

Women's and Children's Health Network

Reconciliation Action Plan



The Past, The Present and The Future
An action plan for Reconciliation 2017– 2020
Continuing our Journey ...



Government
of South Australia

SA Health

The Women's and Children's Health Network acknowledge Aboriginal people as the traditional owners of country throughout South Australia and that we respect their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We also pay our respects to the cultural authority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from other areas of Australia who reside in South Australia.

Front cover artwork

The Future: *As the evening stars light up the sky again, there is the promise of a new day, a seed has taken hold and sprouted, and other seeds have taken off and formed the night sky. The seeds represent the knowledge and strengths of one's culture and that we are all a part of the cycle of life*

Created by Tauondi artists, Christina Gollan, Rick Taylor and Ivan Rehorek, with contributions from the then Children, Youth and Women's Health Service staff and Aboriginal communities, 2008.



Message from the Chief Executive Officer

"...we have both an opportunity and a responsibility to play a role in South Australia's reconciliation journey".

As Chief Executive Officer of the state's leading provider of health services to babies, children, young people and women, with over 3500 staff, we have both an opportunity and a responsibility to play a role in South Australia's reconciliation journey. We acknowledge that Aboriginal people are the traditional custodians of the land

upon which all our services are located, and we pay our respects to the continuing cultural, spiritual and religious practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

I am very pleased to present the second chapter of the Women's and Children's Health Network's Reconciliation Action Plan, **The Past, The Present and The Future: An Action Plan for Reconciliation - Continuing our Journey...** This Reconciliation Action Plan builds on the great work of the past eight years which has not only raised the profile of programs and services for Aboriginal people, but provided education, awareness and leadership for dialogue and understanding, which ultimately has set us on the path of reconciliation.

The Women's and Children's Health Network is committed to person and family centred care to meet the needs of our Aboriginal clients and their families, and this Reconciliation Action Plan serves as a good reminder to all staff of the impact we have on reconciliation, as health professionals and service providers.

As Chief Executive Officer, I have great confidence in our leaders to bring this Reconciliation Action Plan to life, and to generate the collective action needed to achieve reconciliation and address the health and broader disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Naomi Dwyer

Chief Executive Officer

Our Vision for Reconciliation

Improving Aboriginal health is a key priority for the Women's and Children's Health Network (WCHN) and we are committed to making our services more relevant, accessible, and culturally appropriate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This means strengthening our existing relationships and building new relationships with Aboriginal individuals, families and communities in closing the gap in Aboriginal life expectancy. This will ensure Aboriginal people share the same rights, respect and access to opportunities and benefits as all South Australians.

Our Business

The primary purpose of the WCHN is to provide quality health services for South Australian children, young people and women. The WCHN comprises the Women's and Children's Hospital (WCH) and statewide community based services related to children, young people and women.

Our Vision

Better health for children, young people and women.

Our Purpose

To provide quality health services for children, young people and women.

Our Values

These values will be demonstrated through everything we do:

- > Respect for our clients, patients, colleagues and communities.
- > Act with integrity, honesty and accountability.
- > Improve our services and care through innovation, learning, experience and research.

Aboriginal people are exposed to higher life risk factors, poorer health, and less acceptable outcomes in a range of life domains when compared to other South Australians. As a result, Aboriginal people are the most disadvantaged population group in our community. WCHN aims to:

- > Improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes.
- > Develop a culturally safe responsive health system.
- > Promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community health and wellbeing.

Please Note: Throughout this document, we use the term 'Aboriginal' to refer to people who identify as Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, or both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. We do this because the people indigenous to South Australia are Aboriginal and we respect that many Aboriginal people prefer the term 'Aboriginal'. We also acknowledge and respect that many Aboriginal South Australians prefer to be known by their specific language group(s).

Our Journey So Far...

Aboriginal health and reconciliation is a priority for the WCHN. As such, WCHN established an Aboriginal Health Steering Committee (AHSC) and a Reconciliation sub-Committee (RSC) to support service improvement, implement reforms to the WCHN Aboriginal Health Plan and contribute to the important work of reconciliation. The RSC's primary responsibility is to undertake initiatives that support reconciliation across WCHN.

In February 2008, the Children Youth and Women's Health Service (CYWHS) began a series of consultations with Aboriginal communities as part of a commitment to improving the health of Aboriginal children, young people and women. Through the consultations a partnership was formed with the staff and community from Tauondi Aboriginal Community College. The results of this partnership are a series of three paintings representing the Past, the Present and the Future. The paintings took shape during a series of events where the artists, staff and community members contributed by placing their mark on the artworks. These paintings are still in use and continue as a powerful symbol of our reconciliation journey.

Following these consultations, a number of actions were identified and drawn together to formulate the 2008 Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). This consultation process marked a new way forward... a new beginning. The WCHN is committed to *continuing our journey* into the future. The WCHN RAP 2017 – 2020 represents the next steps on this journey and has been developed with significant input from WCHN staff, the AHSC and the RSC.

The RSC is responsible for reporting on and reviewing the RAP in order to maintain its focus and currency.

All members of the RSC are selected through an organisation-wide Expression of Interest and will have the support of their manager or director to attend. Membership is for a two year term with members eligible to apply for additional terms. Membership reflects a Network-wide balance.

In the spirit of reconciliation, the Chairperson role is shared. Here, an Aboriginal Chairperson and a non-Aboriginal Chairperson are elected bi-annually and by consensus by members of the RSC.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

The Women's and Children's Health Network Reconciliation Action Plan 2017 – 2020:

- > Details activities to build positive relationships and provide equitable opportunities with and for Aboriginal people.
- > Provides a framework with a clear indication on how the WCHN strives to build reconciliation in 2017 – 2020.
- > Explores how reconciliation can advance our business and organisational objectives that contribute toward closing the health gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.
- > Commits us to continue to promote an understanding of Aboriginal people, communities, cultures, heritage and aspirations within the WCHN.
- > Supports State and National strategies and campaigns.
- > Supports and guides us as members of staff to build positive relationships between all Australians and demonstrates that as a network we continue to be genuinely committed to reconciliation.

Relationships

Building strong, genuine and meaningful relationships between Aboriginal people and the WCHN is important to developing a culturally inclusive, responsive and respectful organisation that will achieve improved health outcomes for Aboriginal clients and their families.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
The AHSC through the RSC actively monitors the WCHN RAP 2017 – 2020 development and implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > AHSC oversees the development, endorsement and launch of the WCHN RAP 2017 – 2020. > AHSC provides Executive sponsorship to the RSC. > Ensure Aboriginal people are equally represented on the RSC. > RSC to meet at least six times per year to monitor and report to AHSC on implementation. > Establish Terms of Reference for the AHSC and RSC and review bi-annually. 	Launch by February 2017	AHSC Reconciliation sub-Committee Executive Sponsor
Celebrate and participate in National Reconciliation Week (NRW) by providing opportunities to build and maintain relationships between Aboriginal peoples and other Australians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > The RSC will organise at least one internal event for NRW each year. > The RSC will register our NRW event via Reconciliation Australia's NRW website. > Support an external NRW event. > Ensure our RSC participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. > Extend an invitation to Aboriginal consumers and staff to share their reconciliation experiences or stories. > Encourage staff to participate in external events to recognise and celebrate NRW. > Promote the hosting of NRW events across the WCHN. > Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources to staff. 	Annually	Reconciliation sub-Committee Executive Sponsor

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal peoples, communities and organisations to support positive outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with our Aboriginal stakeholders through the WCHN Consumer and Community Engagement (CCE) Unit. 	June 2017	AHSC Director Aboriginal Health Manager CCE Unit

Raise internal and external awareness of WCHN RAP 2017 – 2020 and reconciliation activities across WCHN

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Develop, implement and review a communication plan to communicate WCHN RAP 2017 – 2020 to all internal and external stakeholders. > Promote reconciliation through ongoing active engagement with all stakeholders. 	February 2017 Review by June 2017	Reconciliation sub-Committee
--	--	------------------------------

Respect

Respect for Aboriginal people, culture, land and history is important to our Network as we acknowledge that Aboriginal people have suffered from historical injustices, and in the exercise of Indigenous rights, should be free from discriminations of any kind, be equal to all the other people, but be different, consider themselves different, and to be respected as such, and acknowledge that these inherent rights promote Aboriginal health and wellbeing.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Engage employees in cultural learning opportunities to increase understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal cultures, histories and achievements	> Develop and implement a cultural awareness training framework and strategy including online and face-to-face mandatory Aboriginal Cultural Respect Training for all WCHN staff.	June 2017	AHSC Centre for Education and Training Aboriginal Health Division
	> Investigate local cultural experiences and immersion opportunities.	Ongoing	
	> Provide opportunities for AHSC members, RSC members, Reconciliation Champions, managers and other key leadership staff to participate in further cultural training.		
Engage employees in understanding the significance of Aboriginal cultural protocols, such as Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	> Protocol document for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	May 2017	Reconciliation sub-Committee
	> Develop a list of key contacts for organising a Welcome to Country and maintaining respectful partnerships.		
	> Invite a Traditional Owner to provide a Welcome to Country for all significant events e.g. Service Excellence Awards, opening of new services, etc.	Ongoing	
	> Include Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of all internal and external meetings.		

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Provide opportunities for Aboriginal staff to engage with their culture and communities by celebrating NAIDOC Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to Aboriginal staff participating in NAIDOC Week. 	May 2017	ED, People and Culture
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Provide opportunities for all Aboriginal staff to participate with their cultures and communities during NAIDOC Week. > Provide opportunities for all staff to participate in NAIDOC Week activities. > Hold an internal or external NAIDOC Week event. > Support an external NAIDOC Week community event. 	July of each year	Director Aboriginal Health Executive Sponsor Reconciliation sub-Committee
Provide support to the RECOGNISE campaign, the driving movement behind a national referendum to recognise Aboriginal people in the Australian Constitution and to remove all references that enable the Australian Government to pass laws specific to a particular race.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Develop and implement a communication strategy to actively promote the RECOGNISE campaign. > Provide opportunities for all staff to participate in RECOGNISE campaign activities. > Hold internal events to support the RECOGNISE campaign. 	March 2017	RSC in collaboration with Media and Communications

Opportunities

Aboriginal people, groups and communities are important to the Network's formation of partnership to promote, maintain and restore the health of Aboriginal children, young people and women in South Australia.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Investigate opportunities to improve and increase Aboriginal attraction, recruitment and retention within the WCHN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Dedicated, strong and effective Aboriginal Workforce sub-Committee. > Develop and implement an Aboriginal recruitment and retention strategy. > Engage with existing Aboriginal staff to consult on employment strategies, including professional development. > Collect information on our current Aboriginal staff to inform future employment opportunities. > Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to ensure there are no barriers to Aboriginal employees and future applicants participating in our workplace. > Develop an Aboriginal professional development strategy. > Include Aboriginal representation on recruitment and selection panels. > Include in all job advertisements, 'Aboriginal people are encouraged to apply'. > Include standard interview questions in all recruitment processes to identify and support cultural competence. 	<p>By April 2017</p> <p>Quarterly Reports</p>	<p>ED People and Culture</p> <p>Director Aboriginal Health</p> <p>WCHN Directors and Managers</p>

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Investigate opportunities to support the Aboriginal workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Ensure all Aboriginal staff are enabled to attend the WCHN Aboriginal Staff Forum. > Develop an Aboriginal professional mentoring network. > Develop a cultural mentoring network for existing staff and managers. > Develop and implement Aboriginal employment pathways (e.g. traineeships or internships). > Support Aboriginal staff to attend relevant community events and conferences. > Support Aboriginal staff to engage in further education. > Strengthen Aboriginal leadership. 	By April 2017 Quarterly Reports	ED People and Culture Director Aboriginal Health WCHN Directors and Managers

Tracking progress and reporting

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Report WCHN RAP 2017 – 2020 achievements, challenges and learnings internally and externally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Develop reporting format and reporting cycle. > Publically report WCHN RAP 2017 – 2020 achievements, challenges and learnings. > Report WCHN RAP 2017 – 2020 achievements, challenges and learnings to the South Australian Department of Health and Ageing. 	<p>April 2017</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>AHSC</p> <p>Executive Sponsor</p>
Review, refresh and update WCHN RAP 2017 – 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Review, refresh and update WCHN RAP 2017 – 2020 based on learnings, challenges and achievements. 	<p>Annually</p>	<p>AHSC</p> <p>Strategic Executive Committee</p>



The Past

The tree represents the past and a beginning, a shelter and place of sustenance, against the dawn as a start to a brand new day with hope for the future.



The Present

The Elder's hands represent strength for the next generation, as they release a cloud of butterflies into the midday sun, showing the brief frailty and the immense, intense beauty of life.



The Future

As the evening stars light up the sky again, there is the promise of a new day, a seed has taken hold and sprouted, and other seeds have taken off and formed the night sky. The seeds represent the knowledge and strength of one's culture and that we are all a part of the cycle of life.

Created by Tauondi artists, Christina Gollan, Rick Taylor and Ivan Rehorek, with contributions from the Aboriginal and Children, Youth and Women's Health Service staff and communities, 2008.

For more information

Aboriginal Health Division
295 South Terrace
Adelaide SA 5000
Telephone: (08) 8303 1674
www.wch.sa.gov.au



If you do not speak English, request an interpreter from
SA Health and the department will make every effort to
provide you with an interpreter in your language.



www.ausgoal.gov.au/creative-commons