

AIDA Communique – Specialist Trainee Support Program – Cross-college meeting 7 May 2026

The Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association (AIDA) Specialist Trainee Support Program (STSP) Cross-college meeting was held on Thursday, 7 May 2026 at the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) on Gadigal Country in Sydney. The meeting brought together representatives from Specialist Medical Colleges, AIDA staff, the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing (DoHDA), and key stakeholders to reflect on collective progress and strengthen collaborative approaches that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander trainees and Fellows across specialist medical training.

The meeting commenced by Lee Bradfield (Head of Indigenous Affairs RACP), with an Acknowledgement of Country, recognising the Traditional Custodians of the lands of the Eora Nation and the importance of coming together in a culturally safe and collaborative space.

Colleges reflected on developments across the financial year, including progress in recruitment and retention, expanding mentoring and peer support networks, leadership and governance representation, scholarship opportunities, and strengthened cultural safety initiatives embedded within training and organisational systems.

Updates were provided from DoHDA and AIDA, including progress across the Specialist Trainee Support Program, the Leaders in Indigenous Medical Education (LIME) Program, and the First Nations Oncology Experience Program (FNOEP). These updates reinforced ongoing collaboration with medical colleges and universities and an ongoing commitment to culturally safe training environments and improved workforce outcomes.

A strategic address from AIDA's Chief Executive Officer proposed opportunities to strengthen collective impact, shared accountability, and affirmed the importance of sustained cross-college collaboration to address systemic barriers affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors in specialist training.

College representatives engaged in discussions focused on learning from Cross-college meetings held throughout the 2025–26 financial year. These discussions invited colleges to reflect on what has been heard, attempted, and progressed over time, and where shared effort can be strengthened.

Small group discussions were structured around the following reflective prompts, drawn from recurring focus areas of previous Cross-college meetings:

- **Assessment equity and outcomes** – reflecting on progress made, challenges experienced and observed changes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander trainees.



AIDA

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AIDA acknowledges and pays respect to the Traditional Owners of the lands across Australia on which our members live and work, and to the Elders and ancestors, past and present. We pay respect to the Ngunnawal and Ngambri peoples as the Traditional Owners of the land on which the AIDA office stands.

- **Trainee support, retention, and wellbeing** – considering initiatives trialled during the year, what has been most impactful, and where further collective action is needed.
- **Recruitment into training programs** – reflecting on strategies implemented across the year to strengthen pathways and recruitment outcomes, including lessons learnt.
- **Cultural safety within colleges** – reflecting on how cultural safety has been embedded across training, assessment, supervision, and organisational practice, and what ongoing work remains.

Discussions emphasised the value of sharing practical examples across colleges to inform future actions.

The afternoon session focused on identifying shared commitments and priorities for upcoming Cross-college meetings. Participants discussed areas where the group could continue to work collectively over the next 12 months, building on learning from the past year and aligning future activity to trainee-identified needs.

The meeting concluded with reflection and evaluation, reaffirming a shared commitment to ongoing collaboration and culturally safe systems that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors throughout specialist training.

Attendees:

1. Australian Indigenous Doctors Association
2. Department of Health, Disability and Ageing
3. Australasian College of Dermatologists
4. Australasian College for Emergency Medicine
5. Australasian College of Sport and Exercise Physicians
6. College of Intensive Care Medicine of Australia and New Zealand
7. Royal Australasian College of Surgeons
8. Royal Australasian College of Physicians
9. Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists
10. Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists
11. Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators
12. Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists
13. Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine

Apologies:

1. Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists
2. Royal Australian College of General Practitioners
3. Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia
4. Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists