

Clinical Toolkit

Clinical Tips: Social and Emotional Wellbeing

Western concepts of mental health and mental illness have been very problematic in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander context. It is generally agreed that they are unhelpful and inappropriate for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) is a **strengths-based** approach to healthcare that is appropriate in the context of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture

The nine guiding principles underlying SEWB are:

1. Health as holistic
2. The right to self-determination
3. The need for cultural understanding
4. The impact of history in trauma and loss
5. Recognition of human rights
6. The impact of racism and stigma
7. Recognition of the centrality of kinship
8. Recognition of cultural diversity
9. Recognition of Aboriginal strengths