

What is CATSIN?

CATSIN stands for the Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses.

CATSIN was founded in 1997, to formally represent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses and midwives.

CATSIN is made up of Indigenous nurses and midwives (enrolled nurses or RN Div 2, registered nurses or RN Div 1 or 3 and midwives).

CATSIN also has an associate membership for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student nurses and retired nurses and midwives.

What type of organisation is CATSIN?

CATSIN is a national, professional nursing and midwifery organisation. It is an independent organisation with links to other professional bodies, and is frequently asked to comment on issues and consult on to these organisations.

CATSIN has a Board of Directors and an Executive Director, Sally Goold. Annual elections are conducted for half the Board at the Annual Conference. CATSIN currently has six employees – the Executive Director and staff working in administration, projects, policy and IT.

CATSIN charges very small membership fees and is mostly funded by the Australian Government through the Department of Health & Ageing.

What is CATSIN's role?

CATSIN's primary role is to increase the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples into nursing and midwifery. Recruitment means getting people to think about nursing or midwifery as a career and to apply to study. Retention is about getting people to stay in the profession once they start studying or start nursing or midwifery.

Who should join CATSIN?

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander nurses (enrolled nurses or RN Div 2, registered nurses or RN Div 1 or 3 and midwives). Retired or student Indigenous nurses can become associate members.

I am not a financial member of CATSIN. Can I still attend the Annual Conference?

The annual conference is open to contribution to or attendance by anyone who has an interest in Indigenous nursing or health issues.

Does CATSIN have scholarships?

No, CATSIN does not have scholarships, but we can provide you with information about scholarships and where to find them.

Does CATSIN provide funding?

No, we do not provide funding.

However CATSIN has limited funding available to Indigenous student nurse Associate Members to attend the CATSIN Annual Conference. This is a “by application only” process each year.

How can you support CATSIN?

You can help by joining CATSIN. There is strength in numbers.

You can become a mentor for other CATSIN members and Indigenous students, either formally or informally.

You can attend the CATSIN Annual Conference.

You can talk about CATSIN to other Indigenous nurses/students.

You can feedback to the Executive Director (Sally Goold) on matters that are relevant to you and other Indigenous nurses.

CATSIN is an organisation that facilitates information exchange.

What can CATSIN do for you?

CATSIN holds an annual conference. The conference is held in a different city each year and is held at a subsidized cost to attendees. The conference is sponsored by Wyeth Health.

The conference gives an opportunity to discuss issues. It provides opportunities to influence the nursing profession to promote and shape change. The annual conference provides an opportunity for people to present papers in a culturally safe and non-judgemental environment.

The annual conference provides you with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurse network. Catching up with others from around Australia is a wonderful, annual event.

Each member of CATSIN is expected to support other members, as they are able, and will be supported by CATSIN and its members.

The CATSIN quarterly Newsletter is sent to all members. Members are encouraged to share information and experiences through the Newsletter.

Mentoring and support

What is mentoring?

Mentoring is about linking an experienced nurse with a student nurse in a formal way. Mentoring can mean establishing a relationship based on support, communication, being a resource, a sounding board and role model. Both parties usually find a mentoring relationship to be of great mutual benefit. Mentoring is what you make of it.

Mentoring and support

CATSIN provides mentoring and support, formally for student nurses and informally for registered and enrolled nurses and midwives.

CATSIN's achievements and our voice.

What are some of CATSIN's achievements to date?

CATSIN has become a high profile organisation within the health sector; nationally and internationally.

CATSIN sought and gained funding to publish a book of Indigenous nurses' stories. *In Our Own Right Black Australian Nurses' Stories*, edited by Sally Goold and Kerryne Liddle, was released in 2005 and is available from CATSIN.

The *Gettin' em Keepin'* Report of the Indigenous Nursing Education Working Group, outlines ways universities can improve recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student nurses and midwives. This report was released in 2002.

How does CATSIN have a voice in changing and influencing state and national policy?

Executive Director Sally Goold represents Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses on the National Indigenous Health Equality Council; the Australian Peak Nursing and Midwifery Forum; and on many other professional boards and committees.

CATSIN has members on a broad range of committees and organisations at state and national level. This means Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses and nursing issues remain permanently on the nursing and health agendas.