultural safety work environment for Aboriginal people.

4.3 For 4.2, NTGPE will consult with Cultural Educators, Aboriginal and/or Indigenous health and Equal Opportunity organizations to identify best practice in non-discriminatory Aboriginal recruitment and employment. We will use best practice approaches, and continue to trial approaches that may become best practice. We will be careful to avoid approaches that may do damage to individuals or groups, directly or indirectly, and consult with Aboriginal people and groups to assess whether this is happening.

4.4 NTGPE will recognise Aboriginal cultural practices in employment contracts and conditions.

In supporting staff when they are appointed

4.5 NTGPE will provide appointees with induction, training, mentoring⁴ and/or support in Aboriginal cultural safety, including in identifying and providing positive responses to areas where discrimination has occurred.

4.6 We will provide all staff with training and assistance to understand their culture and customs, and identify how mutual cultural safety will be achieved.

⁴ See 5.5

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5 Procedures

For staff establishment positions requiring cultural knowledge and authority

- 3.7 The Executive Director, with advice from Medical Educator(s) and Cultural Educator(s), will identify duties and positions related to cultural orientation, mentoring and education for medical students, junior doctors, overseas trained doctors, GP Registrars, GP Trainers, and staff.
- 3.8 These positions will have appointment criteria which require the appointee to:
 - 3.8.1 hold and be authorised to pass on Aboriginal cultural knowledge as may be appropriate; and
 - 3.8.2 demonstrate an ability to provide cultural orientation and/or education to non-Aboriginal people.
- 3.9 In deciding these and other aspects related to these positions, the Executive Director or Programs Manager will consult with appropriate Cultural Educators or Aboriginal health⁵ people and/or organizations to identify and use best practice in making appointments to them.

In general recruitment, appointment and job preparation processes

- 3.10 For appointments to staff positions, Executive Director or Programs Manager will consult with appropriate Cultural Educators or Aboriginal health⁶ people and/or organizations to identify best practice. This will include giving attention to, and/or using the following (as possible examples):
 - traineeships;
 - better ways to inform people about the job, the workplace, application requirements, and criteria for appointment;
 - where and how to advertise, and how to find and approach appropriate potential applicants;
 - opportunities for other-than-print-based applications;
 - selection panels including Aboriginal community members;
 - non-threatening selection methods;
 - employment provisions that are more friendly to Aboriginal cultural issues;
 - more appropriate induction, orientation and on-the-job training

In supporting staff when they are appointed Cultural mentors for staff, and related processes

- 3.11 Staff will be invited by the Executive Director (ED) to have a cultural mentor. This would be a mutually agreed person who would provide the staff member (or supervisor or the ED) with advice on how conditions or employment processes might be more sensitive to their and others' culture. This offer could be declined without penalty.

⁵ Normally only if a Cultural Educator is unavailable or not appropriately placed

⁶ as for 5.3



- 3.12 Staff will be invited to attend a confidential meeting with the ED and a nominated cultural mentor within three weeks of the commencement of employment. This will be to identify and discuss how to provide any appropriate additional induction, training, mentoring and/or support. It will also be to see if there are any ways the appointee might want to introduce other staff to their particular cultural customs, including how they prefer to interact with other cultural groups.
- 3.13 At any regular employment review, staff will be invited by their supervisor to:
 - 3.13.1 be accompanied by a cultural mentor or equivalent; and/or
 - 3.13.2 make comment on how culturally safe and supported they feel in the workplace; and/or
 - 3.13.3 identify ways in which their culture and related circumstances can be better recognised and made safe.
- 3.14 A cultural mentor or equivalent may also accompany the staff member's supervisor, with the prior approval of the staff member.
- 3.15 The staff member will have the right to decline any or all of these opportunities in 5.5, 5.6, 5.7 or 5.8 without penalty.

6 *Authority, Version*

This is a Board policy. Changes are authorised by the Chair or Executive Director on behalf of the Board.

Version 1.1

D Lloyd
Executive Director
For the Board
14th April 2005

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