



**We Help Ourselves**

**INNOVATE**

# **RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN**

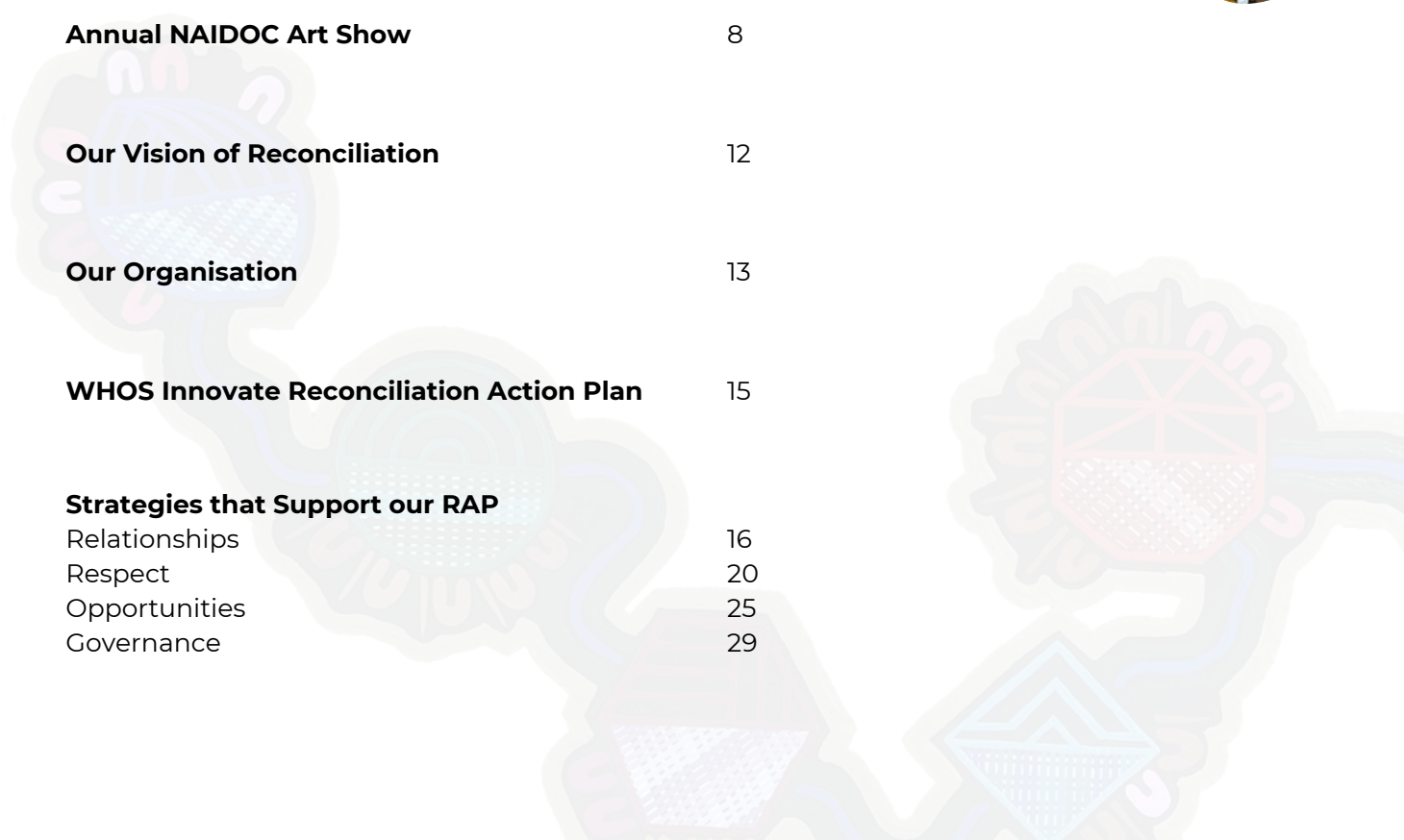
January 2024 - January 2026





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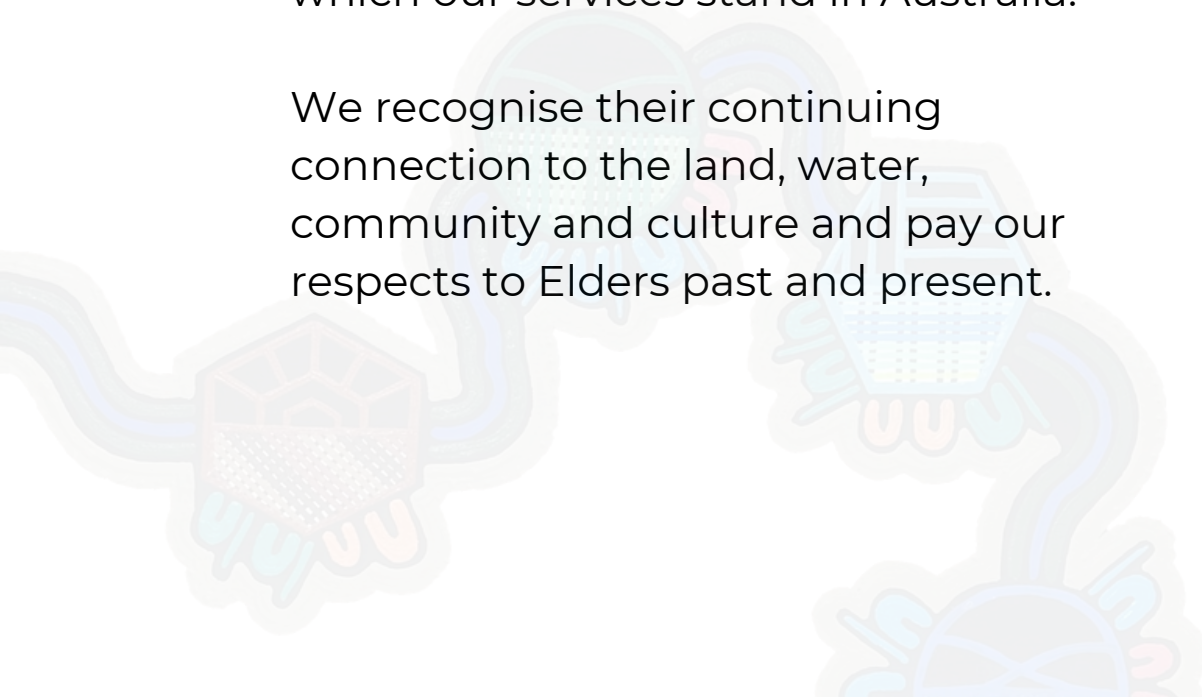




# Acknowledgement of Country

**WHOS** acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands upon which our services stand in Australia.

We recognise their continuing connection to the land, water, community and culture and pay our respects to Elders past and present.





# Message from Reconciliation Australia CEO, Karen Mundine



Reconciliation Australia commends We Help Ourselves (WHOS) on the formal endorsement of its inaugural Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). Commencing an Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey.

It is a time to build strong foundations and relationships, ensuring sustainable, thoughtful, and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

This Innovate RAP is both an opportunity and an invitation for WHOS to expand its understanding of its core strengths and deepen its relationship with its community, staff, and stakeholders.

By investigating and understanding the integral role it plays across its sphere of influence, WHOS will create dynamic reconciliation outcomes, supported by and aligned with its business objectives.

An Innovate RAP is the time to strengthen and develop the connections that form the lifeblood of all RAP commitments. The RAP program's framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities emphasises

not only the importance of fostering consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, but also empowering and enabling staff to contribute to this process, as well.

With close to 3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. WHOS is part of a strong network of more than 2,200 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and intention, and transformed it into action.

Implementing an Innovate RAP signals your organisation's readiness to develop and strengthen relationships, engage staff and stakeholders in reconciliation, and pilot innovative strategies to ensure effective outcomes.

Getting these steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations WHOS on your Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine  
CEO Reconciliation Australia





# Message from We Help Ourselves Executive Director, Garth Popple

On behalf of We Help Ourselves (WHOS), our Board, Executive and Management teams, our employees, and consumers, we are pleased to announce the commencement of our organisation's journey and commitment to achieving meaningful reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

WHOS Reconciliation Action Plan commits to implementing actions that advance reconciliation and create opportunities for First Nations peoples, both within the organisation and broader communities. Our Reconciliation Action Plan incorporates relationships and partnerships with the community; embedding reconciliation principles, actions, and behaviours in our everyday work, supporting initiatives and activities that improve the lives of First Nations people and the experience of our services.

This plan demonstrates our whole organisation's commitment to building respect and relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, which underpins our goal of providing culturally safe and culturally competent services for First Nations people accessing our services.

As an organisation, we have made some significant steps to celebrate and support First Nations people and our reconciliation journey will allow us to continuously build on these relationships and, in doing so, improve our services for our clients, staff, and the communities we serve.

Garth Popple  
Executive Director  
We Help Ourselves





# About the Artwork and Artist

Micheal is a proud Yuin, Kamilaroi Man. Born in Kamilaroi Nation (Tamworth), Micheal grew up in Walgett and now lives on Awabakal land.

Micheal is a resident at the WHOS Lilyfield Therapeutic Community residential services at the time of doing this artwork. His ability to express himself through traditional artwork has helped him through his journey to connect to his culture.

This artwork is a land map of all the WHOS services covering many nations, from the Gubbi Gubbi people of the Sunshine Coast, the Wonnarua people of Cessnock, the Awabakal and Worimi People of Newcastle, the Dharug people of Penrith, the Wangal people of Lilyfield and, Goulburn, the meeting place of many nations.

The artwork has traditional Aboriginal dotting and cross hatching work techniques with contemporary symbols which represent each WHOS service.

Every dot represents a different person that has connected to the services and the lines represent the waters that join them together.







# About the Artwork and Artist

Jess Coleman is a proud Wiradjuri Woman from the Bathurst region, growing up on Dharug Country.

Jess began creating art from a young age and at of 17 shifted her focus to Aboriginal art. In 2021 Jess was residing in a refuge specifically for Indigenous Youth, it was there that she gained a lot of insight and knowledge into Aboriginal art from an Elder at the service.

Jess has named this painting which was designed especially for the WHOS Reconciliation Action Plan: “Dreaming of Connection”

The artwork represents the continuation of connection through the elders and their past connecting through the stars spreading their knowledge and guidance to the generations here on earth.

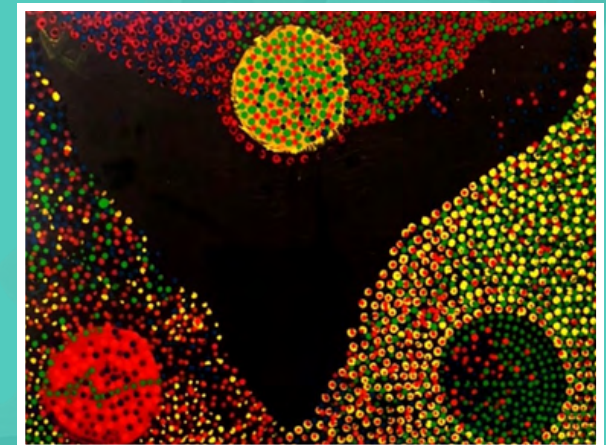
Jess has a passion for the art of tattooing and has identified a need for Indigenous style tattooing delivered by an identified tattoo artist.

She hopes to create an environment that is culturally safe for Indigenous people where they can work together to create artworks representative of Mob, Self, and Culture.



# Annual NAIDOC Art Show

Art by **WHOS** Residents



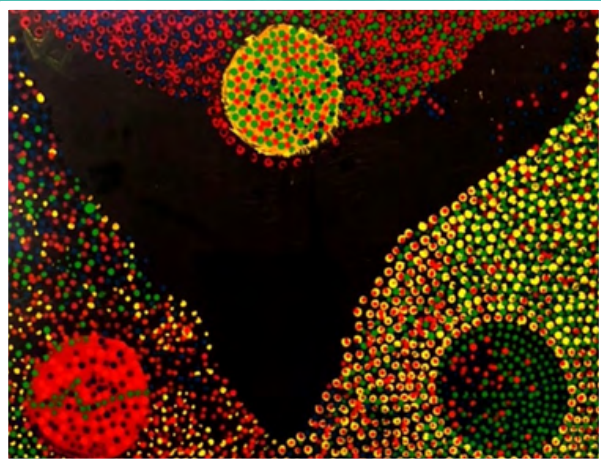














# Our Vision of Reconciliation

Our vision for reconciliation is an Australia that embraces unity between First Nations peoples and all Australians to share in the rich culture and history of these lands and waters. The future vision is one where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, are acknowledged and respected as part of everyday life in an equitable and inclusive Australia.

WHOS is committed to working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities to deliver an accessible, equitable and culturally safe service to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their families who may be experiencing alcohol and other drug (AOD) related challenges.

In addition to reducing AOD related harm utilising our evidence-based care model, we also focus on promoting individual growth and healthy and fulfilling lifestyles.

WHOS will promote, provide, and support opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within our organisation.



# Our Organisation

**WHOS** *Mission Statement - To promote personal growth within an alcohol and other drugs therapeutic program, incorporating harm minimisation and co-existing mental health initiatives.*

WHOS has been in operation since 1972, celebrating 50 years in 2022. The organisation has grown significantly since establishment, with a service footprint that extends across metropolitan and regional NSW & QLD.

Today, WHOS operates seven Therapeutic Community residential programs (four in Sydney on our Lilyfield campus, one in Cessnock, one in Goulburn and one in Nambour, QLD), six Day Programs (Lilyfield, Newcastle, Goulburn, Penrith, Windsor and Nambour) and Transitional & Exit Housing, providing treatment and support services to around 1,000 individuals annually.

In addition, WHOS have 110 staff across our services that are committed to working to enhance an individual's experience of our services and to support them to achieve their desired treatment goals.

WHOS recognises that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kinship and connections to land and culture are an integral part of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person's life.

We further recognise that it is these systems that establish their relationship to culture, others, the land, and its natural resources.

WHOS is committed to assisting in the preservation of kinship systems through collaborative care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, provided by dedicated Aboriginal Engagement staff and Family Support workers by ensuring that our approach is culturally safe, trauma-informed and family inclusive.

WHOS has historically employed staff who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. To further guide our work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people we have in place a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Enhancement Team to provide support and resources to our clients and staff.

Senior staff represent WHOS on the World Federation of Therapeutic Communities, Australasian Therapeutic Communities Association, Network of Alcohol and Drug Agencies (NSW) and their Queensland equivalent, Queensland Network of Alcohol and Drug Agencies.

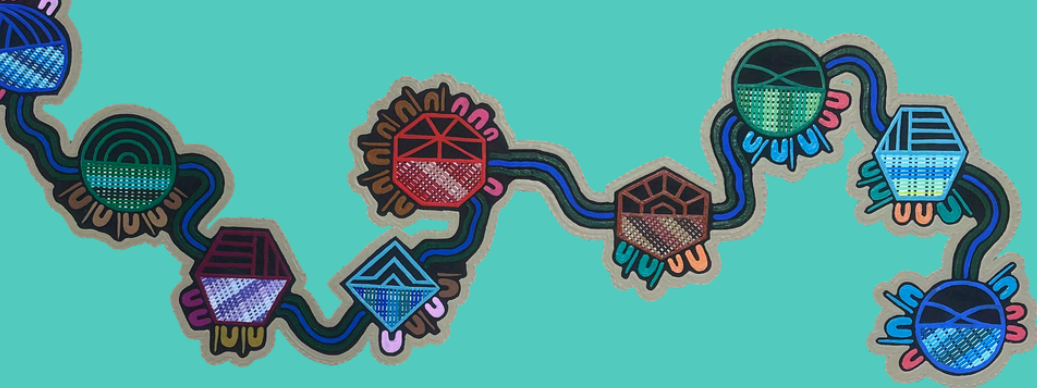




# WHOS Yarning Circle, Bushtucker Walk & Yabun







# WHOS Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

WHOS is pleased to work with Reconciliation Australia to establish this Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The provision of a culturally appropriate and accessible AOD treatment service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their families is a priority for WHOS.

We respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and clients, and we value their contributions to the wholeness and cohesion of our services.

It is part of our ongoing commitment to continue working beside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to build & maintain culturally inclusive, safe, and appropriate services, ensuring the specific needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients & their families are met.

WHOS shares the same goal of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Drug Strategy, which is to improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by preventing and reducing the harmful effects of substance use on individuals, families, and their communities.

Membership of WHOS RAP WG consists of the WHOS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, RAP WG Champions being Carolyn Stubley the WHOS Nurse Manager and Allan Anderson the male Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Worker, WHOS Corporate Services and HR Manager; and a representative from each WHOS residential and day program services.

WHOS RAP provides a framework that clearly maps out protocols, roles, and responsibilities as well as our long-term obligations in achieving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people engagement objectives.

The RAP is incorporated into WHOS strategic plans, policies and procedures and our quality improvement framework to ensure practical

actions are taken to build and maintain respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and that cultural competency is embedded in all aspects of WHOS service delivery. WHOS provides ongoing Cultural Awareness training to improve the understanding and skills of our staff in responding to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

In terms of care delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, WHOS utilises State Non-Government Alcohol and Drug Agency Peak Bodies, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audit tool to assess and inform our practices in program design, data management, communication, partnerships, and other related areas to better work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and communities and ensure we have the capacity to provide culturally appropriate services.

WHOS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement staff are active members of the Aboriginal Corporation Drug & Alcohol Network of NSW.

WHOS seeks to continue to evolve in improving health, wellbeing, and other support services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. WHOS acknowledge that AOD-related harms amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are disproportionately high and affects their spiritual, physical, social, and emotional wellbeing.

We utilise interventions co-designed with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people so that we can better understand the spiritual, health, social & emotional wellbeing treatment needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as they address their AOD use & its associated issues. At WHOS, we provide a culturally safe place where stories can be shared.



# Relationships

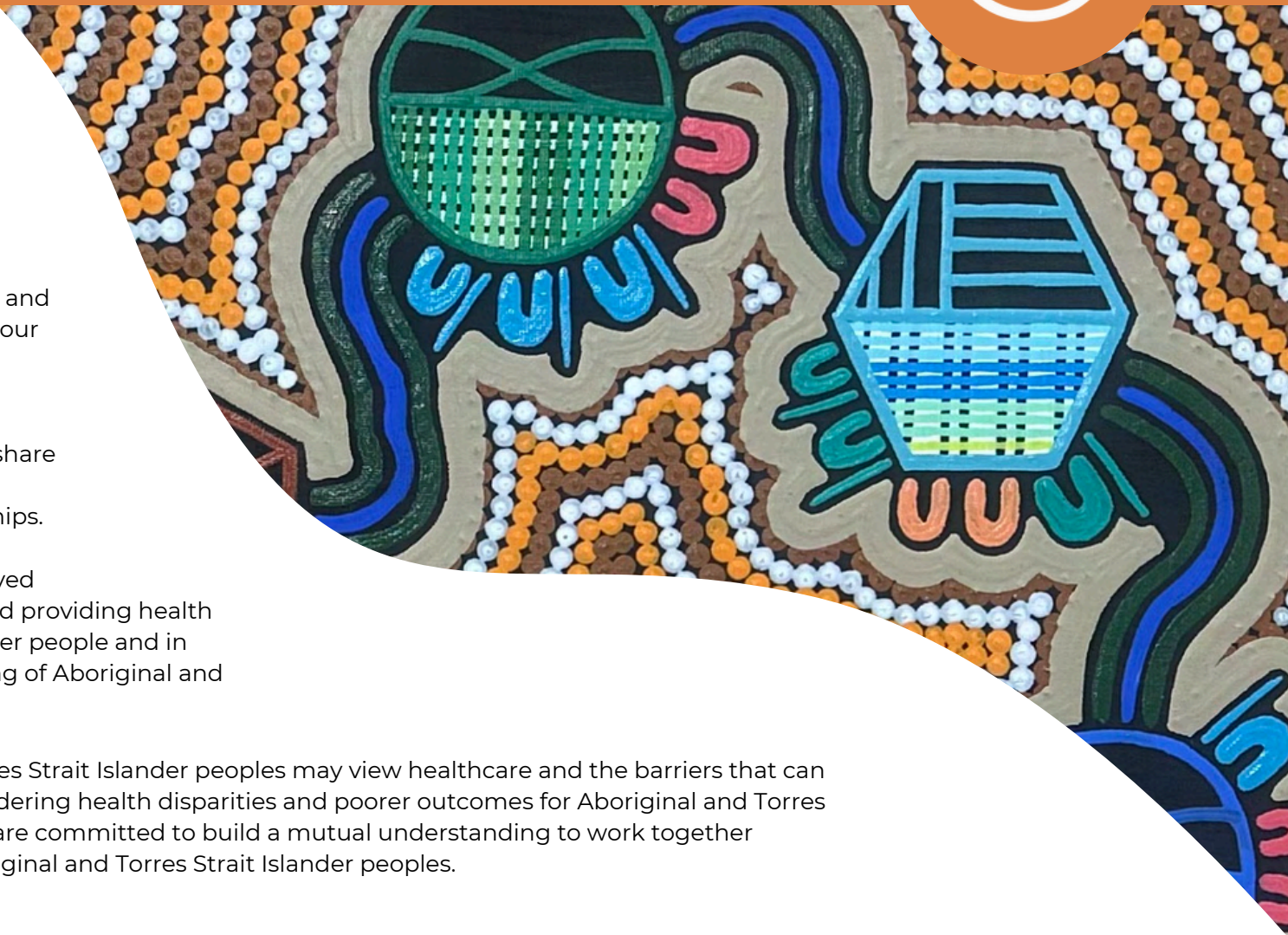


Building strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is important to our organisation.

Our aim is to connect with and learn from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, share experiences, provide equitable governance, communication, engagement, and partnerships.

WHOS recognises and challenges preconceived perceptions or beliefs about working with and providing health services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and in particular works to dismantle the stereotyping of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

WHOS understands how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples may view healthcare and the barriers that can prevent them from accessing services. Considering health disparities and poorer outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their families we are committed to build a mutual understanding to work together effectively to promote health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.





# Relationships



**Focus Area:** To continue and further involvement in activities to promote Reconciliation

| ACTION                                                                                                                                        | DELIVERABLE                                                                                                                              | TIMELINE                 | RESPONSIBILITY                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).</b>                                                         | Organise at least one internal event for NRW each year.                                                                                  | May 2024, 2025, 2026     | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers                                                                                         |
|                                                                                                                                               | Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to all staff and clients.                                | May 2024, 2025, 2026     | RAP Co-Chairs                                                                                                                                    |
|                                                                                                                                               | Register all NRW events via Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.                                                                      | May 2024, 2025, 2026     | RAP Co-Chairs                                                                                                                                    |
|                                                                                                                                               | Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW & invite all WHOS staff.                   | May 2024, 2025, 2026     | RAP Co-Chairs                                                                                                                                    |
|                                                                                                                                               | Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.             | May 2024, 2025, 2026     | RAP Co-Chairs                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>2. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.</b> | Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.                                | September 2024           | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers                                                                                         |
|                                                                                                                                               | Hold an information stall on WHOS services at Yabun facilitated by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff and non-Indigenous staff. | January 2024, 2025, 2026 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers and Manager.<br><br>Volunteers from the RAP Working Group and WHOS non-Indigenous staff |





# Relationships

**Focus Area:** To continue and further involvement in activities to promote Reconciliation

| ACTION                                                            | DELIVERABLE                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | TIMELINE            | RESPONSIBILITY                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.</b> | Attendance at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander interagency meetings. Representing WHOS as a culturally inclusive organisation and to develop partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific services. | August 2024         | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers         |
|                                                                   | Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to develop partnerships for future engagement.                                                                                                           | September 2024      | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers         |
|                                                                   | Participate in AOD specific Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Conferences to develop relationships and referral pathways between WHOS services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services.                       | February 2024, 2025 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers         |
|                                                                   | Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to communicate and raise awareness of our RAP and reconciliation to all internal and external stakeholders.                                                                | February 2024       | RAP Co-Chair/RAP WG                                              |
|                                                                   | Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.                                                                                                                    | August 2025         | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers /RAP WG |
|                                                                   | Collaborate with RAP and other likeminded organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation.                                                                                                                           | October 2024        | RAP Co-Chairs                                                    |
|                                                                   | Communicate our RAP through public document made available to all via WHOS website. WHOS website, includes virtual tour through WHOS services including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait activities.                          | March 2024          | Manager Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers |



# Relationships



**Focus Area:** To continue and further involvement in activities to promote Reconciliation

| ACTION                                                                               | DELIVERABLE                                                                                                                                                                                     | TIMELINE                                                                              | RESPONSIBILITY                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                      | Report to funders and stakeholders on the engagement in treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients within the WHOS services.                                                    | January and August 2024, 2025, 2026                                                   | Manager Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers    |
| <b>4. Promote positive race relationships through anti-discrimination strategies</b> | Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provision, and future needs.                                                                            | November 2024                                                                         | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager/HR Manager |
|                                                                                      | The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy to ensure the organisation is addressing racism.                                   |                                                                                       |                                                                     |
|                                                                                      | Implement and communicate an Anti-Discrimination and Harassment policy.                                                                                                                         | May 2025                                                                              | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager/HR Manager |
|                                                                                      | All staff undertake orientation to WHOS policies when employed. Ongoing annual e-Learning in mandatory policies required by all staff which includes Anti-Discrimination and Harassment policy. | June 2024, 2025, Jan 2026 Annual training.<br>New staff at commencement of employment | WHOS Service Managers/HR Manager                                    |



# Respect



At WHOS, we offer a holistic psychosocial treatment model of care within our Therapeutic Communities that respects the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, traditionally and contemporarily to their land, waters, languages, histories, cultures, spirituality, identities, kinship, and communities.

We value contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, clients, and staff, and it is through effective communication that we understand the impact of our history has had and continues to have upon Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the need to work together and learn from each other in the healing process to improve the health and wellbeing for all.

We promote awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's cultures and histories and acknowledge the successes and celebrations.





**Focus Area:** Maintaining an equitable and inclusive workplace; ongoing cultural training available to all staff.

| ACTION                                                                                                                                                                 | DELIVERABLE                                                                                                                                                                    | TIMELINE        | RESPONSIBILITY                                                                                                                               |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights through cultural learning.</b> | Conduct a review of cultural learning needs for all staff within our organisation. Whether it be face to face, online or cultural immersions.                                  | September 2024  | Manager and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers.<br>WHOS Treatment Services Operations Manager<br>WHOS Service Managers |
|                                                                                                                                                                        | Consultation with local Traditional Owners/Elders and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors on the development and implementation of a cultural learning strategy. | October 2024    | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers/Aboriginal Consultant                                                               |
|                                                                                                                                                                        | Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our staff.                                                                                                | November 2024   | Manager and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers.<br>WHOS Treatment Services Operations Manager<br>WHOS Service Managers |
|                                                                                                                                                                        | All WHOS frontline staff attend mandatory Cultural Awareness training. Annual training is conducted on the Anti-discrimination and Harassment policy.                          | July 2024, 2025 | RAP Co-Chairs<br>WHOS Treatment Services Operations Manager<br>WHOS Service Managers                                                         |





# Respect

**Focus Area:** Maintaining an equitable and inclusive workplace; ongoing cultural training available to all staff.

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE                                                                                                                                                                                     | TIMELINE            | RESPONSIBILITY                                                                                                                               |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|        | Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.                                      | September 2025      | Manager and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers.<br>WHOS Treatment Services Operations Manager<br>WHOS Service Managers |
|        | Promote and circulate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events calendar posted on WHOS Intranet and reviewed annually.                                                                      | May 2024, 2025      | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers and Manager                                                                         |
|        | Monitor access and retention in WHOS programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to identify any barriers to treatment and ensure access to health and psychosocial supports.    | June 2025           | Manager of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce<br>WHOS Treatment Services Operations Manager<br>WHOS Service Managers        |
|        | Utilise Australian Indigenous Alcohol and other Drugs Knowledge Centre as a resource to enhance cultural awareness and provide culturally appropriate resources to workers of the organisation. | June 2024           | WHOS Site Managers                                                                                                                           |
|        | Promote WHOS cultural awareness and cultural safety initiatives through presentations at sector conferences and agency in-services.                                                             | November 2024, 2025 | Manager and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers                                                                         |





**Focus Area:** Maintaining an equitable and inclusive workplace; ongoing cultural training available to all staff.

| ACTION                                                                                                          | DELIVERABLE                                                                                                                                                                                                 | TIMELINE                            | RESPONSIBILITY                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>2. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.</b> | Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Sorry Business and Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.                         | March 2024                          | Manager and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers                                                                   |
|                                                                                                                 | Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.                                                                | September 2023                      | Lead: Manager of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers supported by the Engagement Workers<br>WHOS Service Managers |
|                                                                                                                 | Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year including NAIDOC Week, Reconciliation Week, Sorry Day. | May & July 2024,<br>May & July 2025 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers                                                                               |
|                                                                                                                 | Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.                                                                                             | January 2024                        | Manager and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers                                                                   |
|                                                                                                                 | Review and update our cultural protocol for Acknowledgement of Country of all internal and external meetings and presentations in consultation with each WHOS Program Local Land Council.                   | July 2024                           | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers                                                                               |





# Respect

**Focus Area:** Maintaining an equitable and inclusive workplace; ongoing cultural training available to all staff.

| ACTION                                                                                                               | DELIVERABLE                                                                                                                                      | TIMELINE              | RESPONSIBILITY                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>3. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.</b> | Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff and clients.                                                          | July 2024, 2025       | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers/RAP WG |
|                                                                                                                      | RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week Event.                                                                               | July 2024, 2025       | RAP Co-Chairs                                                   |
|                                                                                                                      | Provide internal activities to the clients and staff of the organisation throughout NAIDOC Week.                                                 | July 2023, 2024, 2025 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers/RAP WG |
|                                                                                                                      | Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.                                         | January 2024          | Human Resources Manager                                         |
|                                                                                                                      | Provide opportunities for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to participate with their cultures and communities during NAIDOC Week. | July 2024, 2025       | RAP Co-Chairs/Service Managers                                  |



# Opportunities



We acknowledge the unique skills and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professionals.

Across WHOS sites, an average of between 18% to 25% of our clients annually identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are employed to provide cultural awareness and cultural safety initiatives for all staff and clients of the organisation adding substantial value to frontline service delivery and treatment outcomes for this client groups.

We promote and welcome opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to join our organisation, to further our cultural safety in the delivery of services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and families.

We continue to seek funding from State and Commonwealth Governments to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce across all WHOS services.



# Opportunities

**Focus Area:** Policies and procedures in place to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples engagement in services and in employment and retention.

| ACTION                                                                                                                                                | DELIVERABLE                                                                                                                                                                                              | TIMELINE            | RESPONSIBILITY                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff recruitment, retention, and professional development.</b> | Develop, implement, and review an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development strategy.                                                                   | June 2025           | Human Resources Manager/WHOS Managers                                                |
|                                                                                                                                                       | Building understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future recruitment, retention, and professional development opportunities.                                    | November 2024       | Human Resources Manager/WHOS Managers                                                |
|                                                                                                                                                       | Engage with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on employment strategies, including professional development, cultural competence, and clinical supervision.                 | October 2024        | Human Resources Manager/<br>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers |
|                                                                                                                                                       | Develop an e-Learning package with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and consultant to increase the knowledge of WHOS staff in supporting and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce. | June 2025           | Manager and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers                 |
|                                                                                                                                                       | New staff orientation training conducted by the organisation includes a presentation on cultural awareness, cultural safety, and the organisation's RAP.                                                 | February 2024, 2025 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers                             |
|                                                                                                                                                       | Ensure future and current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing support by providing cultural clinical supervision from an external cultural facilitator.                                       | January 2024        | Manager Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers                     |
|                                                                                                                                                       | Provide professional development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff to support the work they undertake in the organisation.                                                   | January 2024        | Manager Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers/Service Managers    |



# Opportunities



**Focus Area:** Policies and procedures in place to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples engagement in services and in employment and retention.

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | TIMELINE      | RESPONSIBILITY                                                       |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
|        | Provide mentoring by establishing links for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to attend Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Interagency meetings and linking in with other Aboriginal AOD workers.                                      | July 2024     | Manager and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers |
|        | Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services and networks to ensure the workforce are aware of the WHOS service for future employment opportunities.                                                                                  | July 2024     | Manager and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers |
|        | Consult with Aboriginal Colleges/TAFE to support student placements e.g., AHMRC.                                                                                                                                                                    | June 2024     | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers             |
|        | Include in all job advertisements, 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are encouraged to apply.'                                                                                                                                          | January 2024  | Human Resource Manager                                               |
|        | Advertise job vacancies in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and social media e.g., Koori Mail Newspaper, ACDAN, Australian Indigenous Health Info Net and AHMRC. | January 2024  | WHOS Service Managers                                                |
|        | Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's participation in our workplace.                                                                                              | November 2024 | Manager Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers     |
|        | Where possible ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's representation at interviews.                                                                                                                                                  | November 2024 | RAP Co-Chairs                                                        |
|        | Provide interview and selection training to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.                                                                                                                                                            | November 2024 | WHOS Treatment Services Operations Manager                           |



# Opportunities

**Focus Area:** Policies and procedures in place to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples engagement in services and in employment and retention.

| ACTION                                                                                                                        | DELIVERABLE                                                                                                                                                                 | TIMELINE            | RESPONSIBILITY                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>2. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.</b> | Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy for obtaining goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses. | August 2025         | Manager and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers |
|                                                                                                                               | Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.                                                                                  | August 2025         | Manager and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers |
|                                                                                                                               | Investigate Supply Nation membership.                                                                                                                                       | November 2024       | RAP WG member                                                        |
|                                                                                                                               | Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and professional development at WHOS.                                                                              | November 2024       | Manager Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers     |
| <b>3. Create employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at WHOS.</b>                         | Support cadetship for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.                                                                                                       | May 2025            | RAP Co-Chairs                                                        |
|                                                                                                                               | Support AHMRC student placements within WHOS programs when undertaking studies in AOD/Mental Health or Community Services.                                                  | November 2024, 2025 | WHOS Service Managers                                                |





| ACTION                                                                                                                                                   | DELIVERABLE                                                                                                             | TIMELINE                                       | RESPONSIBILITY        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>1. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.</b>                                                    | Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.                                              | February, May, August, November 2024, 2025     | RAP Co-Chairs         |
|                                                                                                                                                          | Review Terms of Reference for the RWG.                                                                                  | January 2024, 2025                             | RAP WG                |
|                                                                                                                                                          | Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.                                               | January 2024                                   | RAP Co-Chairs         |
| <b>2. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.</b>                                                                   | Define resource needs for RAP implementation.                                                                           | January 2024                                   | RAP Co-Chairs /RAP WG |
| <b>3. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings both internally and externally. Continued.</b> | Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire. | January 2024                                   | RAP Co-Chairs         |
|                                                                                                                                                          | Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly.                                                          | January, April, July, October 2024, 2025, 2026 | RAP Co-Chairs         |
|                                                                                                                                                          | Provide a report or publication on its website updated annually.                                                        | March 2024, 2025                               | RAP Co-Chairs         |
|                                                                                                                                                          | Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.                                | February 2026                                  | RAP Co-Chairs         |



| ACTION                                                                    | DELIVERABLE                                                                                                                                                                           | TIMELINE                              | RESPONSIBILITY                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>4. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.</b> | Conduct and submit the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire annually.                                                                                                                 | September 2024, 2025                  | RAP Co-Chairs /RAP WG                                            |
|                                                                           | Conduct monthly reviews and report all outcomes as required in funding and annual reports, WHOS newsletter, reports to Board, Managers Meeting.                                       | Monthly from January 2024, 2025, 2026 | RAP Co-Chairs                                                    |
|                                                                           | Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings through annual reports, reports to Board, client focus groups, website, newsletter, staff intranet and staff meetings. | June 2024, 2025, January 2026         | Manager Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Workers |
|                                                                           | Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.                                                                                                     | January 2026                          | RAP Co-Chairs                                                    |



# Contact Details

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