

December 2014

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service Mackay (ATSICHS) leads the way for indigenous health service providers

ATSICHS becomes the first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community health service to become certified to the national core health standards

BSI Australia has certified the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service Mackay Ltd (ATSICHS Mackay) to the National Safety and Quality Health Standards (NSQHS) and ISO 9001 Quality Management. This achievement is an important development proving the organization's dedication to improving patient safety and healthcare services.

"This is a very significant achievement for indigenous healthcare in Australia. ATSICHS has become the first indigenous health service to be certified to core healthcare standards – and we hope this will set the benchmark for other Indigenous healthcare providers across the country" says Marc Barnes, Managing Director for BSI Australia.

ATSICHS is a self-governing, independent, community-controlled indigenous organization providing primary healthcare services to indigenous people within the local region. The organization was established to provide primary healthcare services to indigenous communities in the areas of Mackay, Isaac, Whitsunday and Central Highlands, offering a large number of primary healthcare services including dental, podiatry, drug and alcohol education and support and more.

"ATSICHS are committed to providing safe, quality healthcare for the local indigenous population," states Nadine Bellear, Quality and Safety Coordinator for ATSICHS Mackay. "Continual improvement was the foundation and driving force of implementing the correct procedures, maximizing the outcome for our clients."

BSI conducted lead auditor training at the ATSICHS premises in Mackay, spending five days teaching staff members about the NSQHS standard and how to lead an audit against it. Thirty-three staff members attended the training, ensuring that the standard was clearly communicated and that they were prepared for the upcoming audit.

A comprehensive analysis on the organization's management systems was conducted to identify areas of improvement. From this, ATSICHS was able to enhance their system and improve the way they conduct their day-to-day activities. This resulted in certification being awarded to ATSICHS, making them the first indigenous community service to achieve certification.

"We're very proud of ATSICHS for their achievement, and we hope that other indigenous healthcare providers across the country will follow the great example set by them to improve the level of indigenous healthcare throughout Australia," says Barnes.

- ENDS-

Notes to editors:

The Australian Commission on Quality and Safety in Health Care developed the NSQHS Standards to improve patient safety and health care services. The NSQHS program applies to any health care

organization, including large public and private hospitals, day procedure centers, endoscopy, dental and other medical room service providers.

About BSI

BSI is the business standards company that equips businesses with the necessary solutions to turn standards of best practice into habits of excellence.

BSI's expertise in the area of healthcare safety and quality is unrivalled, making them the natural choice to undertake ATSIHCS's third-party certification assessment. BSI wrote the original quality management standard and has certified many hospitals, day surgeries and community healthcare organizations.

Formed in 1901, BSI was the world's first National Standards Body and a founding member of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). Over a century later it continues to facilitate business improvement across the globe by helping its clients drive performance, manage risk and grow sustainably through the adoption of international management systems standards, many of which BSI originated. Renowned for its marks of excellence including the globally recognized BSI Kitemark™, BSI's influence spans multiple sectors including Aerospace, Automotive, Built Environment, Food, Healthcare and ICT. With over 72,000 clients in 150 countries, BSI is an organization whose standards inspire excellence across the globe.

About ISO 9001

ISO 9001 is the globally-recognized standard for quality management. The original standard, BS 5750, was written by BSI and adapted by ISO into the 9000 series of standards in 1987. Over 1 million businesses across more than 50 countries worldwide have become certified to ISO 9001 since its inception.

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