

# CULTURAL SAFETY FOR ABORIGINAL FAMILIES IN HOSPITAL

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## Objectives

The objective of this scoping literature review was to map the range of current practice and best evidence recommendations for embedding cultural safety in child protection responses for Aboriginal families in hospitals.

## Methodology

Relevant concepts were mapped and search terms were built iteratively from the published literature. Electronic databases were searched systematically and the reference lists were examined. Efforts to reduce the risk of bias were made by using an inductive approach and involving Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal researchers in the analyses.

## Implications

Analysis of eight articles revealed three main themes: relationships, organisational processes, and culture.

**Relationships:** Four articles presented data that fell under this theme, and influencing concepts of communication, information sharing, and trust. Communication skills of healthcare professionals and the impact of this on the patient experience of trust, power and identity was a central concept.

**Organisational process:** All articles addressed the major theme of organisational process, which included concepts of complexity, monitoring, referral to services, and identification.

**Culture:** All articles except two explored this theme and related concepts of cultural competence, Aboriginal staff, identity, culture shock, and separation. Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people consistently reported the importance of sensitivity to culture in healthcare provision.



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Relationships,  
organisational processes  
and respect for culture are  
critical for Aboriginal  
families to feel culturally  
safe in hospital.

## Lessons Learned

This review scoped the available literature for embedding cultural safety for Aboriginal families with children at risk of engaging with child protection services in hospitals. In addition to organisational factors we also found themes of relationships and Aboriginal culture, reflecting the need for strategies that focus on cultural safety rather than cultural competence alone. This provides some direction for policy and practice development in this field, however has also highlighted the deficiencies in evidence and urgent need for further research.

***We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we live and work and pay our respects to the Elders past, present & emerging.***

