

# foreword

Protocols are an essential component when dealing with individuals and communities. No where is it clearer than in Aboriginal communities. For many years unfortunately these protocols were invisible to non-Aboriginal peoples who, for one reason or another, had no conception about what it might mean to treat and respect Aboriginal people as basic human beings.

This is a sad reflection on those times and the attitudes which were borne of those overwhelming aspects of colonisation. We now have an opportunity to address this issue and right those wrongs.

Over recent years numerous cross-cultural training awareness courses have been initiated throughout the country to service deliverers, institutions, government departments and so on. Their impact in the main has resulted in a greater appreciation of Aboriginal peoples. These protocols have the same effect.

Once upon a time, non-Aboriginal people assumed “everyone was the same” but we know “everyone” is not the same. We all come with a set of values, ideals and principles which have been shaped since birth according to our respective cultures.

It is vital to adhere to how one wishes to be addressed. There is, I believe, much more understanding of the politics of difference. However, while there is a long way to go for the respect it deserves, these protocols offer a good start.



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