

Tip Sheet 1

What are identifiers?

The Commonwealth, State, Territory Governments are asking general practices, hospitals, community health centres, schools and other services to ask their clients to 'identify'. This information collected allows organisations to know all they can about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples health for planning and provision of appropriate health care services.

The information provided enables funds to be allocated more appropriately, and services to be customised to address areas of most need eg low rates of uptake in immunisation, influenza and pneumococcal, child pneumococcal. These are free to eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

How do staff and GP's ask the question?

There is no right or wrong way to ask the question. To ensure that you get the right response it is best to take a person by person approach. What will be fine with one person may not be fine with another person. The reaction by that person depends on age, level of education, confidence and the way the practice staff addresses the situation.

To ensure that you get a high and accurate responses consider a number of factors.

1. Have you got all the information you need? (leaflets and posters)
2. Have you set up your patient software (Medical Director) so you can record the information? (who will make these changes)
3. Make available a number of resources including promotional material in the waiting room and consulting room.

Most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people do not have a problem answering the question. However their main concern is why the question is being asked and if the decision to identify will effect any future medical treatment provided by the general practice.

