



## Sharing what works to improve chronic disease care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

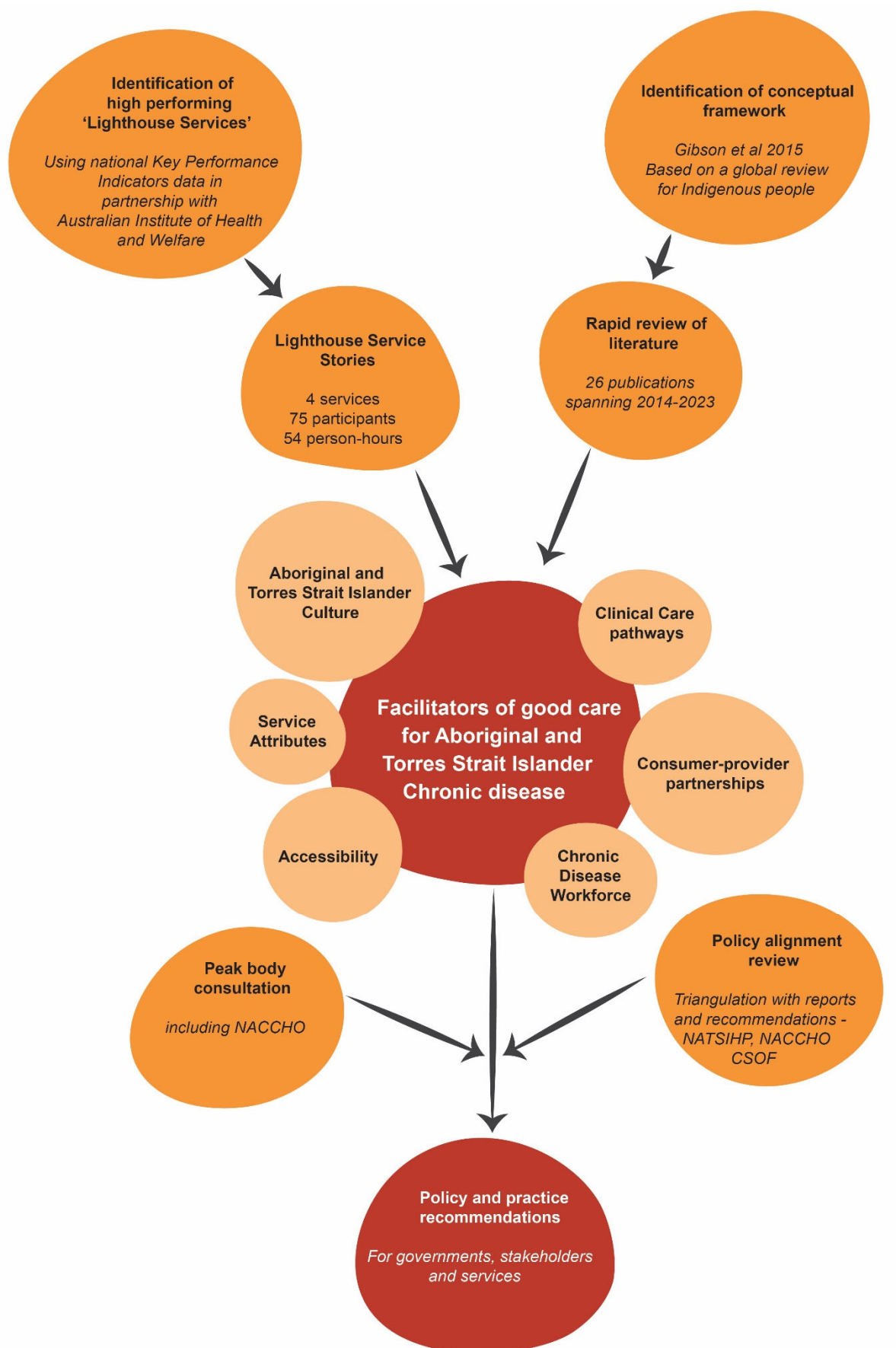
This summary provides an overview of the methodology employed in a three-year study of the ‘Lighthouse Services’, which aimed to explore what makes good chronic disease care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and to share what works. The study’s procedural framework is depicted in **Figure 1**. To develop recommendations for policy and practice, we undertook the following steps:

- Used nKPI data to identify four Lighthouse Services- all community-controlled, with one being remote and three very remote- and invited them to share their stories about chronic disease care delivery.
- Conducted focus groups and/or interviews with 75 people across the Lighthouse Services providing 54 person-hours of qualitative data. These stories were transcribed and thematically analysed.
- Undertook a review of research published between 2014 and 2023 to update and collate the evidence base on barriers and facilitators of chronic disease care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Synthesised the responses from Lighthouse Services and the literature review into 6 key domains, as demonstrated in the centre of the **Figure 1**.
- Considered the key practice and policy options to enhance enablers and address barriers to chronic disease care in the 6 key domains of our findings. Practice recommendations focus on practical, actionable steps which enable most effective delivery of chronic disease care and partnerships at a service and primary care level. Policy recommendations focus on creating an enabling environment for these practices through funding mechanisms, programs or service delivery models.
- Cross referenced these practice and policy options with foundational documents, including:
  - National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2021-2031.
  - Core Services and Outcomes Framework: The Model of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community-Controlled Comprehensive Primary Health Care.<sup>1</sup>
  - National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan 2021-2031.<sup>2</sup>
- Synthesised a
  - Narrative review of the rationale for our recommendations and their articulation with other policy work within this report.
  - Snapshot summary which provides a high-level overview of recommendations in the ‘Recommendations Snapshot’.
- Sought feedback on draft recommendations from:

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- Participating Lighthouse Services.
- Consenting individual participants who provided their email address for this purpose.
- The National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation.
- The expert network of study investigators.
- The Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care

Figure 1. Overview of the Study Process on Lighthouse Services



The clear opportunities identified to support high quality in each of the six domains that facilitate good chronic disease care are listed below:

**Practice recommendations** focus on service (clinic) level activities and included:

- Supporting the governance, leadership and employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Creating times and space for culturally safe care and caring relationships.
- Practical support for people to access primary care through transport, outreach services and flexible appointment systems.

**Policy recommendations** focus on creating an enabling environment for practice recommendations through funding priorities and domain-specific recommendations and included:

- Ensure primary care funding is sufficient in scale and scope to reflect the burden of disease and the service delivery needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Ensure primary care funding models are flexible enough to be used for local priorities, potentially including provision of service user transport, creating welcoming environments, local language resources, innovative models of care delivery.
- Review capacity for MBS rebates to recognise and remunerate flexible service delivery by multidisciplinary primary care teams, including outreach and extended hours services.

## References

1. NACCHO. Core Services and Outcomes Framework: The Model of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community-Controlled Comprehensive Primary Health Care. In: National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation A, editor.; June 2021.
2. Australian Government Department of Health. National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan 2021-2031. In: Department of Health, editor.; 2022.