

Australian Healthcare
and Hospitals Association

**RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN
REFLECT**
JULY 2017 – JUNE 2018



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN
REFLECT



ohha
australian healthcare &
hospitals association

WE WILL WORK WITH AND SUPPORT ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF HEALTH PUBLIC POLICY THROUGH OUR PROGRAMS OF ADVOCACY, RESEARCH, EDUCATION, PUBLICATIONS AND EVENTS.

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MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

MESSAGE FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE



DEBORAH COLE
Chair, Australian Healthcare
and Hospitals Association

I am pleased to present the inaugural Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association (AHHA) Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) (June 2017–July 2018). Its targets are clear—we will work with and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the development of health public policy through our programs of advocacy, research, education, publications and events.

The AHHA's expertise, membership and connectedness across the public healthcare system calls attention to the issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, and in particular to health disparities, inequity and institutional racism. Our RAP supports our commitment to shaping community debate and policy development.

Working around the pillars of relationships, respect, opportunities and tracking progress, the AHHA will authentically engage our staff and our members to fulfil the aspirations reflected in AHHA's RAP.

The 2017–2018 Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association (AHHA) Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) sets out a range of positive actions that the organisation will undertake to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through health public policy. AHHA will work to develop closer ties with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health community. We will nurture a culture of respect and understanding among our staff and members. AHHA will seek to create opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through sponsorships and scholarships. Most importantly, AHHA will actively monitor its reconciliation activities and strive for continual improvement.

This RAP challenges the AHHA senior leadership team to take responsibility and work to affect real, substantive change in AHHA practices and commitments. The AHHA Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group (RAPWG) has been established to lead our efforts and will meet regularly throughout 2017–18 to ensure the implementation of actions outlined in the RAP.

On behalf of the AHHA I am proud to take this step forward in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through health public policy.



ALISON VERHOEVEN
Chief Executive, Australian Healthcare
and Hospitals Association

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION OUR BUSINESS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

AHHA supports the principles of reconciliation and is committed to working towards it. We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of the land, and respect and value the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in Australia.

OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

When reconciliation is achieved in Australia health outcomes will be equal for all Australians. Consistent with our vision, mission and guiding principles, we will work with and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the development of public health policy that will Close the Gap. AHHA will contribute to Closing the Gap in health outcomes through advocacy, research, education, publications and events.

OUR BUSINESS

OUR VISION

A healthy Australia, supported by the best possible healthcare system.

OUR MISSION

To conduct research, educate and influence the healthcare system to achieve better health outcomes, improved patient and provider experience, greater equity and sustainability.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Healthcare in Australia should be:

- Effective
- Accessible
- Equitable
- Sustainable
- Outcomes focused

The Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association (AHHA) is an independent and authoritative national peak body advocating for universal and equitable access to high quality healthcare in Australia. With 70 years of engagement and experience with the acute, primary and community health sectors, AHHA is uniquely positioned to advise and encourage collaboration between governments, policy-makers, administrators, clinicians, academics and the community. AHHA members include public and not-for-profit hospitals, Primary Health Networks, community health services, research institutes, and other professional healthcare groups and individuals.

The AHHA undertakes evidence-based advocacy drawing on the work of its research institute, the Deeble Institute for Health Policy Research. The Deeble Institute conducts high-quality, independent academic research on a wide range of health policy topics, working with academic and health service partners to ensure research is both rigorous and relevant. Our work is also driven by health systems research published in the *Australian Health Review*, AHHA's peer-reviewed journal.

AHHA's Secretariat employs approximately 15 professionals, none of whom have self-identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

OUR GOALS

In partnership with our members, we aim to:

- Enhance the health and wellbeing of Australians through improved standards in primary, acute, community and aged care
- Improve health service provision and health outcomes by developing, providing, disseminating and promoting research and education
- Support the delivery of high quality healthcare by promoting evidence-informed practice and advocating for funding models that support primary, acute, community and aged care services
- Support the health sector through the provision of business, education, advisory and consultancy services by connecting the diverse contributions of health practitioners, researchers, policy-makers, and consumers
- Promote and support universally accessible healthcare in Australia for the benefit of the whole community
- Focus on innovation that enhances integration of care, including development of new models of care, and funding models that support health reform that responds to emerging issues.

OUR JOURNEY TOWARDS RECONCILIATION

AHHA has aimed to contribute positively and influence issues relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and well-being throughout its 70-year history. We recognise the need to adopt culturally appropriate ways of engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and we seek to expand our advocacy, research, education, publications and events work for appropriate, accessible health care for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to address health disparities, inequity and institutional racism.

To demonstrate our commitment, we have committed to this Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to focus AHHA on these goals and provide the momentum to undertake activities dedicated to achieving them. The AHHA's Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group (RAPWG) drove the development of the RAP and champions its implementation.

The RAPWG is comprised of

- AHHA Advocacy Director
- External Committee member
- Deeble Institute for Health Policy Research Director
- AHHA Engagement and Business Director
- AHHA Executive Officer.

AHHA does not currently employ anyone who identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person. To ensure the RAPWG includes lived experience from a First Person's perspective, AHHA is seeking expressions of interest from its membership to join as an active member of the RAPWG.

Reconciliation Australia, AHHA Staff and the AHHA National Board have endorsed the RAP. The RAPWG will meet regularly throughout 2017–2018 to monitor ongoing implementation of the RAP.

OUR PARTNERSHIPS AND CURRENT ACTIVITIES

In December 2015 AHHA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO), the peak body representing over 150 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations around Australia. There exists an opportunity for NACCHO and AHHA to maximise use of resources and enhance value to members through a collaborative approach to identified areas of service delivery relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health in the community and across the care continuum, including preventive, primary, acute and aged care sectors.

In addition to its MoU with NACCHO, AHHA is an active member of the Close the Gap Campaign Steering Committee.

AHHA also enjoys strong working relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics in their research examining the causes and implications of institutional racism, and with organisations such as the Council for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives, the Australian Indigenous Doctors Association and the Lowitja Institute.

The AHHA publishes an annual edition of *The Health Advocate* highlighting health programs aimed at Closing the Gap. The most recent Close the Gap special edition was published in February 2016 and covered issues such as the opportunities for social impact bonds to improve health outcomes in Aboriginal communities in the Kimberley, the progress of a project designed to ensure better cardiac care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and a discussion on strengthening Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices in healthcare governance.

The AHHA is a founding member of the Lighthouse Project alongside the National Heart Foundation. The aim of this project is to drive change in the acute care setting through the implementation of quality

improvement activities that improve care and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experiencing coronary heart disease. Phases 1 and 2 of the project have been completed, and the AHHA and the Heart Foundation have recently been successful in securing funding to enable implementation of Phase 3 of the project.

The AHHA has made Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health issues a focus of its research, both through the Deeble Institute for Health Policy Research and through our peer-reviewed journal, the *Australian Health Review*. Recent relevant publications include *Food and nutrition programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians: what works to keep people healthy and strong?* (July 2016) and *An evidence-based approach to reducing discharge against medical advice amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients* (March 2016).

OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN



RELATIONSHIPS



RESPECT



OPPORTUNITIES



TRACKING AND PROGRESS

AHHA recognises the significant health inequality faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the imperative to remove racism within our care systems. In order to play a meaningful role in addressing these issues, AHHA needs to understand the lived experience of Australia's First Peoples. AHHA's RAP provides the plan and tools for its Secretariat and membership to gain and to promulgate this understanding through its programs of advocacy, research, education, publications and events.



Relationships

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1. RAP Working Group (RAPWG) actively monitors RAP development and implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAPWG oversees the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP. Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are represented on the RAPWG. Meets quarterly to monitor and report on RAP implementation. Establish Terms of Reference for the RAPWG. AHHA senior leadership group to maintain active oversight of RAP. 	Meetings in: October 2017 January 2018 April 2018 September 2017	Advocacy Director
2. Build internal and external relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations within our sphere of influence. Develop a list of like-minded RAP organisations with whom we can connect to meet our RAP deliverables. Refresh Memorandum of Understanding with National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (originally signed in December 2015) Ongoing projects and engagement, such as improving care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in hospitals. Lighthouse Project to improve cardiac care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in collaboration with the National Heart Foundation. 	July 2017	Executive Officer
		December 2017	Advocacy Director
3. Participate in and celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage our staff to attend a National Reconciliation Week (NRW) event. Provide members and staff with Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources. Ensure our Working Group participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. 	27 May – 3 June 2018	Engagement and Business Director
4. Raise internal and external awareness of our RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness amongst all staff across the organisation about our RAP commitments. Develop and implement a plan to engage and inform key internal stakeholders of their responsibilities within our RAP. Leverage existing communication channels to raise internal and external awareness of commitment to reconciliation and RAP amongst members and stakeholders. Development of AHHA Statement of Reconciliation. Formalise relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health organisations. 	July 2017	Advocacy Director



Respect

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
5. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural learning and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for increasing awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements within our organisation. 	September 2017	Deeble Institute Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capture data and measure our staff's current level of knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievement. 	December 2017	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of cultural awareness training needs within our organisation and deliver training to meet current needs. Communicate and encourage staff to use Reconciliation Australia's Share Our Pride online tool. Earmark funding to support cultural awareness activities for AHHA staff. 	July 2017	Chief Operating Officer
6. Participate in and celebrate NAIDOC Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week, which includes information about local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. Promulgate NAIDOC Week events through our communication channels. Collaborate with an AHHA member to actively participate in their NAIDOC Week event. 	July 2017	Engagement and Business Director
7. Raise internal understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an internal protocol to standardise AHHA nomenclature when referring to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. 	August 2017	Public Affairs Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope and develop a list of local Traditional Owners of the lands and waters within Australian capital cities. 	July 2017	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness and understanding among staff, members and event participants of the meaning and significance behind Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols by both incorporating the appropriate protocol at AHHA events and explaining why it has been used. 	August 2017	Deeble Institute Director
8. Identify and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates or activities of significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage AHHA staff and member participation in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander activities of significance, such as the annual Closing the Gap report on progress, Close the Gap day, National Sorry Day and NAIDOC Week. 	June 2018	Executive Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote dates and activities through AHHA communication channels to staff, members and health sector stakeholders. 		Advocacy Director



Opportunities

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
9. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment and organisational development opportunities. 	June 2018	Chief Operating Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage future employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in the health sector by showcasing successful education, training, upskilling and employment programs in the health sector through AHHA communication channels. 	June 2018	Engagement and Business Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation. 	June 2018	Chief Operating Officer
10. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procure services such as venue provision and food services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander providers where possible by identifying appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers and including at least one when requesting quotes. Develop and communicate to staff a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses that can be used to procure goods and services. Investigate Supply Nation membership. 	June 2018	Chief Operating Officer
11. Support AHHA's members to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health topics and First Nation peoples to engage with broader health system policy development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through the Deeble Institute for Health Policy Research. 	September 2017	Deeble Institute Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership development by providing complimentary placements at relevant events and training opportunities. 	June 2018	Engagement and Business Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively encourage members to raise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' health issues for inclusion in AHHA advocacy work. Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health organisations to share issues and work with AHHA members. 	June 2018	Advocacy Director
12. Ensure our research, education and advocacy programs include actions and deliverables to support reconciliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform research, education and advocacy programs through our partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health organisations. 	June 2018	Advocacy Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include actions and deliverables as part of our annual planning processes, specifically our six-monthly national Council meetings and quarterly Board meetings, with input from Council representatives from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health partner organisations. Allocate complimentary placements at AHHA events and training to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health professionals to support learning and development. 	July 2017	Business and Engagement Director



Tracking and Progress

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
13. Build support for the RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track, measure and report on RAP activities through the AHHA senior leadership team to the Board. Complete the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia. 	June 2018 September 2018	Advocacy Director
14. Review and refresh RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements. Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal review and endorsement. 	March 2018 April 2018	Advocacy Director

AHHA WILL WORK TO DEVELOP CLOSER TIES WITH THE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HEALTH COMMUNITY. WE WILL NURTURE A CULTURE OF RESPECT AND UNDERSTANDING AMONG OUR STAFF AND MEMBERS.

Contact details

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