Cancer Council NSW

Inclusive Language Guide.

A communications guide outlining inclusive language and imagery guidelines.
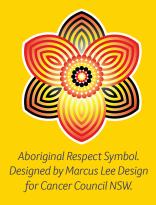
March 2024

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Acknowledgement of Country

Aboriginal Respect Symbol. Designed by Marcus Lee Design for Cancer Council NSW.

Cancer Council NSW would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live and work. We would also like to pay our respect to the Elders past, present and emerging and extend that respect to all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Cancer Council NSW is committed to reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Our vision for reconciliation is to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across NSW by creating culturally safe and responsive programs and services.

Introduction.

Purpose of the Guide

This guide is intended to support you in creating inclusive communications, both internally and externally, which represent the diverse formats and audiences of Cancer Council NSW's work. This guide will identify best practices for inclusive communications across diversity areas that include the ability, age, body type, cultural and linguistic, gender and sexual diversities and support you through:

- Reflection of the diversity dimension's relevancy to Cancer Council NSW's work
- Language to avoid and suggested alternatives
- Inclusive imagery considerations
- Practical case studies and examples
- Additional external supports

Use this guide when producing internal or external communication resources – whether video, support information, animation, patient information resources, media releases, flyers, social tiles, etc. - to build on your understanding and ensure that communications effectively represent and communicate to our diverse communities. This guide will build on your existing knowledge of inclusive best practices, whether minimal or advanced, and support you in advancing appropriate communications

Glossary of Diversity Dimensions.

This glossary outlines the various diversity dimensions in our community

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Diversity

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples represent two distinct populations with great diversity in cultures and practices and maintain their cultural identity, whether they live in Australia's regional, remote, or urban areas. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples also have great diversity of languages, ways of life, and kinship structures among Indigenous communities across Australia, with a wide variety of groups speaking more than 250 languages

Age Diversity

Age diversity represents differences in age distribution and avoids stereotyping, prejudice, or discrimination based on age.

All Abilities Diversity

Ability diversity refers to varying abilities and disabilities. Differences in cognitive, social-emotional, and physical abilities contribute to the diversity of abilities.

Body Type Diversity

Body type diversity encompasses a broad variety of body types, shapes, sizes, and appearances. It discourages the notion that certain characteristics are more associated with an optimal body.

Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

Cancer Council NSW uses the term culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) to describe and recognise the diverse range of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, including:

- people born in a non-English speaking country and who have a cultural heritage different from the dominant Australian culture

- migrants and refugees (including asylum seekers) who identify as being from a culturally and linguistically diverse background. This includes those who are recently arrived as well as those who have lived in Australia for some time

- people born in Australia who identify as being from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, even where their families have been settled for several generations

- people with dual heritage[1]

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1 Definition taken from Cancer Council NSW DRAFT Multicultural Action Plan 2023 - 2025

Gender Diversity

Gender is a concept that places physical characteristics into categories. It can correlate with one's assigned sex at birth, or it may not.

The most widely used categories are male and female and are attributed to those with physical attributes that fit into the traditional perception of those genders. However, there are many more genders people identify with. Some of these have been provided below.

- **Cisgender:** A person whose gender identity corresponds with their sex assigned at birth
- **Non-binary:** A person who experiences gender outside the gender binary (the belief that there are only two genders, male and female)
- **Gender-fluid**: A person whose gender expression and presentation shifts and changes
- **Transgender/Trans:** An umbrella term for people who identify with a different gender to their sex assigned at birth

Sex Characteristics Diversity

While Intersex is included in the LGBTQIA+ acronym, it is not a sexual orientation or gender diversity. LGBTQI+ Health Australia defines Intersex people as having 'innate variations of sex characteristics that differ from medical and social norms for female or male bodies. Intersex is an umbrella term for a diverse range of different traits that can be determined prenatally, at birth, during puberty and at other times. People with intersex variations grow up to express diverse identities, including LGBT and non-LGBT identities[2].

Sexual Orientation Diversity

Sexual orientation or sexuality indicates one's sexual or romantic attraction to one gender, multiple genders or none. The various identities associated with sexual orientation have been summarised by the LGBTQIA+ acronym, meaning Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex and Asexual. The acronym refers to sexuality as well as gender diversities and the + indicates the identities not already covered.

Plain English

Plain English

Plain English is a form of language that includes clear wording with everyday language and grammar, an effective structure and clear design. This differs from Easy English, which is further simplified and includes images that/to help (people) understand concepts, and suits people with low or no literacy, people with intellectual disabilities and those who find it hard to read and understand English or require reading aids.

General Inclusive Guidelines.

Introduction

Cancer Council is Australia's leading cancer charity and is committed to representing all communities within Australia across every area of cancer. Inclusive actions, language, imagery and formats are pivotal for effective communication across the organisation, internally and externally. In the work of Cancer Council, using inclusive practices will allow all audiences to better relate to and receive the information being communicated.

Considering Diversity and Inclusion

Inclusive verbal and non-verbal communications ensure equal access to information by diverse audiences.

Inclusive communications should consider and be mindful of the following:

- Encourage representation of individual identity across communications and allow individuals the opportunity to determine how they wish to be referred to. This can be achieved by avoiding assumptions about a person's identity such as their title, pronouns, gender, ethnicity and any other identity terminology
- When discussing a diversity dimension in communications, use person-first and identity-first language, e.g. instead of 'Diabetic' say 'Person with diabetes'
- When referring to a person with disease, avoid suggesting that people with diseases are helpless, e.g. instead of 'suffering from cancer' say 'diagnosed with cancer'
- Consult or research diverse backgrounds when featuring or addressing these diverse audiences in communications
- Consider the environment, context and motivations of the communication resource being created
- Consider taking a strengths-based approach to ensure our communications and language choice focuses on abilities, knowledge and capacities rather than problems or deficits. E.g. there is a difference between a more deficit approach such as "helping disadvantaged Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people improve their nutrition", and a more strengths-based alternative such as "strengthening Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples access to healthy foods".

Considering Intersectionality

Diversities are complex and often intertwined, and should reflect intersectionality in communications whenever feasible to do so.

Intersectionality is a term created by Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw[3], describing how race, gender, sexuality, ability, and other social identities overlap and intersect with one another. This theory highlights that the nuanced impact of each diversity intersection will vary between individuals.

This guide presents diversities in separate categories, although the audiences of the communications may not fit neatly into one diversity dimension. For this reason, it is important to consider there may be instances when not all diversities and differences can be addressed through your communications.

3 'Kimberlé Crenshaw on Intersectionality, More than Two Decades Later', Columbia Law School, 8/6/17,
https://www.law.columbia.edu/news/archive/kimberle-crenshaw-intersectionality-more-two-decades-later

Ability Diversity.

How this applies to Cancer Council NSW:

- **Events:** accessible formats for in-person and online events, webinars and meetings
- **Resources:** information resources on website, email communications and documents are accessible
- **External and Internal Communications:**
  - alternative text in all visuals on website as well as social media posts, social tiles, photos etc.
  - varying abilities in talent representation in visual communications

Language recommendations

Avoid	Consider
Use of terms such as:	**Using person-first language:**
• confined to a wheelchair/wheelchair bound • disabled person • person with a disability • handicapped	• person with disability • person who is deaf or hard of hearing • person who is blind or has low vision • person living with disability[4] • person who uses a wheelchair or mobility device
Use of terms such as:	**When making comparisons, write:**
• able-bodied • normal • of sound mind	• person living without disability • 'sighted person' for someone who is not blind • 'hearing person' for someone who is not deaf • neurotypical[5]
• Long sentences, jargon, complicated and confusing concepts	• Using Plain English as required general communications and resources, and also providing certain information in Easy English • Incorporating simple infographics into communications for visual learners

Imagery Recommendations

- Considering the environmental context of the primary talent when representing diverse experiences of disability e.g. A person who uses a wheelchair sitting at home on the couch, instead of the wheelchair
- Representing people with disability in contexts outside of the home or healthcare settings such as socialising, playing sport, at the beach, or making art
- Recruiting talent that represent intersections of diverse abilities as well as diverse genders, sexual orientations, and ethnicities

Additional Considerations

Program requirements:

- Closed captions for videos and online meetings
- Transcript of any audio resources
- AUSLAN videos

Design Requirements:

- Alternative text for all non-text objects on websites or social media
- Colour contrast between text and background colour
- Avoiding flashing content
- Web content and PDF resources to be Web Content Accessible Guidelines (WCAG) compliant
- Making links obvious, e.g. underlining links, spelling out links, not embedding links. In this case, when wanting to lead readers to the Cancer Council website, link the full website URL (https://www.cancercouncil.com.au/) rather than embedding a link in the words 'Cancer Council' as this may be confusing when read with a screen reader
- Easy English resources

Best Practice Case Study

You are creating a television commercial (TVC) on the effects of smoking with a call to action for people to quit. The script portrays positive scenarios of individuals having fun with their families, friends, and the outdoors. The voiceover testimonials describe the journey to quit smoking and how they are now enjoying life and physical activity so much more, with wheeziness and shortness of breath they previously had experienced now gone.

For the TVC, you hire diverse talent, including: a CALD family at the beach, friends of different abilities and sexual orientations having a picnic, and a person in a wheelchair playing sport with others.

The TVC is also available on the Cancer Council website with closed captions.

Links for more information:

- https://www.mapleservices.com.au/the-ultimate-guide-to-inclusive-language-for-disabilities/
- https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/accessible-and-inclusive-content/inclusive-language/people-disability
- https://www.afdo.org.au/
- https://sylaba.com.au/plain-english-or-easy-english/

Age Diversity.

How this applies to Cancer Council NSW:

- **Events:** age representation in the imagery used in community engagement advertising or advertising of national/state-wide fundraising events

- **Resources:** informational resources on age-related risk factors, age-related behaviours (e.g. vaping, nutrition), or age-related preventative measures

- **External Communications:** social tiles targeting early detection of disease to targeted age groups

- **Internal Communications:** language and images in internal newsletters or promotions to staff of internal events

Language Recommendations

Avoid	Consider
Use of terms such as: • old people • the elderly • aged	*Using terms such as:* • older adult • retired people or retirees • older Australians • senior Australians or seniors
Use of terms such as: • junior or juniors	*Using terms such as:* • young people • youth
• References to age of students	• Using preschool students, high-school students, postgraduate students etc.
• Age-centred references to ages based on research – e.g. '75-year-old'	• When an age or age range is relevant to a fact taken from research, you can use person centric language such as 'people aged 75 to 84'
• Colloquial references to age generations – e.g. baby boomer, generation X	• Use specific birth years or ages if required – for example, 'those born in 1991-1997' or, those born in the 90's

Imagery Recommendations

- Use of imagery that reflects the ages of targeted communications

- Avoid using imagery of older people that perpetuates assumptions about capacities and instead consider using broad range of ages performing a range of tasks, e.g. an older person doing yoga instead of an older person in a nursing home

- Use a broad range of age diversity when creating communications for the wider community

Additional Considerations

Not linking age and appropriate behaviours unless it is factual. For example, imagery that represents an older person is more dependent or less sexually active or assumptions of negative behaviours

Best Practice Case Study

You are working on a podcast episode for the Cancer Council NSW podcast show 'The Thing About Cancer'. The episode is discussing sexual activity after a cancer diagnosis. You are writing the script based on the recently released Cancer Council NSW Sexuality, Intimacy and Cancer information booklet.

You are incorporating age inclusive language in the script by:

• ensuring that all adult ages are addressed when discussing the effects of a diagnosis of cancer on a person's sexual activity

• not mentioning targeted age ranges, or references to age throughout the podcast, as you have decided it is not relevant to the information being shared

• You do not assume that older adults are less likely to be the relevant audience for this piece

Links for more information:

• https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/document/publication/ahrc_wagtdwi_2021.pdf

• https://www.cota.org.au/

• https://www.everyagecounts.org.au/

• https://nationalseniors.com.au/

Body Type Diversity.

How this applies to Cancer Council NSW:

- **Events:** the talent represented in imagery used when advertising events
- **Resources:** social tiles that communicate the importance of health and wellbeing, information resources on nutrition and exercise
- **External Communications:** in the creation of external materials that reflect research on health and wellbeing
- **Internal Communications:** in the creation of newsletters or internal communications that discuss employee/team initiatives that focus on physical targets

Language Recommendations

Avoid	Consider
• Discussions of specific exercises to promote weight loss	• Using a broad definition of movements and continuing to provide instructions for specific exercises for people affected by cancer, as an evidence-based part of cancer treatment and recovery
Use of terms such as: • weight loss • weight	*Substituting with:* • wellbeing • maintaining a healthy weight
• References to weight numbers to categorise 'healthy weight'	• Encouraging audiences to consult with their doctor to determine a healthy weight
Use of terms such as: • Fat people • morbidly obese people • overweight people • obese people • skinny people • slim people	*People-centred language such as:* • People with higher body weight • People overweight/with obesity • People who are overweight/obese
• Language that heightens guilt or shame around weight	• Using language which encourages behaviour change - weight is not a behaviour, though a healthy diet or exercise are

Imagery Recommendations

- Non-stigmatising images of people in larger and diverse bodies are available. Cancer Council should always consider diversity in the images it uses across all its communications
- Including images of people with diverse bodies in all Cancer Council messaging, not only communications relating to eating well and being active, will help to reduce weight stigma.
- Show a diversity of bodies
- Show the full person, do not isolate or emphasise body parts (e.g. no headless bodies)

Additional Considerations

- Not everyone living in a larger body is unhealthy, and not everyone living in a smaller body is healthy. Eating well and being physically active are behaviours that will reduce cancer risk, regardless of a person's body weight

- Avoid the promotion of internal team initiatives that promote reaching physical targets e.g. "complete 500 Push Ups for our Push Up Challenge". Instead, focus on participation and effort and offer alternative ways to support the cause

- Avoid references that moralise food and exercise, such as "we deserve this naughty treat because we went for a lunch walk", and substitute with conversations about balance in the diet

Best Practice Case Study

You have been tasked with designing an informational article promoting general health and wellbeing practices that will be linked in a regular Electronic Direct Mail (eDM) sent to stakeholders. The copy text includes tips to maintain health and wellbeing. You are tasked with selecting appropriate imagery to accompany the body text. The article discusses two points relevant to body type diversity considerations:

- The importance of a nutritious diet that incorporates whole foods

- The importance of joyful movement

You utilise a photo gallery for the images. You decide to use an image that represents people with a range of body types socialising and eating a nutritious meal together. You also choose to include two images reflecting types of movement that promote health and wellbeing without referring to body types, such as a hand holding a tennis ball and racket or a pair of running shoes leaving footprints on a hiking trail.

Links for more information:

- https://www.sizeinclusivehealth.org.au/

- https://asdah.org/

- https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/-/media/Corp/Documents/Health-for/Health-Networks/Healthy-Weight-Action-Plan/Shift-A-guide-for-media-and-communications-professionals.pdf

- https://uconnruddcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2909/2020/07/MediaGuidelines_PortrayalObese.pdf

- https://assets-au-01.kc-usercontent.com/59e62872-3ec4-02cb-f1dd-a1d60d76195d/a0354fb2-17e3-46ae-86e4-f63860f39dbb/2022_Weight%20Messaging%20Guidelines.pdf#_ga=2.68306193.1283073282.1661052514-273607460.1659944787

Cultural and Linguistic Diversity.

How this applies to Cancer Council NSW:

- **Events:** resources created for CALD community events such as PowerPoints, Promotional Flyers, Handouts
- **Resources:** where grants for specific projects allow for resources to be made in-language, or where required in community engagement
- **External Communications:** targeted information distribution to channels that are most appropriate to CALD audiences
- **Internal Communications:** reflecting the cultural and linguistic diversity of the workforce in images and language used in internal communications

Language Recommendations

Avoid	Consider
• Use of complicated medical jargon that could be difficult to understand across English and health literacy levels	• Using plain English language that can be easily translated or accessible to all levels of English and health proficiency levels
• Use of Australian colloquialisms and shorthand such as 'arvo', 'brekkie', 'fair go'	• Using complete words and phrases which avoids non-literal language
• Mentions of Cultural or Religious identity where not relevant to the context	• Where relevant to the context, consider using terms such as 'Chinese-speaking communities' or 'Japanese-Australians'
• Use of the term 'English as a Second Language' Speaker or 'ESL' Speaker	• Using the term 'Language other than English spoken at home'
• Use of acronyms	• Where there is a need to use an acronym, spelling the word out in its entirety at least once
• Use of figure of speech (hyperbole) that would not translate appropriately or convey intended meaning	• Whether the terms being utilised have in-language equivalents or alternative language to support understanding of newer terms • Using professional translation services that identify terms that will not translate properly
• Reliance on word-for-word translations (such as Google Translate)	• Consulting relevant communities about the cultural appropriateness of the information
	Using terms such as: • Multicultural communities • diverse cultures

Imagery Recommendations

- Images that reflect different cultural or religious headwear where relevant
- Symbols to support understanding (particularly where related to a call to action), e.g. a mobile phone symbol next to a helpline number
- Explore drawing on Cancer Council NSW's CALD community partners to provide talent for photo or video shoots
- Where you cannot source real-life talent, explore creating animation and graphics that reflect varying ethnicities and races within Australia
- In anatomical illustrations and diagrams, ensure a range of skin colours are represented
- Ensuring that the surroundings of any CALD communities are culturally and religiously appropriate, e.g. is the food on a coffee table appropriate in their culture, are the background artworks culturally appropriate, etc.

Additional Considerations

- Collate a calendar of cultural and religious celebrations and posting social tiles on Cancer Council NSW social media, or internal newsletters
- Avoid representation of CALD people in images that reflect them only wearing cultural clothing or attire. Where or when relevant to the communication, this can be appropriate (e.g.: a social tile celebrating a cultural or religious festival) however, consider representations of CALD without clear cultural cues if depicting them in their every day lives
- Creating audio or audio-visual resources that can meet the information needs of audiences that have low levels of in-language literacy
- Consulting with CALD community partners or research to identify how communications can account for cultural sensitivities
- If targeting communication to CALD communities, find out which platforms they engage with the most or if there are any ethno-specific outlets or platforms to use
- Clear placement of resources on the Cancer Council NSW website for CALD communities to easily identify
- For videos, in-language voiceover (accompanied with in-language subtitles) are a helpful tool to capture audiences with low in-language literacy. However, where the hero of the video is a not representative of the relevant language group it is best to utilise in-language subtitles

Best Practice Case Study

You are working on a project to create resources for a community engagement session that Cancer Council NSW will be partnering with a local migrant resource centre to deliver. The session will promote early detection of bowel cancer to a group of 50+ aged Arabic-speaking community members. You have been tasked with creating an English PowerPoint slide, handouts for the session, and a promotional social tile. You will be engaging with a professional National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) accredited translation service with quality control checks such as the use of back translations by a second translator.

You have decided to create a PowerPoint slide that incorporates:

- Diverse imagery,
- Subtitled videos, and
- Plain language that can be translated easily

The content of the PowerPoint was informed by the barriers identified for the Arabic-speaking community in the early detection of bowel cancer.

The in-language handouts used symbols to support the call to action to book an appointment for a bowel screening, and included contact details for local Arabic-speaking GPs that offer screening for bowel cancer.

The social tile used an image of Arabic-speakers aged 50+ to attract the intended audience. The social tile was optimised for distribution on Instagram and Facebook, as you found through research, these are the most common platforms used by Arabic-speakers in Australia.

Links for more information:

* https://fecca.org.au/
* https://eccnsw.org.au/
* https://www.embracementalhealth.org.au/sites/default/files/knowledge/2023/POLARON-Language-Services_Guide-to-better-communication-with-CALD-communities-1.pdf

Gender Diversity.

How this applies to Cancer Council NSW:

- **Events:** in imagery used in promotional materials for events
- **Resources:** when discussing cancers that affect external or internal sex-based organs
- **External Communications:** references to the target audience in social media tiles
- **Internal Communications:** references to the target audience in social media tiles

Language Recommendations

Avoid	Consider
• References to the target audience in social media tiles	Using gender neutral terms such as: • They/ them/ themselves etc.
• Assumptions about one's pronouns	Asking people their pronouns if necessary; • email signature to include pronouns – she/her, they/them, he/him, she/they, etc.
*Use of terms such as: • both genders • opposite sex • women and men • same-sex partner **Note: there are certain instances where such references cannot be avoided i.e. research, cancer statistics.*	*Using terms such as:* • all genders • everyone • people • all • same-gender partner (except when referring to the law, which only applies to same-sex partners)
• Assumptions about one's title, e.g. Ms, Mrs, etc.	• Using the title the person uses for themselves. If not available, use their name, or ask
• Use of binary language- e.g. 'ladies and gentlemen'	• 'Distinguished guests, 'everyone', 'folks', 'people, or 'all'
Use of terms that focus on gender such as: • chairman • policeman • tradesman • mum • dad • grandmother etc.	*Using gender neutral terms such as:* • chair • chairperson • tradesperson • parent • caregiver • guardian • grandparent etc.
• Only providing male, female, and other as gender options in questionnaires and forms	• Providing multiple options for gender such as: male, female, non-binary, transgender, prefer not to say, 'type here'

Avoid	Consider
Use of terms such as:	*Using terms such as:*
• gender reassignment	• gender-affirming healthcare
• sex change	• transition-related healthcare[6]
• sex reassignment	

Imagery Recommendations

• Avoid portraying gender stereotypes, e.g. including images which only represent men wearing PPE at a construction site, outdoors in the heat, or women dressed in feminine attire i.e. floral dress in the role of an early education teacher

• Consider diverse family structures and move away from solely focusing on traditional nuclear families as the norm. Diverse family structures include: single parent, extended family, gender-diverse parents, same-gender parents

• Clothing for talent to be diverse and with a variety of colours – avoid using colour as a gender identifier

• Images that are trans-inclusive and gender-diverse

Best Practice Case Study

You are creating a social media carousel for Cancer Council's Instagram page to raise awareness for cervical cancer. The tile requires an infographic with a medical diagram as well as images of people that have experienced cervical cancer and their testimonials.

To do this, you discuss their experiences with the talent, gathering testimonials on how Cancer Council NSW and their families and friends have supported them. For the photoshoot, you ask the talent to wear clothing they would normally wear and are comfortable in, ensuring authenticity and that gender norms are not imposed on them.

For the medical diagram copy, the language used is inclusive, stating what 'women and people with a cervix' need to know to monitor for symptoms. You and the rest of your team agree that while common, the gendering of body parts will exclude audiences that could be prone to this cancer and deter them from screening for symptoms. It is important that messaging is tailored to meet all information needs.

As well as a Plain English caption, you include Alternative Text describing each tile of the carousel.

Links for more information:

• https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/
• https://www.genderspectrum.org/resources
• https://www.transhub.org.au/language

Sexual Diversity.

How this applies to Cancer Council NSW:

- **Events:** attending an LGBTQIA+ health event such as the LGBTIQ Women's Health Conference
- **Resources:** resources such as Cancer Council NSW's *Sexuality, Intimacy and Cancer guide* and promotion of such resources
- **External Communications:** scouting of talent for visual communications
- **Internal Communications:** internal newsletters and surveys

Language Recommendations

Avoid	Consider
• Assumptions about one's sexuality and questions regarding sexuality when not relevant	• Not referencing unless relevant to what is being discussed or the information needed (unless required for minimum data collection)
Assumptions about one's romantic partner and using terms such as: • husband • wife • girlfriend • boyfriend	• Using 'partner' instead • In LGBTQI+ communications, using partner/s
• Assuming sexual behaviours and practices will align with a person's gender	• Including examples of multiple sexual behaviours and practices

Imagery recommendations

- Show diverse representations of people of the LGBTQIA+ community all year round and not only around Mardi Gras / World Pride
- Use of imagery that reflects LGBTQIA+, non-traditional partnerships, and diverse family structures

Best Practice Case Study

You have been tasked with producing a fact sheet about sex and cancer for patients, their carers and partners, where applicable. The fact sheet must be a maximum of two pages and include two images. The purpose of this is to outline information about the effects of cancer and treatment on the sex drive. It will be displayed on Cancer Council's website and distributed as a link through Electronic Direct Mail (eDM) communications.

In the fact sheet you have included:

- Gender neutral language such as 'partner/s' and not 'husband' or 'girlfriend' – there are no assumptions of heterosexuality and monogamy as the norm

- You do not attribute certain reproductive organs to a gender but instead use terms such as 'men and people with testes', 'women and people with a cervix' etc.

- Included images of couples that are same-sex and gender diverse

- A section for LGBTQIA+ individuals, with information about how they are entitled to respectful and culturally safe care from their team, and possibly a discussion around how sharing their sexual orientation may help their team provide the most appropriate care, but it is their own decision[7]

Links for more information:

- https://www.vic.gov.au/inclusive-language-guide

- https://www.lgbtiqhealth.org.au/

- https://aifs.gov.au/sites/default/files/publication-documents/2110_inclusive_communication_with_lgbtiq_clients_e2pg_0.pdf

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7 Information similar to this case study has been created by Cancer Council. See: 'Resuming sexual activity after treatment'
https://www.cancercouncil.com.au/cancer-information/managing-cancer-side-effects/sexuality-intimacy/resuming-sexual-activity/

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Diversity.

How this applies to Cancer Council NSW:

- **Events:** resources created for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples community events such as PowerPoints, promotional flyers, handouts

- **Resources:** where grants for specific projects allow for resources to be made in-language, or where required in community engagement

- **External Communications:** targeted information distribution to channels that are most appropriate to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

- **Internal Communications:** building cultural capacity through reflecting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander diversity of the workforce in images and language used in internal communications

Language Recommendations

Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Incorrect	Use
Use of terms such as:	*Using terms such as:*
• aboriginal and Torres Strait islander • ATSI • A&TSI	• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Always capitalise Aboriginal. • Use Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person if referring to one person • Use Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples if referring to more than one person • However, where it forms part of an acronym to describe such entities as organisations, abbreviations are used extensively and acceptably: • QATSIHP (Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Partnership) • A&TSIHB (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Branch)

Correct use of 'Aboriginal'

Incorrect	Use
Use of terms such as:	*Using terms such as:*
• an Aboriginal(s)	• Aboriginal person/people(s)
• there were many Aboriginals who came to the clinic	• there were many Aboriginal peoples who came to the clinic

Correct use of 'Torres Strait Islander'

Incorrect	Use
Use of terms such as:	*Using terms such as:*
• there were many Torres Strait Islanders who came to the clinic	• there were many Torres Strait Islander peoples who came to the clinic
• torres strait islander	• Torres Strait Islander, always capitalise
• Never use abbreviations for Torres Strait Islander e.g. Islander	

Correct use of 'Indigenous'

As 'Indigenous' is not specific, some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people feel the term diminishes their identity and should be avoided.

We encourage the use of 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander within Cancer Council NSW. However, in certain circumstances 'Indigenous' with capitalisation is acceptable though less frequently used now.

Incorrect	Use
Use of terms such as:	*Using terms such as:*
• indigenous	• Indigenous
• The median age of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is 21 years compared to the median age of Australians at 37 years	• The median age of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is 21 years compared to the median age of Australians of other descent at 37 years
	• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorian (preferable)
	• Indigenous Victorian

Correct use of 'First Nations and First Peoples'

'First Nations' or 'First Peoples' (capitalised) can refer to the peoples or nations of people who were there from the beginning, prior to the settlement of other peoples or nations. These terms have some general acceptance but can also be perceived as generic or not adequately describing the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia and should be avoided.

We should primarily use 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander'; however, in certain circumstances 'First Nations' and 'First Peoples' with capitalisation is acceptable.

Incorrect	Use
Use of terms such as:	*Using terms such as:*
• first nations	• First Nations
• first peoples	• First Peoples
• The median age of first nations people is 21 years compared to the median age of Australians at 37 years	• The median age of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is 21 years compared to the median age of Australians of other descent at 37 years.

Imagery recommendations

Use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artwork and photographs.

Acknowledging artwork

When CCNSW purchases art for inclusion in publications or other media from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person, we need to ensure we acknowledge the artist by displaying information about the artist and the artwork.

Our visual concept designed by Marcus Lee, a descendant of the Karajarri people, is an interpretation of an Indigenous styled daffodil. The symbol of the daffodil is our trusted icon and is the international symbol for hope. Guidelines for how to use CCNSW's Aboriginal respect symbol can be found here.

Permission to be photographed or filmed

- Before filming or taking photographs for inclusion in publications or other media, we must get written consent from those we will photograph by signing the CC Standard multimedia talent release found here.

- The participants must be fully briefed as to how the film or photographs will be used. Film or photographs obtained for CCNSW publications are not to be released to the media or any external agency without the written consent of the person or people involved.

- Some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander material is unsuitable for the public. This includes secret and sacred material which should not be published unless prior written permission has been granted. Any approvals granted for the use of sensitive materials, should be prominently displayed.

- Some images and knowledge may also be gender-specific and may only be seen by initiated men and women. Gender-based works may require you to follow special communication procedures which should be discussed with the participant and community prior to publication.

Use of audio and visuals

- If an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person dies, it is culturally respectful to speak with family to obtain their approval for continued use of their image or photograph.

- There is a section in the CC Standard multimedia talent release (section 9) form that states the below:

  - Images of or references to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may appear in the material the recordings are combined with, and the recordings will be used into the future;

  - We may include warning text to indicate that recordings may include references to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who have passed away;

  - We will, if requested in writing, use Your mourning name (if and as provided by You in writing now, or provided or amended in the future by You or Your next of kin), as soon as practicable after the Cancer Councils are reliably notified of Your death.

Terms associated with Aboriginal communities and organisations

Always check with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community about using this type of terminology. There are many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language groups and the use of these terms can be restrictive.

Don't refer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by these names without express permission and/or acceptance. The information presented is for cultural awareness only.

Clan

The 'clan' is a local descent group, larger than a family but based on family links through common ancestry. A 'clan' is a subset of a nation.

Be aware that the term 'clan' has specific meaning that derives from non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies and may not be applicable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

Community

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples may belong to more than one community- including where they come from, where their family is, and what organisations they belong to. However, in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, community is primarily about country, (extended) family ties, and shared experience. Community is about inter-relatedness and belonging and is central to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

It is generally acceptable to use the term 'community' to refer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living within a particular geographical region. However, the diversity of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within that community should be considered where applicable.

Country

Relationships to 'Country' are complex and interrelated. The term 'Country' is often used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to describe family origins and associations with particular parts of Australia.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have diverse relationships with, connections to and understandings of the Australian environment. Some of these relationships are based on the traditional knowledge and practice that have been passed down from generation to generation, while others have resulted from the various impacts of colonisation.

The term Country is acceptable in this context in uppercase.

Elder

The traditional meaning of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elder is someone who has gained recognition within their community as a custodian of knowledge and lore, and who has permission to disclose cultural knowledge and beliefs. Recognised Elders are highly respected people within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

In some instances, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples above a certain age will be referred to as 'Elders'. However, it is important to understand that in traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, age alone does not necessarily mean that one is a recognised Elder.

When negotiating with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, ensure that recognised Elders are involved. This may occur directly, or through other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples negotiating on the Elders behalf. Although negotiating with recognised Elders is important, it should not replace negotiation with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, such as the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health organisation.

The term Elder is acceptable in uppercase.

Mob

'Mob' is a term identifying a group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people associated with a particular place or Country.

'Mob' is an important term for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as it is used to describe who they are and where they are from.

'Mob' is generally used between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Therefore, it is not appropriate for non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to use this term unless it is known to be acceptable.

Nation

'Nation' refers to a culturally distinct group of people associated with a particular culturally defined area of land or country. Each nation has boundaries that cannot be changed, and language is tied to that nation and its Country.

'Nation' may be used to refer to culturally distinct Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander group and its associated country.

Be aware that the boundaries of some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nations cross over state boundaries. This has important implications for service delivery and provision, as well as negotiation processes.

Traditional Custodian

'Traditional Custodian(s)' is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person or peoples directly descended from original Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inhabitants of a culturally defined area of land or Country and has a cultural association with this Country that derives from the traditions, observances, customs, beliefs or history of the original Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inhabitants of the area.

All formal meetings, presentations and other gatherings should be opened with a Welcome to Country by a traditional owner or an Acknowledgment of Country of the traditional custodians of the land in which the gathering is being taken place.

Tribe

Like nation, 'tribe' refers to a culturally distinct group of people associated with a particular, culturally defined area of land or country. Be aware that 'tribe' has specific meaning that derives from non-Indigenous societies and may not be applicable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

Where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples use the term, its usage should be respected. If unsure, guidance should be sought from local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples or organisations.

Sorry Business

The period of mourning for deceased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is commonly known as Sorry Business.

In many Aboriginal communities there is a prohibition on naming someone who is deceased, which may last for months or even years. When this occurs, a different name is used to refer to the person who has passed away.

Generally, the face of the person who has died should not be shown without warning, particularly to their own communities. You should always check with local Aboriginal community and family to seek permission before displaying or broadcasting names or images of deceased people. We should include warning text to indicate that recordings may include references to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who have passed away.

CCNSW's leave policy has accommodations for Sorry Business under compassionate leave for employees. On occasion, events may be cancelled of postponed out of respect for Sorry Business.

Smoking Ceremonies

Smoking Ceremonies are undertaken in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to cleanse the space in which the ceremony is taking place. The Smoking Ceremony is a ritual of purification and unity and is always undertaken by an Aboriginal person with specialised cultural knowledge. This is a very significant ceremony and is performed only at events deemed appropriate by the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community.

A Smoking Ceremony can be used in organisations at specific building openings and program launches. They can also be combined with a Welcome to Country.

Welcome to Country

A Welcome to Country is when the local traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander custodian(s) or Elder(s) welcome people to their land. It always occurs at the opening of an event and is usually the first item on the program.

A Welcome to Country may involve (but is not limited to):

- A welcome introduction that may or may not be in the relevant Aboriginal language
- The individual/group being dressed in cultural attire
- A speech, song, ceremony, or combination of these things
- Involvement from the participants at the event
- Sharing of information such as local history or culture
- Recognition of other Aboriginal Elders and Aboriginal people
- Reciprocated respect
- Best wishes for a successful event

Why it is important

Welcome to Country is a mark of respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and increases awareness and recognition of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's culture and heritage.

When to use it

The practice of adopting the Welcome to Country protocol should be routinely incorporated into the planning of major events including:

- Fundraising activities such as Relay For Life and Australia's Biggest Morning Tea
- Conferences, workshops, and seminars
- Ceremonies
- Other functions where official guests and dignitaries are in attendance.

Fee for service

Cultural practices including Welcome to Country are intellectual property of Aboriginal communities and individuals. People who undertake these practices have been trusted by their community to share this culture with the wider community.

In providing cultural services such as Welcome to Country, artistic performances and ceremonies, Aboriginal peoples are using their intellectual property. As such, providers of these services should be appropriately remunerated.

Consideration must also be given to transport for Elders and assistance to travel to and from the event should be provided if required.

Important things to note

Welcome to Country can only be made by an Elder or Traditional Custodian. It's important to be mindful of other cultural commitments within the community at the time of the event, such as Sorry Business. This may have an impact on availability or attendance of people within the community for both the Welcome to Country and/or participation in the event.

Acknowledgement of Country

An Acknowledgement of Country is an opportunity for anyone to show respect for Traditional Custodians and the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Country.

How to use it

There is no specific wording for an Acknowledgement of Country, just be sincere and, if possible, do some research on the Country you are acknowledging. The AIATSIS Map of Indigenous Australia provides further information on specific community locations and the Traditional Custodians of that Country..

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples may also wish to acknowledge their own mob/s and other First Nations peoples present.

Suggested wording could include:

I'd like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet today, the (people) of the (nation) and pay my respects to their Elders past and present and acknowledge all Aboriginal peoples in attendance.

When to use it

An Acknowledgement of Country can be offered by any person and should be used at the beginning of a meeting, speech or event.

It can also be expressed on behalf of an organisation in different forms of communications such as:

- Email signature blocks
- Resources (e.g. PowerPoint)
- Brand
- Websites
- Social media

Additional Considerations

There are many differences in the way Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples interact and communicate. Key differences include:

- **Use introductory protocols:** When meeting an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person for the first time, you may have to provide some background information about yourself to establish who you are before the consultation begins. This introduction is the first step towards building rapport with the Aboriginal community. It may take several meetings to establish a good level of rapport and build credibility with the community before consultation can be fully effective.

- **Have flexible timeframes:** Often groups will discuss matters with community leaders, community members and families before making decisions. Flexibility should be allowed when setting times for important community decision making.

- **Allow for silence:** Often Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people remain silent when they are listening and thinking about an unfolding discussion. Silence can also mean that people do not wish to give an immediate opinion and prefer to contribute after more consideration. In some cases, silence may be used as a form of cultural politeness or quiet protest when people do not agree with the discussion or information being presented.

- **Maintain confidentiality:** Information shared during consultation must remain confidential in keeping with the principles of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander intellectual property rights. It is important to determine with the group being consulted what is and what is not confidential or secret information and what can be discussed with other parties.

- **Allow time for consultation:** Do not put Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people on the spot with an unannounced request then expect an immediate response. This may make many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people feel uncomfortable. In some cases, they will need to consult others before they can respond. Be aware that not every Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person will want to speak publicly about their culture, history, family, or issues that affect the community.

Best Practice Case Study

You are interviewing a local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person to produce video content on the role of Cancer Council NSW's Aboriginal Advisory committee in informing the creation of important resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The filmed interview must be edited down to a maximum of four minutes and must also be edited into shorter videos for social media purposes. It will be displayed on Cancer Council's website, social media and distributed as a link through Electronic Direct Mail (eDM) communications.

While producing the video, you have:

- clearly informed the person that their likeness may appear in materials the recordings are combined with, and that the recordings will be used into the future
- had the video reviewed by the person before the video is published
- as per general video best practice, included subtitles to maximise accessibility
- if required, included warning text to indicate that recordings may include references to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who have passed away

Links for more information:

- Cancer Council NSW Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples website
- Cancer Council NSW Reconciliation Action Plan
- www.health.qld.gov.au/atsihealth/documents/terminology.pdf
- https://www.actcoss.org.au/sites/default/files/public/publications/gulanga-good-practice-guide-preferences-terminology-referring-to-aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-peoples.pdf
- 2015-74-ATSI-Cultural-Protocols-update_WEB.pdf (oxfam.org.au)

Thank you.

For more information contact the PR team on
prteam@nswcc.org.au

We're here for all Australians affected by cancer.
Call 13 11 20 for Information and Support.

Cancer Council