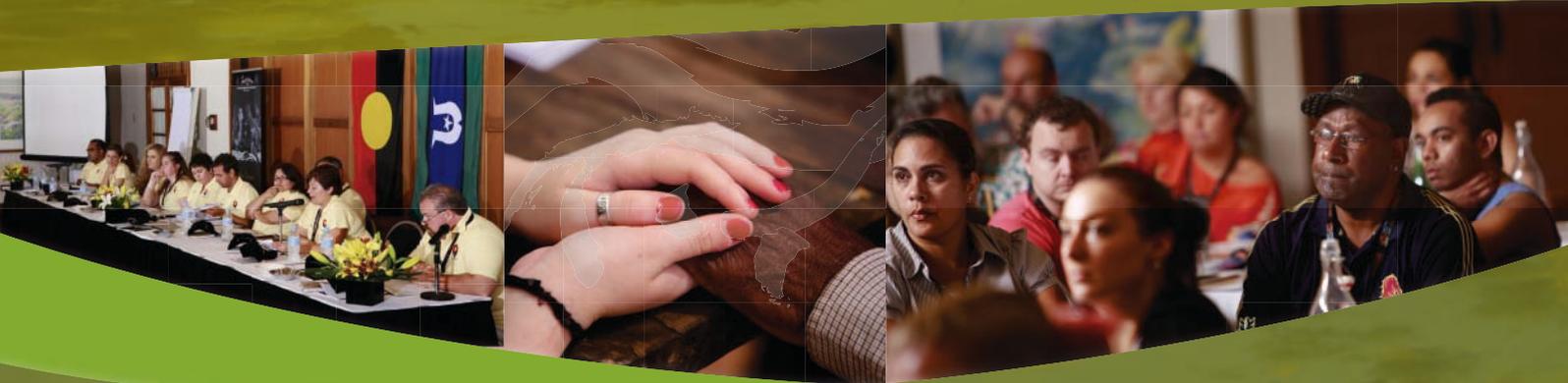


The Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association Ltd

# AIDA Mentoring Framework



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## Purpose

This framework aims to provide and promote strategies that will guide organisations to develop and implement sustainable mentoring programs that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students and doctors.

## Objectives

The objective of this framework is to provide mentorship opportunities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students and doctors. The framework aims to ensure that;

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students and doctors are stronger in their profession drawing on their cultural strength,
- Medical education and training organisations (medical schools, postgraduate medical councils and medical colleges) are provided with guidance that will assist in the establishment and delivery of mentoring programs that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students and doctors and;
- All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students and doctors are provided access to mentoring opportunities.

## Scope

AIDA offers its members collegiate support to assist them in their careers. This framework provides guidance to medical schools, postgraduate medical councils, medical colleges and other organisations to establish, maintain and evaluate sustainable and culturally safe mentoring programs to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students and doctors.

AIDA has ensured that mentoring is a key feature in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students and doctors across the education continuum, and this has been articulated in our Collaboration Agreements with Medical Deans of Australia and New Zealand and Confederation of Postgraduate Medical Education Councils.

## Mentoring

For the purpose of this framework, mentoring is defined as a dynamic and mutually-beneficial engagement between an advanced incumbent (mentor) and a less experienced person (mentee), to facilitate professional growth by sharing knowledge and skills in a confidential, non-judgemental and culturally safe environment.

Peer, or collegiate, support, which involves interacting with peers of like experience, is seen as important to the professional development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students and doctors. However, it is important to note that peer support differs to mentoring, as mentoring is often a formal arrangement, where an experienced person shares knowledge and skills in order to help develop a less experienced person.

### Principles of the Mentoring Framework

1. Mutual respect and understanding are essential to the mentoring relationship.
2. Both the mentee and the mentor are genuinely committed to the mentoring relationship
3. The cultural needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students and doctors are embedded within mentoring programs.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### AIDA

As a peak national body for supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students and doctors, AIDA represents its members and advocates with other organisations to develop and implement sustainable mentoring programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students and doctors.

### Medical schools

Medical schools may facilitate mentoring opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students, to contribute to the retention and graduation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students and to strengthen pathways along the medical education continuum.

### Postgraduate Medical Councils

Postgraduate Medical Councils may articulate their commitment to mentoring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prevocational doctors to contribute to the career progression of Junior Doctors.

### Medical colleges

Medical colleges may articulate their commitment to mentoring opportunities for Registrars and Fellows to progress their career.

## Roles and Responsibilities of Mentors and Mentees

To help guide the success of the mentoring relationship, the role of a mentor and mentee are outlined below.

The role of a mentor includes:

- Assisting the mentee to identify their needs, issues, concerns and aspirations
- Sharing knowledge and wisdom and;
- Facilitating growth and development of the mentee.

The role of a mentee includes:

- Identifying the needs, issues, concerns and aspirations relevant to career goals
- Being open to advice and constructive feedback and;
- Accepting responsibility for their development.

The responsibilities of mentors and mentees are; Commitment to the mentoring arrangement Maintaining an open and honest form of communication Agreement to maintain confidentiality

## Strategies

### Clinical/Professional Mentoring

1. Medical Education and Training Institutions develop mentoring programs to benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students and doctors.
2. Medical Education and Training Institutions articulate their commitment to strengthening pathways and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and doctors.
3. Medical Education and Training Institutions develop respectful relationships with local Elders and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, such as Aboriginal Medical Services and local Land Councils.
4. Medical Education and Training Institutions identify and commit resources to the mentoring program.
5. Evaluation processes developed and implemented to determine the success of the mentoring program
6. Strategies are developed and implemented for when the mentoring process does not meet expectations of the mentor or mentee.



## Cultural Mentoring

1. Medical Education and Training Institutions develop respectful relationships with local Elders and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, such as Aboriginal Medical Services and local Land Councils.
2. Cultural workshops held to provide a culturally safe place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students and doctors to meet with local Elders and share life experiences.
3. AIDA's key role in articulating the unique medico-cultural perspective of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students and doctors provides for a range of support opportunities.

## Evaluation of the Mentoring Framework

This Mentoring Framework will be evaluated by AIDA on an annual basis. The evaluation will help us determine:

- the Framework's effectiveness in guiding organisations to develop mentoring programs;
- the number of colleges who have developed mentoring programs through implementing the Framework;
- the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students and doctors participating in mentoring programs;
- and the value that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander medical students and doctors place on peer/collegiate support as a contributing factor to professional development.

Within the mentoring programs themselves, there may be a continuous review of the mentoring process and relationship.

## Attachments

- A. Glossary of terms
- B. Roles and Responsibilities of Mentors and Mentees
- C. The Mentoring Process

## Attachment A - Glossary

### Types of Mentoring

#### Clinical/Professional mentoring

The provision of teaching, coaching and mentoring by a relevant registered health professional (this must be an experienced competent practitioner) to support the student to integrate their postgraduate learning into the practice setting.

#### Cultural mentoring

A supporting role by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person providing advice and support to another Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person in relation to cultural needs. A cultural mentor does not need to have a medical background, however assumed knowledge of the medical career progression would be beneficial.

### Methods of Mentoring

#### Distance mentoring

A mentoring relationship where the mentor and mentee are separated by a distance reducing the amount of 'face-to-face' contact and relying upon other methods – for example email and videoconferencing – to support the mentoring relationship.

#### Peer support

Support which occurs, either informally or formally with a peer, or colleague of similar position and experience. This can take shape in various forms, such as sharing resources or de-briefing.

#### Formal mentoring

A well-structured program where a mentor is linked with a mentee by common interests or career aspirations. A formal mentoring program is well resourced and often accompanied by tools, such as mentoring agreements, mentoring plans (action plans), and an ongoing formal evaluation process.

Formal mentoring programs may be time limited depending upon availability of the mentor and resources.

#### Informal mentoring

Informal mentoring is a supportive relationship that develops spontaneously or informally without assistance from a formal mentoring program. The relationship may occur naturally or be initiated by the mentor or mentee.



## Attachment B – Roles and Responsibilities

For a mentoring relationship to be successful, a mentor and mentee should be aware of their role and responsibilities to maximise the mentoring relationship.

### The Mentor

Providing a mentorship role allows for a mentor to develop their own leadership skills and provides an opportunity to contribute to the professional development of another.

Key attributes of a mentors' role is to;

- Listen to the mentee, with no judgement and maintain confidentiality
- Share lessons learnt and mistakes made
- Create a safe and confidential place for discussion
- Open doors to new experiences and professional contacts
- Possess excellent self management skills

### The Mentee

Engaging in a mentoring program is highly beneficial to a mentee and allows for advice in career direction, professional development and an increase of confidence and self-awareness. A mentee is also able to gain skills and knowledge, which may not be providing in a clinical or classroom setting.

Key attributes of a mentees' role is to

- Listen to the mentor, with no judgement and maintain confidentiality
- Take responsibility for their professional and personal development
- Identify and set goals
- Consider advice and reflect on what is learnt

### Mentoring Exclusions

A mentoring role is not a training or teaching role. These roles are often short term and focused on specific outcomes and goals.

A mentoring role is not a counselling role and a mentor does not attempt to resolve issues that are underlying within a mentee. A mentor role is one that is mutually beneficial, to the mentor and mentee and assists with the provision of practical advice to assist the mentee in setting goals and navigating barriers that exist in their career pathways.

### When Mentoring does not meet Expectations

If the mentoring relationship fails to meet the expectations of either the mentor or mentee, the relationship and the mentoring process would need to be evaluated.

Remediation strategies should be in place when mentoring programs are not meeting the expectations of mentors or mentees.

## Attachment C – Mentoring Process

The following outlines a suggested approach to mentoring (Deakin University 2012 <sup>1</sup>).



### Establishing a mentoring agreement

In the early stages of establishing a mentoring agreement, discussions around the expectations and roles of mentors and mentees can contribute to the success of the mentoring program.

Establishing a mentoring agreement involves the mentee and mentor; Discussing and determining the purpose of the mentoring relationship. Determining the length of relationship, mentoring styles, frequency of mentoring sessions, confidentiality, roles and responsibilities Discussing and clarifying expectations for both parties

### Developing the Mentoring Process

When developing the mentoring process, the following can assist in achieving maximum benefits for both the mentor and mentee;

- Using effective communication styles to develop trust, confidence and rapport
- A mentor showing genuine concern for mentee's welfare and career aspirations.

### Provision of Mentoring

The mentor can provide support to the mentee by:

- Helping the mentee to identify areas for learning, growth or change
- Establishing a set of goals to address identified areas for mentoring
- Helping mentee identify barriers and challenges and;
- Monitoring the progress of the mentee.

### Management of the Mentoring Process

The mentoring process can be managed by;

- The mentee regularly reporting on progress toward achievement of goals
- The mentor identifying barriers to progress and assist mentee to identify strategies to address these
- Keeping the mentoring session on track by focusing on strategies and achievement of agreed goals.
- Constructive criticism provided to the mentee.

### Evaluation of the Mentoring Process

Evaluating the mentoring process is important to determine its effectiveness. If a mentoring process is deemed as not meeting or exceeding the mentors or mentees expectations, the process will need to be reviewed.

The effectiveness of the mentoring process can be evaluated by;

- Regular open communication about the mentoring relationship including strengths and weaknesses
- The mentor seeking feedback from mentee on mentoring effectiveness

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<sup>1</sup> Deakin University 2012 Support For Mentors <http://www.deakin.edu.au/hr/assets/support-for-mentors.doc>

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