

## Current responses in regards to institutional racism;

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- Aboriginal languages aren't recognised within the state languages policy, lack of interpreters.
- There is a fear to speak up when it comes to questions such as the ones listed in the attached document.
- It isn't compulsory for front line police to complete cultural competency/awareness training.
- Institutionalised Racism in the Health Industry is more likely to occur in the Emergency Departments (ED): the use of the statement "No tolerance" is blatantly used against Aboriginal People in this setting.
  - Resident group member witnessed and has also been ignored whilst attending the ED, witnessed non-Indigenous persons getting treatment before me and other Aboriginal people even though we may have been before these people.
    - Having to wait for 4-6 hours before being treated
    - To voice an opinion in these situations provides the person in the Triage the opportunity use their "No tolerance policy" against us.
    - This situation happens across all ED's in Western Australia.

Some Aboriginal Medical Services including recommendations from Aboriginal Managed Advisory Boards/Councils have tried in vain to have Aboriginal Health Workers employed ED and other parts of the system but this is being overlooked?

Cultural Awareness Training is unlikely to make any changes those that would attend are more at the management level and not at the Front Line Services.

Aboriginal people attending the ED from outlying communities would feel the brunt of this racism a lot more than those of us that are town based.

- Aboriginal staff within agencies and other organisations are micro managed more noticeably than other staff.
- Complaints against Aboriginal Staff members (within organisations) are taken more seriously and investigated more thoroughly than complaints against non- Aboriginal staff. The Aboriginal staff member is then judged more suspiciously by others and leads to the feeling of not being trusted. Often isolation by other workers occur.
- There is a lack of Cultural Competency training within organisations.
- Organisations employ Aboriginal Cultural Advisors but these people and their position are often not taken seriously in the workplace.
- Lack of Cultural Awareness Training in organisations.
  - The racism arises from a lack of understanding of language and cultural differences. Often the people in the institutions believe they are interacting with Aboriginal people in the right way, unaware that they are being offensive, not adhering to social protocols and cultural protocols that are important to Aboriginal people.

This arises from a lack of cultural competency training. The people working in any organisation who has contact with Aboriginal people must have been trained to be aware of racism, bigotry, social protocols, cultural protocols and language.

Aboriginal people interact with people in organisations in a way that is meaningful and correct from their cultural perspective. However this is often not how the

people in organisations interact and therefore we end up with a terrible cultural, social and linguistic clash.

- Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people interact at the cultural interface. The cultural interface is a place of contested knowledge, contested values, contested language, contested culture etc. The non-Aboriginal people are usually in the position of advance/power and therefore the cultural interface is perceived as a place of racism.
- There needs to be an unpacking of what 'racism' is. Identifying the elements. Identifying minority people's behaviours and reactions when they encounter racism. Much study has been done on this and there are psychosocial models available for this to be understood.
- Minority or power-less people will perceive racism when it doesn't exist but is due to a sense of dispowerment or disillusion.
- Genuine racism- discriminating against someone because of race- does happen. It's about being clear when it genuinely happens compared to when there is just the clash that happens at the cultural interface.

#### **Current responses in regards to what challenges do people here face when interacting Centrelink;**

The biggest challenge to effective communication with centreline is language. Aboriginal people speak a variety of languages and think in those languages. Even people who are town based often speak Aboriginal English. There are issues related to linguistic mis-interpretation as well as social mis-interpretation.

Secondly, Centrelink is a 'culture' in itself. It is the culture of welfare, job seeking, employment, etc. It is difficult for a non-Aboriginal person to navigate Centrelink let alone for an Aboriginal person who is unable to communicate in the language they think in, who comes from a different social and cultural background and even from a different economic background.

Interpreters are needed to assist with all communication so people can communicate effectively.

- Lack of Aboriginal interpreters. Locally there was an interpreter employed by Centrelink but that position was closed, made redundant.
- Extremely hard for elders to use the online components of Centrelink.