

Cultural Safety Policy

Flinders NT

Endorsed May 2015



This is the newly endorsed Cultural Safety Policy for Flinders NT incorporating the Poche Centre, Alice Springs; the Northern Territory Medical Program and the Centre for Remote Health. A specific implementation strategy is currently in development. In the interim, all staff and students are asked to familiarise themselves with the principal components and expectations implicit in this policy.

Preamble

Flinders NT is a multicultural, multidisciplinary organisation operating in a variety of cultural contexts. Cultural Safety is the endorsed philosophy of Flinders NT for ensuring all staff, students and those with whom we interact feel safe, respected and valued for our diversity. Flinders University Faculty of Health Sciences aims to produce culturally safe graduates. As the organisation responsible for the education of our students, Flinders NT therefore needs to be culturally safe in its operations.

Cultural Safety

Cultural safety is a philosophy and a way of operating that ensures all individuals and groups are treated with **regard** to their unique cultural needs and differences. It assumes the right to difference and calls for interactions that do not diminish, demean or disempower individuals on the basis of any perceived or actual difference.

The core business of Flinders NT is concerned with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health as a local and national priority. Whilst a Cultural Safety policy is overtly concerned with ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians experience such within Flinders NT, it is the right of all individuals to also expect culturally safe engagement in the course of their work and/or study.

To this end, Flinders NT endorses the following principles underpinning this policy:

- There is no single Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, just as there is no single non-Indigenous culture. Our interactions and practices acknowledge the diversity of Indigenous and other cultures, locally, nationally and internationally.
- Culture can be constructed to relate to more than ethnicity alone; - it may be linked to socio-economic status, religion, gender, age, sexuality or disability.
- Staff and students of Flinders NT will strive to demonstrate and facilitate Cultural Safety in their professional encounters through:
 - Examination of and reflection on one's own culture and its potential impact on others;
 - Developing and displaying sensitivity to historical influences on the health and well-being of others;

- Acknowledging power relationships and dominance that are a result of cultural privilege and acting to ensure equitable and respectful engagement;
- Ensuring respectful dialogue and avoiding use of language that may be colonising or 'othering' in nature (the tendency to view 'others' as exotic and one's own cultural group as the 'norm');
- Acceptance of the right to hold differing world and other views.

Responsibilities implicit in this policy

Flinders NT is responsible for:

- providing quality and timely ongoing training in Cultural Safety;
- providing information on Cultural Safety to all staff and students;
- taking steps to ensure consistent application of this policy;
- taking steps to investigate allegations or complaints of breaches of this policy.

Staff are responsible for

- Being aware of policies and procedures in relation to Cultural Safety;
- Attending ongoing training which facilitates an applied knowledge of Cultural Safety in our work environment;
- Providing clear guidelines to students and access to materials to support learning and action in Cultural Safety;
- Ensuring the development of culturally specific teaching materials is undertaken in consultation and collaboration with members of the cultural group referenced;
- Refraining from culturally unsafe practices and interactions, and where safe to do so, challenging potentially unsafe practices and interactions, including such things as stereotyping, discrimination, and racist, sexist or other demeaning and harmful commentary;
- Conducting themselves in a culturally safe manner.

Students are responsible for:

- Informing themselves of the Cultural Safety expectations of Flinders NT;
- Taking advantage of education opportunities provided on Cultural safety;
- Submitting work that adheres to the principles of Cultural safety;
- Conducting themselves in a culturally safe manner;
- Refraining from culturally unsafe practices and interactions, and where safe to do so, challenging potentially unsafe practices and interactions, including such things as stereotyping, discrimination, and racist, sexist or other demeaning and harmful commentary.