phn NORTHERN SYDNEY
An Australian Government Initiative

Sydney North Health Network

Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

January 2026–January 2027

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN
REFLECT

Acknowledgement of Country

Sydney North Health Network would like to acknowledge the Aboriginal lands and its Traditional Custodians, the Cammeraygal people of the Northern Sydney region. We would like to pay our respects to past, present and emerging Elders.

As we work to serve the community's health needs, we recognise the importance of the land and waterways as an essential component of people's health and well-being. We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and learning are integral to the cultural fabric of all Australians.

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NORTHERN BEACHES
HORNSBY

KU-RING-GAI
PARRAMATTA

Artwork Story

I am a Wiradjuri artist, born in Hornsby Hospital and raised on the lands of Darug and Guringai Country. This artwork isn't design; it's memory. It's the morning air, the wattle scent, the bird calls and river light I met every time I opened the front door as a kid.

Sydney North Health Network walk these same paths every day to heal and hold community. I painted what I know; they care for what we all know. Same heartbeat, different hands.

This is my gift, from my heart to theirs, and through them to every Elder, child, mum, dad and neighbour they serve.

Now it's not just mine.

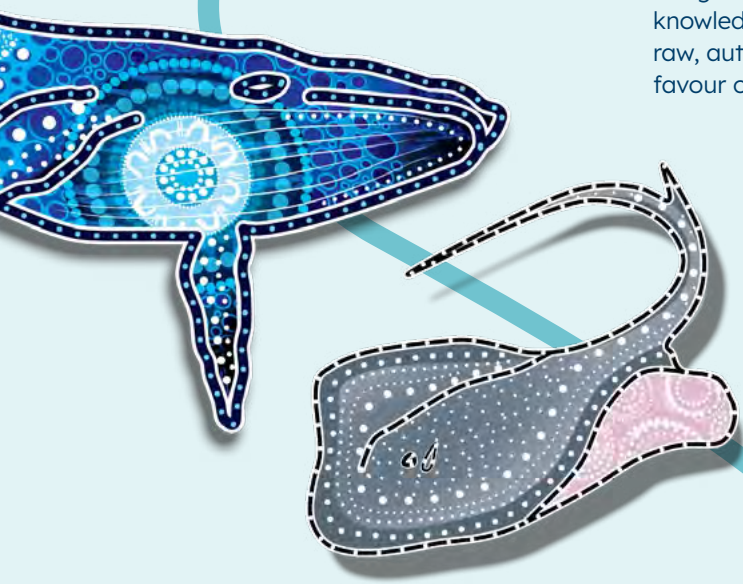
It's ours. Strong. Real. Home.

Kristopher Khamis

Artist Biography

Kristopher Khamis is a highly acclaimed Wiradjuri digital artist whose work is a vibrant celebration of culture, identity, and connection to Country. Though not raised on Wiradjuri land, Kristopher's creative journey is deeply rooted in the places he has lived and the Country he has walked, drawing inspiration from the landscapes of northern Sydney and beyond.

His art bridges generations, with each piece serving as a vessel for Wiradjuri traditions and storytelling. As a proud father of two daughters, Kristopher is deeply committed to passing on cultural knowledge and pride through his creative expression. His work is a raw, authentic reflection of his spirit and heritage, resisting trends in favour of truth and ancestral wisdom.

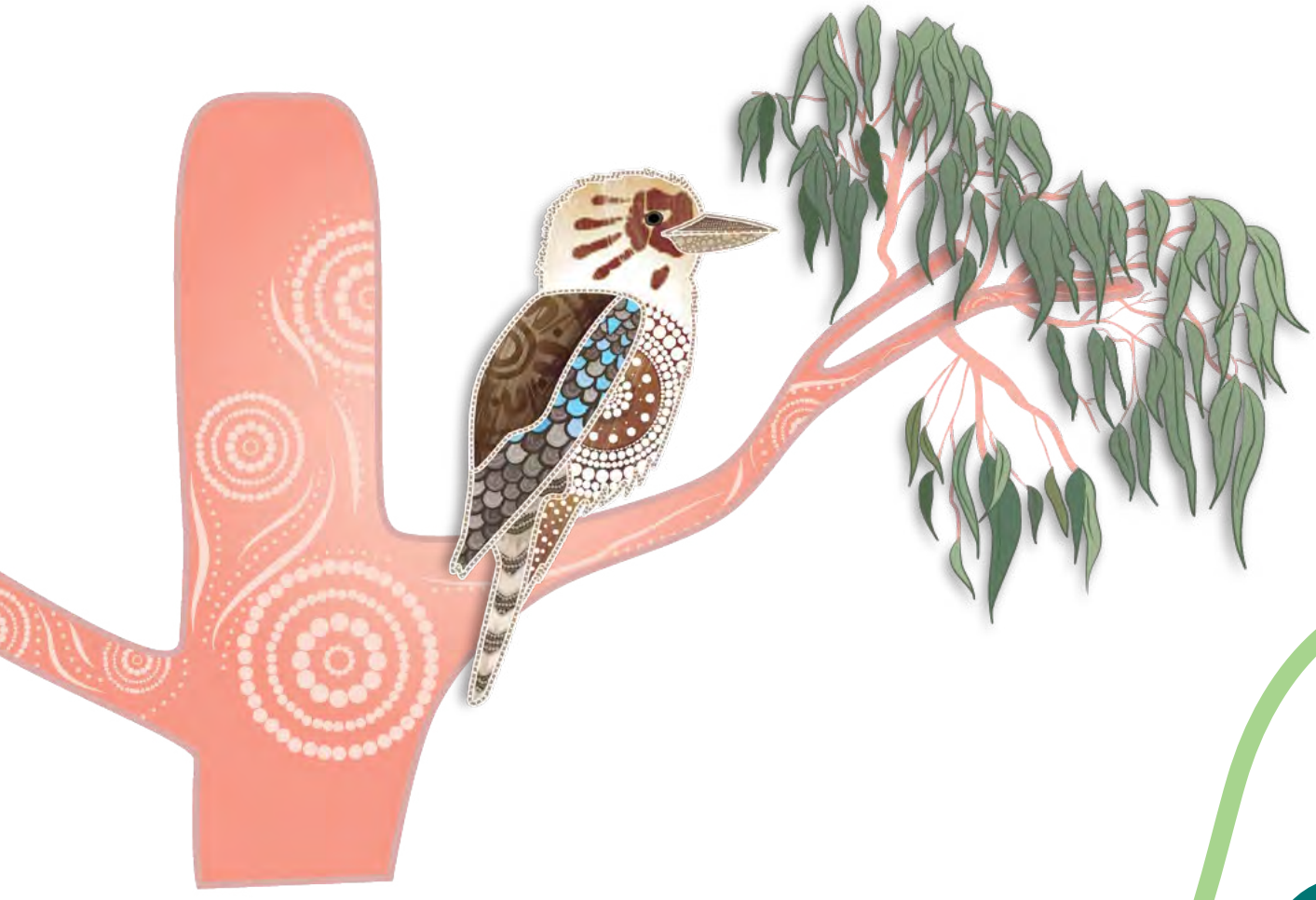


YarnnUp Aboriginal Consultants' Business Bio

The Sydney North Health Network (SNHN) is proud to partner with YarnnUp throughout the development, endorsement and implementation of our first Reflect RAP and our ongoing commitment to reconciliation.

YarnnUp is a First Nations-led agency specialising in engagement, strategy, and design. Headquartered in Mascot, NSW, YarnnUp acknowledges the Gadigal and Bidjigal peoples on whose lands they live and work. YarnnUp supports organisations that are working towards active Reconciliation alongside First Nations peoples, businesses and communities, by providing them with the knowledge, skills and strategy to create authentic change through policy reform, cultural transformation and training.

Throughout this Reflect RAP phase, YarnnUp will also be delivering its unique capability building training programs that blend Aboriginal philosophy and western academia including neuroscience, emotional and cultural intelligence to our employees with the aim of building capacity to engage most effectively cross-culturally and engage with self-efficacy throughout this ongoing commitment to reconciliation.



A Message From Our Acting Chief Executive Officer

Ramon del Carmen
Acting CEO,
Sydney North Health Network

At SNHN, we acknowledge the deep and enduring connection that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have to the lands, waters, and skies of this nation.

We recognise their histories, cultures and contributions, as well as the profound role that reconciliation plays in fostering a more equitable and respectful future.

As a healthcare organisation committed to the well-being of all communities, we are embarking on this Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to deepen our understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and perspectives. Our Reflect RAP marks the beginning of this transformative journey. Through it, we seek to create meaningful relationships, show genuine respect and identify tangible opportunities to contribute to reconciliation within and beyond our organisation into the communities we serve.

Central to our reconciliation journey is the need to connect with local communities, fostering trust, collaboration and a shared understanding of the unique contributions Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples bring to our society. We are committed to actively listening, learning and working alongside these communities to support sustainable, culturally safe and inclusive healthcare practices.

Our Reflect RAP reaffirms our deep commitment to supporting First Nations communities and fostering a culturally safe and inclusive organisation. It lays the groundwork for embedding reconciliation into every part of our operations, ensuring that the healthcare we support and facilitate is grounded in authenticity, respect and cultural integrity.

A Message From Reconciliation Australia

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia welcomes Sydney North Health Network to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

Sydney North Health Network joins a network of more than 3,000 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. The program's potential for impact is greater than ever, with over 5.5 million people now working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. This Reflect RAP will lay the foundations, priming the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives, for the most effective outcomes.

These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.

It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

This Reflect RAP enables Sydney North Health Network to deepen its understanding of its sphere of influence and the unique contribution it can make to lead progress across the five dimensions. Getting these first steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Sydney North Health Network, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.

Our Business

Sydney North Health Network (SNHN) is a primary healthcare organisation established by the Australian Government to improve health services and outcomes in the Northern Sydney region. It is one of 31 Primary Health Networks (PHNs) established across Australia that has been operating since July 1, 2015.

We are a not-for-profit organisation governed by a Board of Directors consisting of 10 members with experience in primary healthcare governance.

We have a staff of 65 across four business units: Primary Healthcare Engagement & Coordination; Commissioning; Business Development & Marketing; and Corporate Services.

We employ one staff member who identifies as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person, our Senior Indigenous Health Coordinator, who leads and educates service providers and community members about First Nations initiatives.

Through our network we have over 1,800 members, including individuals and organisations in the healthcare sector. We work directly with general practitioners (GPs), medical specialists, hospitals, allied health practitioners and other primary healthcare providers to create integrated health solutions across the Northern Sydney region.

Snapshot of healthcare providers in our region:

Healthcare Providers

288	General Practices
495	Practice Nurses
215	Pharmacies
1445	General Practitioners
797	Pharmacists
4735	Allied Health Professionals

Headquartered in Chatswood, Sydney, on Cammeraygal land, our network spans some 899 square kilometres over the Northern Sydney region. This region aligns with the Northern Sydney Local Health District and includes nine Local Government Areas (LGAs): Hornsby, Hunters Hill, Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, Mosman, North Sydney, Northern Beaches, Ryde and Willoughby. The LGAs cover land traditionally owned by the Cammeraygal, Guringai and Dharug peoples.

Our Business

Our purpose is to work collaboratively to help our community to live their best health. Primary Health Networks were created to coordinate and integrate local health care services in collaboration with the local health district; to commission primary care services to address gaps in service delivery; and to provide practice support to primary care providers.

Sydney North Heath Network will take a 'place-based' approach to catalyse change and achieve our vision, which is for our community, to begin life well, maintain and manage their mental health and physical wellness throughout their lives, stay connected with their health providers and each other and age with dignity. Our vision and approach, recognises that health across the lifespan is influenced by numerous factors within that place, including physical, social and economic elements. This holistic approach ensures that health improvements are not isolated but interconnected with other aspects of wellbeing. This approach will support communities to actively participate in decision making and shape their own "best health" outcomes. We will not do things 'to' our community, rather we will achieve 'with' and 'through' the community we exist to serve.

As an organisation, we are guided by our values of innovation, collaboration, accountability, respect and excellence. They are the foundation of our workplace culture and are embedded into all our systems, policies and procedures. They permeate our day-to-day work, focus our collaborative efforts with stakeholder groups and align with our commitment to reconciliation through a shared goal to realise health equity for all members of the community across the Northern Sydney region.

Our Vision For Reconciliation

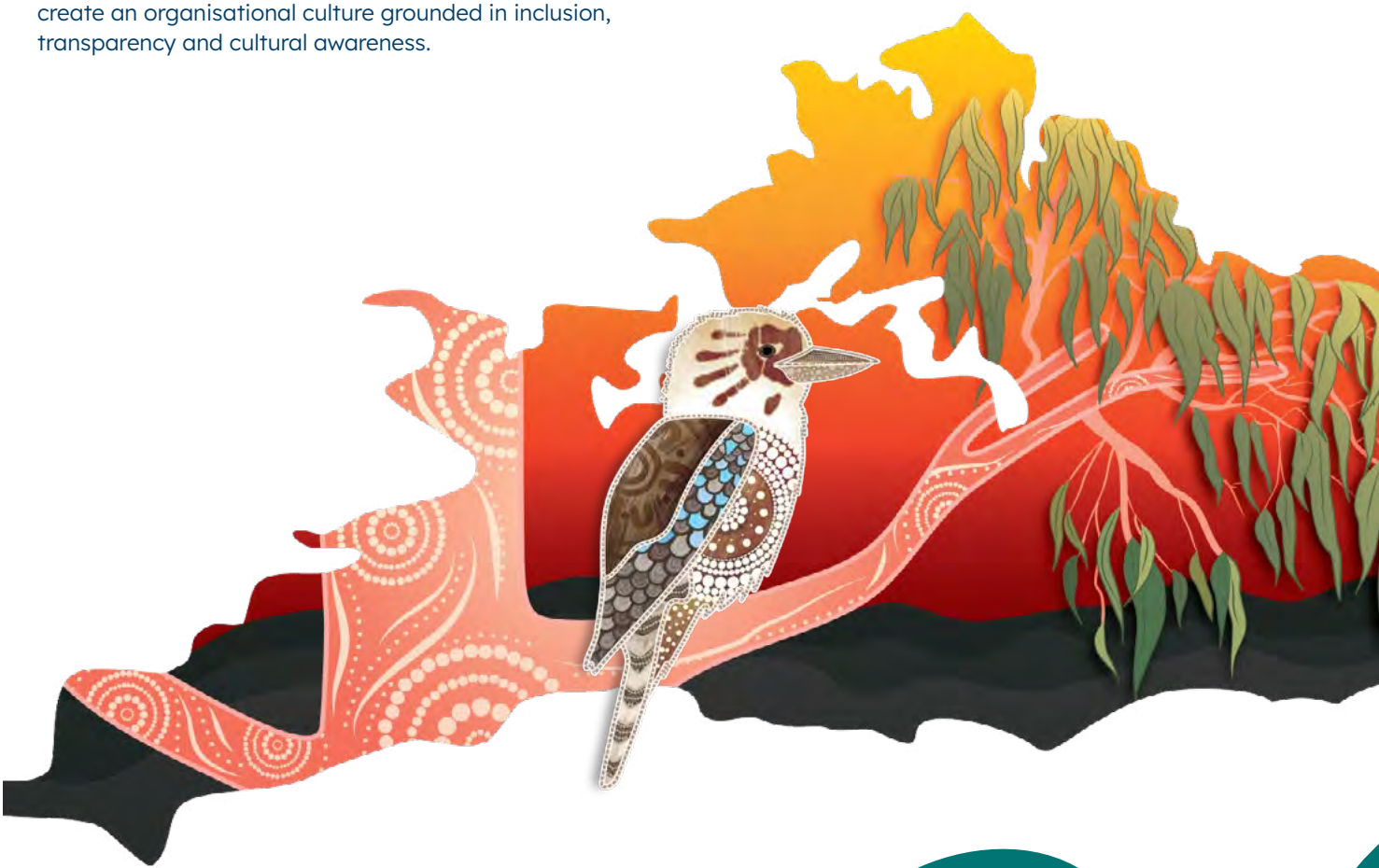
Our vision for reconciliation is to collaboratively respect, support and advance opportunities and health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Northern Sydney region.

We hope to improve health outcomes for First Nations peoples by improving access to culturally appropriate, safe and person-centred healthcare services, supporting preventative health initiatives and addressing systemic barriers to equitable healthcare.

Through increased learning and understanding of First Nations cultures, histories and values, we hope to create an organisational culture grounded in inclusion, transparency and cultural awareness.

We aspire for Sydney North Health Network (SNHN) to become a trusted leader in reconciliation, that recognises, respects and celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across our staff, clients, primary care stakeholders and community.

Our network can help increase employment and procurement opportunities through strong, collaborative relationships with First Nations communities to co-create initiatives that address their needs and aspirations.



Our Journey Towards Reconciliation

Sydney North Health Network is pleased to be taking the first step on our journey towards reconciliation, embracing the opportunity for healing, acknowledgement and creation of authentic partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across our region.

This Reflect RAP demonstrates our commitment to the national reconciliation movement both as an organisation and within the local community. We are proud to share our intent and vision for reconciliation through this Reflect RAP, formalising our commitment to make a meaningful difference within our community and across broader health networks.

Much of our journey to date has been led by our Indigenous Health Coordinator. This role supports invaluable facilitation of local events and community groups and plays a key role in overseeing and implementing various programs to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Sydney's north.

Celebrating cultural events

We take great pride in celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW) and NAIDOC Week through various initiatives that emphasise reflection, awareness and action towards reconciliation and cultural understanding. Our participation in these events demonstrates the sound foundations upon which our Reflect RAP lies and willingness to drive change.

Over the past two years we hosted events attended by our community engagement team and CEO in celebration of NAIDOC Week and NRW showcasing First Nations cultures, from art to music, food and bush medicine. We have engaged a range of First Nations businesses including Indigiearth, Koori Kulcha and Bush to Bowl demonstrating our commitment to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses through procurement. Last year we worked with the First Nation's Collaborative, a consortium of services and community groups in our region to stage a NAIDOC Week event, bringing greater awareness to the local community around First Nations culture.

Our formal journey towards reconciliation was announced during NAIDOC Week 2023, aligning our efforts with broader national initiatives celebrating the rich and diverse cultures, wisdom, histories and traditions of First Nations peoples. We took this opportunity to unveil our commissioned artwork, Connection to Country by Wiradjuri artist, designer, illustrator and photographer, Kris Khamis.

Our Journey Towards Reconciliation

Improving health outcomes

At SNHN, improving health outcomes is our daily focus. Through our commissioned Integrated Team Care (ITC) program we are committed to improving health equity and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples suffering from complex, chronic health conditions in Northern Sydney. We are consciously facilitating health services through a First Nations lens, providing culturally appropriate care and often one-on-one support ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples get access to the health care they need.

An Australian Government initiative which forms part of the Indigenous Chronic Disease Package (ICDP), the ITC program aims to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through better access to coordinated and multi-disciplinary care. It consists of three key components aimed at improving health outcomes including:

1. Care Coordination

Care Coordination is provided by our commissioned service provider who employs Aboriginal Health Care Coordinators to work collaboratively with people and their general practice, First Nations health services, medical specialists, allied health professionals and community services to assist in the provision of culturally sensitive health care and services.

2. Supplementary Services

Supplementary Services funding may be used to directly pay for services by specialist and allied health providers, or to meet the difference between Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) rebates and fees charged. The funds may also be used to assist with the cost of local transport to and from medical appointments.

3. Development of culturally sensitive health services

The ITC is responsible for improving the cultural sensitivity of mainstream health services to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are catered for locally. These include:

Caber-ra nanga Engage Program

This free service is dedicated to improving mental health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The program offers two key areas of support:

- **Service Capacity Building** – delivering culturally safe, high-quality mental, social and physical health support.
- **Individual Case Work** – tailored assistance including links to health services, housing, financial support and cultural groups.

Individuals and families have access to a dedicated Engagement Officer and also Identity and Wellbeing Workshops, including family tree mapping, to strengthen cultural identity and wellbeing.

Odyssey House

Non-residential day rehabilitation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults over 18 years old, including individual and group counselling. Support is provided to family members of people who have an addiction in their Chatswood and Manly centres.

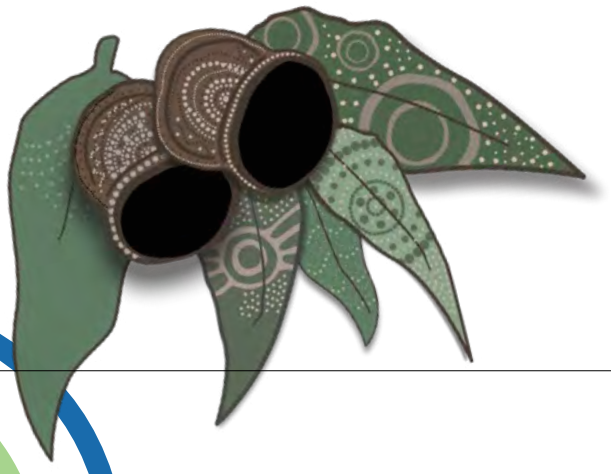
Our Journey Towards Reconciliation

Through our efforts, we are assisting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in managing their chronic conditions, providing a range of supplementary services, including transport and payment for allied health and specialist appointments and facilitating social supports such as Centrelink, housing and emotional wellbeing services. Highlights include:

- Eye and Ear Health Clinics to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities within the Manly and Ryde LGAs and clinics offering screening for students at nine schools in the Hornsby and Lane Cove regions.
- Cultural and Social wellbeing groups consistently since 2017 providing culturally safe spaces for community across the region to socially and culturally gather to enhance connectedness, health literacy and to reduce social isolation.
- Improving Cultural Safety in Primary Care in partnership with Centre for Cultural Competence Australia, this RACGP accredited online course equips primary care providers with a better understanding of the health and emotional issues that face Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our region. As well, providing the opportunity for reflective practice to improve culturally appropriate workplaces and service delivery.
- Cultural, health and wellbeing initiatives in 2021 in response to requests by public and Independent schools in the Northern Sydney region, SNHN collaborated with Caber-ra Nanga, delivering Aboriginal Youth Mental Health First Aid courses to secondary school teaching and support staff, providing them with tools to be better equipped with the increasing number of students experiencing mental health concerns. We facilitated the Caber-ra Nanga Wellbeing Ceremony at the Narrabeen Sport Centre in February 2018, attracting over 170 people, including local community members and health and wellbeing services and On Track at Christmas in the Ryde LGA which has been bringing local families together, to enjoy cultural food and games and help people develop their own sense of self through mindfulness since December 2017.

Fostering connections

We take a holistic approach to healthcare for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, focusing on social, emotional and cultural wellbeing of the whole community. Through our Indigenous Health Coordinator, SNHN have developed and implemented a range of initiatives aimed at supporting the culture, health and wellbeing needs within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across the Northern Sydney region. We celebrate and acknowledge Indigenous Literacy Day through social media posts, celebrating First Nations peoples' stories, culture and history, providing opportunities for listening and learning.



Our Journey Towards Reconciliation

We are proud of the First Nations young people, adult and family cultural and social programs across the community we fund and support, enabling genuine connection and the creation of meaningful relationships. These newly established programs have proved successful and are running effectively with the support of collaborative local community partnerships, such as local Police Citizen Youth Clubs (PCYC), Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups (AECGs), local councils and businesses, ensuring their future sustainability.

For the past seven years we have funded The Ryde Aboriginal Women's Group, a culturally safe social group that meets 40 times a year, where women come together to participate in activities including storytelling workshops, gardening, bush medicine workshops and guest speakers. Through this initiative we have been privileged to build relationships with First Nations artists such as Wiradjuri, Kuku-Yalanji woman Diyan Coe, organisations including Bush to Bowl and community partners including Ryde TAFE. Some of the group members are also involved with the commissioned ITC healthcare program.

We also fund Hornsby PCYC First Nations Youth Group, represented by young people in the region who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The young people aged 12-17 meet fortnightly and engage with First Nations artists to explore their cultural identity and share their experience with likeminded others. Students come together bringing their unique expressive qualities and culture to the group in a culturally safe space, collaborating on artworks completed each term.

Top: NAIDOC Week celebrations showcasing cultural foods and medicines to community. **Below:** Enjoying NAIDOC Week event Aunty Lois Birk, Melanie Gould and Toni Barlow.

Our Journey Towards Reconciliation

Top: Artwork created by Hornsby PCYC Youth group on the walls of Hornsby PCYC. **Below:** Artwork produced by Hornsby PCYC Youth group and artist Jakob Watson.

Our Journey Towards Reconciliation

Our Indigenous Health Coordinator founded and chairs the Sydney North First Nations Collaborative, an initiative focused on services and challenges for First Nations peoples within the community. Founded in 2017, the collaborative is a First Nations service interagency initially created to support SNHN First Nations commissioned service staff. The bi-monthly meeting quickly grew to include other non-government agencies (NGOs) and sectors including housing, education, justice and local govt. The Collaborative now has 69 members and has consistently met since 2017 strengthening partners, key stakeholders and support for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service workforce. The Collaborative provides an opportunity to network and share resources and information.

We support the health and wellbeing of First Nations people through the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) 715 Health Check initiative, also known as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Assessments. In collaboration with statewide partners including New South Wales Health and Newcastle University, this comprehensive annual health check program delivers culturally responsive, tailored care at no cost to patients. Designed specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, it enables early intervention and management of common health concerns, contributing to efforts to close the gap in health equity.

From 2017-2020, SNHN played a crucial role in supporting and sustaining the Connected Mobs initiative for the benefit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in communities across Northern Sydney. The group met monthly in the Northern Beaches of Sydney, bringing together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and families for cultural connection and improved mental health, physical, social and emotional wellbeing. We helped this initiative by providing organisational support, facilitating partnerships and recognising the importance of cultural connection for mental health and wellbeing.

As a Primary Healthcare Network, we leverage our sphere of influence to strengthen partnerships across First Nations-led initiatives. We work closely with Northern Sydney Local Health District (NSLHD) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Service (ATSIHS) and their GP Clinic Bungee Bidgel, and SNHN First Nations specific commissioned services, Caber-ra Nanga (Relationships Australia) and Odyssey House. These collaborations are crucial to ensure the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are heard in health planning and decision-making, co-designing health services that meet community needs and sharing knowledge and resources to improve health outcomes.

Commitment to diversity and inclusion

At SNHN, we are committed to providing a diverse and inclusive working environment with an open culture, where all ideas are respected and innovation is fostered. We are an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) employer where decisions, processes and practices are fair, clearly defined and based on merit. Our EEO principles apply to all aspects of the employment relationship, including recruitment and selection. Through our Equal Employment Opportunity, Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy we strive to create a fair, diverse and inclusive workplace that benefits from the full spectrum of diverse talents and perspectives and reflects the communities we serve, with diversity supported at all levels of the organisation, from the Executive Team to the Board.

We recognise the diversity of cultures, community perspectives and experiences across the Northern Sydney region and have incorporated this within our governance framework with representation through our Community Council.

Our Journey Towards Reconciliation

The Community Council represents diverse community perspectives and people with life experience, helping to shape local healthcare strategies and ensuring community representation from the following areas:

- Aged Care
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (including refugees)
- Young people
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Disability
- Community and Family Health
- Chronic conditions
- Mental Health
- Carers
- Homelessness

The 10-12 Community Council members are advocates for their community and represent these community groups, raise public concerns in response to gaps in primary care (any healthcare provided outside of hospitals) and provide vital information and resources back into the local community. The Community Council give the broader Northern Sydney community an important voice in shaping local healthcare and have provided consultation and feedback on various SNHN initiatives for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples including:

- Eye and Ear Health clinics
- Community groups
- Cultural workshops - Bush Tucker, Storytelling, Bush medicine and native floristry
- Cultural Festival events - NAIDOC and NRW
- Aboriginal Women's Health Check Day events
- First Nations vaccination outreach clinics

Building our cultural awareness

At SNHN, we strive to increase cultural awareness and competence among healthcare providers and the promotion of culturally sensitive practices in healthcare delivery in the Northern Sydney region. This includes building our cultural competency among our staff and member organisations. We have integrated compulsory learning within the performance management cycle offering programs designed by Supply Nation registered First Nations business, Ochre and Salt and current provider the Centre for Cultural Competence Australia. Our commissioned service providers also complete cultural competency training. To date SNHN has funded around 670 people from the health and social care sector to experience cultural awareness or cultural safety training in their region.

SNHN hosts annual GP and Allied Health Professional Wellbeing Days. This program incorporates a Walk on Country facilitated by Susan Moylan-Coombs, a Woolwonga Gurindji woman from the Northern Territory through the bushland of Northead, Manly, an area that has enduring significance for the Traditional Owners, the Giamaragal people.

A grant from the NSW Mental Health Commission in 2022, enabled SNHN to fund a regionally tailored and targeted program to develop a more culturally competent healthcare workforce to better serve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities in Northern Sydney. Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Safety Series for Frontline Workers provided a three-module online course for health, community and human service workers (health staff, social services, Local Councils, NGOs). During the online group session, frontline workers explored cultural safety, social/emotional wellbeing and optimising care environments.

Our Journey Towards Reconciliation

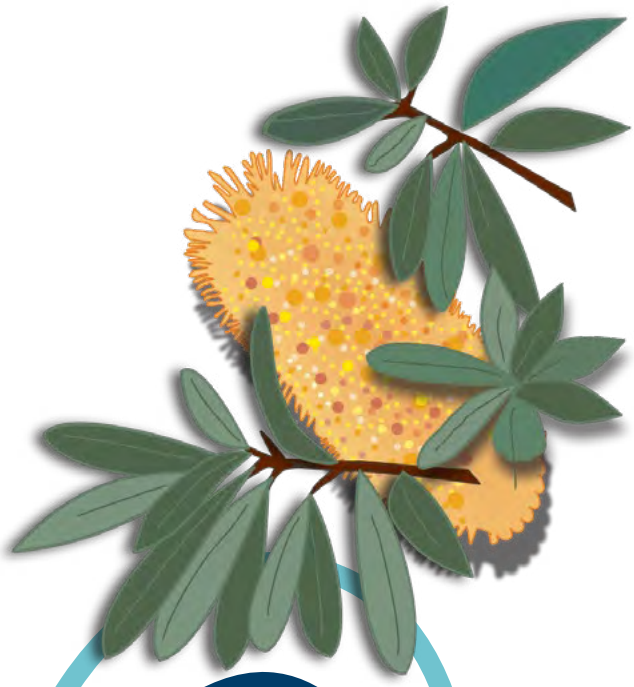
The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health: Working with Aboriginal Youth Series program offered online three-module courses for service providers, educators and clinicians. Covering social determinants of health, cultural perspectives and trauma-informed care, the course provided interactive online modules and a live Zoom session.

We also engaged with the Centre for Cultural Competence Australia to create a General Practitioner (GP) and Allied Health Cultural Safety training program. This course is accredited by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) and is approved as cultural safety training which meets the training requirements for the Practice Incentive Payment – Indigenous Health. The course provides in-depth knowledge and skills to work with patients who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, providing a culturally respectful environment enabling learners to reflect on their own practice in supporting culturally safe services and environments. The learners are provided with fundamental knowledge about Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their cultures and the effects of colonisation, as well as governments' policies and practices. The course is intended to increase knowledge, shift attitudes and influence behaviour with a practical component focusing on individual and organisational outcomes in the workplace.

Workforce development

SNHN is committed to increasing the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the healthcare workforce across the Northern Sydney region. We collaborate with various organisations to support First Nations workforce initiatives including Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups (AECGs), Local councils and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Workforce, Northern Sydney Local Health District, to help create sustainable employment and training opportunities for First Nations peoples in the health sector.

Through these efforts, we are contributing to broader reconciliation goals while specifically focusing on improving health and wellbeing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the Northern Sydney region.



Our Reconciliation Action Plan

SNHN recognises the critical role that our organisation plays in supporting the health, wellbeing and prosperity of First Nations communities across Northern Sydney.

Through this Reflect RAP, we will align our efforts with the needs and aspirations of First Nations communities, ensuring our actions have a positive and lasting impact. Our RAP will support SNHN's existing programs, as well as guide the development of future health and community programs to help close the gap in health equity and improve the socio-economic wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Importantly, our aspirations for reconciliation complement our Strategic Plan 2024-2029 which will see a 'place-based' approach to implementing change. This approach will recognise that health across the lifespan is influenced by numerous factors within a place, including physical, social and economic determinants. This holistic approach ensures that health improvements are interconnected with other aspects of wellbeing, empowering communities to actively participate in decision making and shape their own "best health" outcomes.

An organisational RAP will ensure a place-based health service system to improve health outcomes meets the requirements for all of our community and stakeholders including First Nations peoples.

Embed reconciliation into our organisational frameworks

Embarking on this Reflect RAP will allow SNHN as an organisation to formalise our commitment to reconciliation. It will enable us to develop structured and strategic approaches to advance reconciliation within our organisation and community, including setting measurable targets and actions to support reconciliation efforts and embedding reconciliation into our governance and reporting mechanisms.

We see an opportunity to include RAP objectives within operational planning for each business unit which will align with our broader Strategic Plan. We also see opportunities to explore the development of a cultural diversity policy or at a minimum inclusion within our Equal Employment Opportunity, Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy.

Community engagement and partnerships

We acknowledge the opportunity to develop and strengthen partnerships with local First Nations communities, organisations and leaders across the Northern Sydney region to foster mutual respect and collaboration. It is an opportune time for SNHN to understand the connection to Country, sites of significance, history and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Northern Sydney, by building a relationship with local Councils and the Aboriginal Heritage Office. Through our LGAs and Councils, we can explore relationships with key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and agencies including the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council (MLALC), the Aboriginal Heritage Office and The Gai-mariagal Group.

Importantly, through better relationships and understanding, we can gain insights into the specific needs and perspectives of First Nations peoples in the Northern Sydney region and through direct links to these communities we can, as an organisation, better understand barriers to appropriate health equity and ensure co-design for future initiatives. We can look to establish and grow relationships through our sphere of influence and across broader primary health networks. This includes relationships with other government health systems partners including Northern Sydney Local Health District (NSLHD) and learning from their Muru Dali Gili Gili Employee Network that provides connection, social events, peer support, mentoring and a celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

Improve health outcomes

As a primary health network, SNHN has the opportunity to address health inequities affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and improve health outcomes. Through improved cultural awareness, better understanding and the creation of meaningful relationships, we can address social determinants of health and factors including a reluctance to identify, screen and participate in health initiatives that disproportionately affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We will then be in a better position to develop culturally appropriate and targeted health programs and services, improve access to culturally appropriate healthcare and increase First Nations representation in the healthcare workforce and decision-making processes.

Strengthening employment and procurement

Our formal commitment to reconciliation positions SNHN to enhance procurement opportunities with First Nations peoples and businesses by implementing targeted strategies that foster inclusivity. In addition to exploring a Supply Nation membership, we can assess our supply chain and look for opportunities to establish partnerships and create a supplier diversity program integrated into our network's operations.

As well as being an equal opportunity employer, we can better position SNHN as a First Nations employer of choice. We can develop a First Nations employment plan as best practice with a culturally inclusive recruitment process, supportive onboarding practices, improving flexible work arrangements and targeted training. As part of this we can ensure we attract First Nations candidates by utilising advertising channels such as Koori Mail, Career Trackers and Indigenous Employment Australia. Importantly, we can improve measures to retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our workforce by engaging in regular feedback mechanisms to ensure that their voices are heard and their needs met, by providing mentorship opportunities and a culturally safe work environment to help nurture the skills and careers of First Nations employees.

We are in the position to open further pathways for employment by offering development opportunities through culturally appropriate mentoring and internship programs. By collaborating with educational institutions, we can offer leadership, internship and training programs for First Nations peoples to build a pipeline of future employment opportunities, at all levels, across our network's workforce.

Improve cultural competency

This Reflect RAP is an opportune time for SNHN to promote ongoing education and awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures and histories for all staff. Implementing policies that promote cultural competency and awareness among all staff will foster a more inclusive workplace, ultimately leading to better understanding, more respect and equity for First Nations communities. We acknowledge that this education needs to challenge stereotypes, reduce prejudices and promote understanding and empathy.

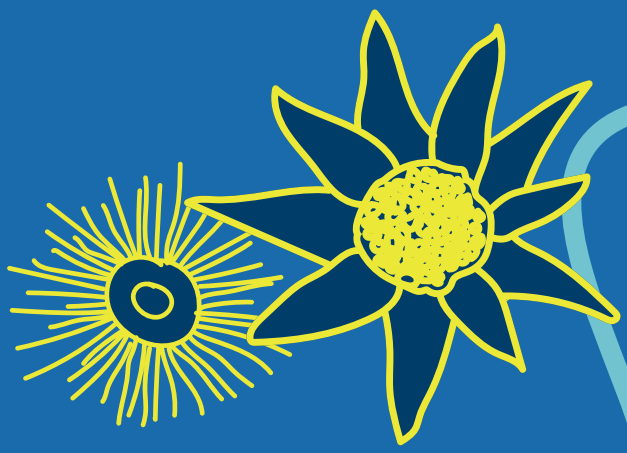
We will actively support and participate in cultural events and initiatives that celebrate First Nations cultures and promote reconciliation including NAIDOC Week, NRW and National Close the Gap Day and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day (NAICD).

Through our Reflect RAP we hope to close the gap for First Nations peoples so they can experience the same equitable access to culturally safe health services and enjoy longer healthier lives. This journey presents the opportunity for us to align our RAP initiatives with both our internal governance framework and broader national efforts to contribute to the national conversation on reconciliation. By pursuing these opportunities, SNHN can play a significant role in advancing reconciliation within our health network and the broader community we serve.

Driving the RAP Within The SNHN

Driving the RAP within the SNHN will be key stakeholders across all levels of management reflecting the level of commitment we show towards this journey. SNHN currently has one First Nations person on the RWG, the Senior Indigenous Health Coordinator.

RWG Role	Name	Title
Executive Sponsor	Eugene McGarrell	General Manager
Champion	Melanie Gould	Senior Indigenous Health Coordinator
Member	Anya Rowlandson	Community Insights Manager
Member	Alison Jefferies	Senior Project Officer
Member	Amanda McLoughlin	Health Pathways Coordinator
Member	Brooke Jay	Clinical Engagement Manager
Member	Kim Kindler	Primary Care Advancement Coordinator
Member	Lucinda Wilde	Executive Manager, Corporate Services
Member	Sandra Lange	Communications Officer
Member	Tai Luani	Project Manager Integrated Health and Collaboration



Relationships

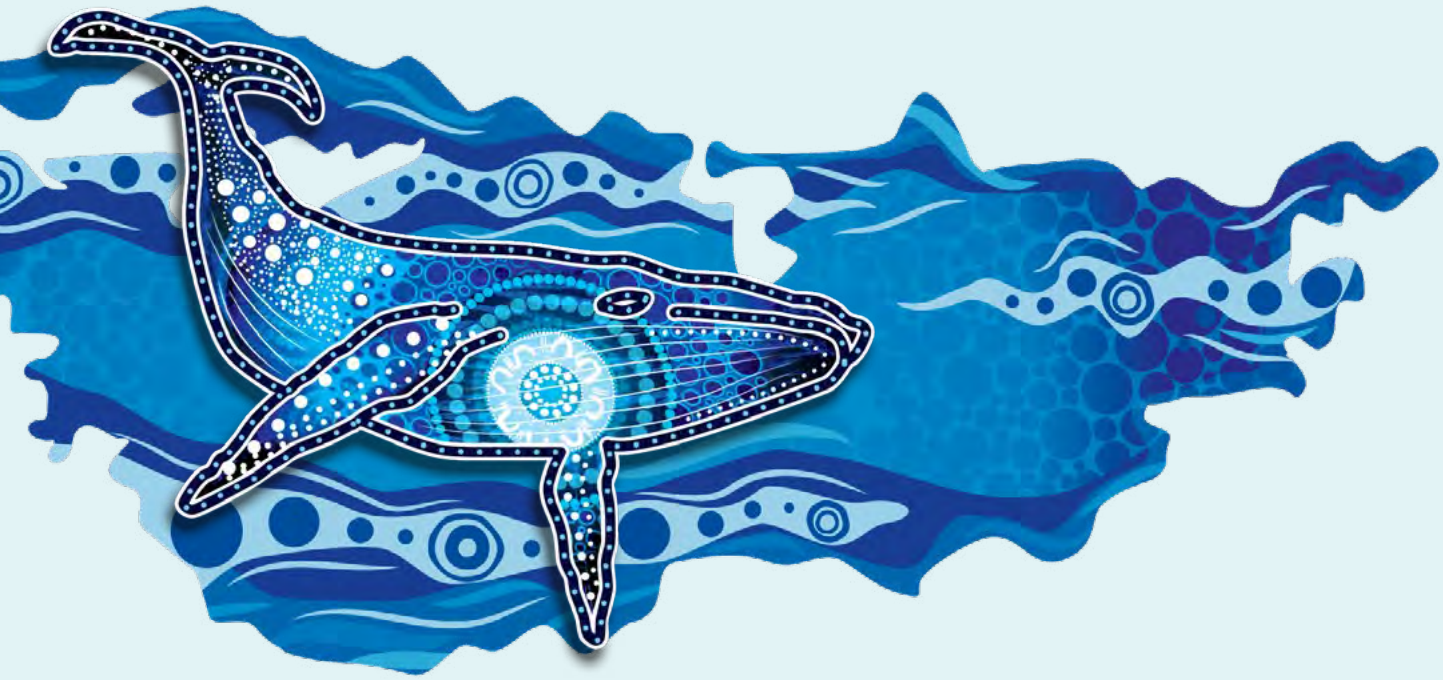
Action		Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
1	Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	January 2026	Indigenous Health Senior Coordinator
		Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	January 2026	Health Pathways Coordinator
2	Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2026	Communication Officer
		RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May - 3 June 2026	Indigenous Health Senior Coordinator
		Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May - 3 June 2026	Management Leadership Team
3	Promote reconciliation and our RAP through our sphere of influence.	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.	January 2026	Communication Officer
		Identify RAP and connect with other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	February 2026	Commissioning Senior Project Officer
		Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	March 2026	Commissioning Mental Health, AOD and SP
4	Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	March 2026	Executive Manager, Corporate Services
		Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions and future needs.	March 2026	HR Manager

Respect

Action		Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
5	Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	February 2026	Commissioning Manager – Primary Care, Aged Care
		Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	February 2026	Clinical Engagement Manager
6	Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.	September 2026	PCAT Coordinators
		Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	September 2026	Indigenous Health Senior Coordinator
7	Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	June 2026	Community and Partnership Lead
		Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	June 2026	Community and Partnership Officer
		RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July 2026	Lead: Indigenous Health Senior Coordinator Support: Community Insights Manager

Opportunities

Action		Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
8	Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	December 2026	Management Leadership Team
		Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	March 2026	HR Manager
9	Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	December 2026	Executive Manager, Corporate Services
		Maintain Supply Nation membership.	April 2026	Corporate Services Senior Administrator



Governance

Action		Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
10	Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain a RWG to govern RAP implementation.	January 2026 July 2026	Project Manager Integrated Health and Collaboration
		Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	February 2026	Project Manager Integrated Health and Collaboration
		Maintain and strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	February 2026	Indigenous Health Senior Coordinator
11	Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	February 2026	Community Insights Manager
		Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	March 2026	Commissioning GM
		Maintain a senior leader to champion our RAP internally.	March 2026	Commissioning GM
		Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	March 2026	Commissioning Senior Project Officer
12	Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence.	June 2026	Commissioning Business Services Coordinator
		Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Survey.	1 Aug 2026	Commissioning Business Services Coordinator
		Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	30 Sept 2026	Community Insights Manager
		Communicate our RAP progress to internal and external stakeholders	July 2026 December 2026	Management Leadership Team
13	Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	October 2026	Indigenous Health Senior Coordinator

For any queries, contact:

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