

Reconciliation Action Plan: Reflect

November 2020 to November 2021



The Royal
Melbourne
Hospital



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

REFLECT

A message from our Board Chair and Chief Executive

We are proud to present the first Reconciliation Action Plan for The Royal Melbourne Hospital. This Plan represents a milestone in the long journey we have started with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. It lays the foundation for more education, patient and consumer partnerships in care programs and employment outcomes, while creating and strengthening our ties with communities.

Our first Reconciliation Action Plan is an opportunity to examine what impact our services have had on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the history of The Royal Melbourne Hospital and what initiatives we can put in place to improve our role in the years to come. Some of this work has already begun, for example the development of our first Aboriginal Employment Action Plan in 2014, while other work, such as the increased collection of service metrics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander healthcare, will take time to establish.

We are acutely aware of our healthcare delivery responsibility in achieving health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We understand that delivering high quality care must be intrinsically linked to providing culturally appropriate and responsive services. To that end, our *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healthcare Needs Plan* is already in place to leverage The Royal Melbourne Hospital network of excellence for improved care and research to help address chronic diseases and mental health issues among communities.

Together with our commitment to provide great care is our aspiration for The Royal Melbourne Hospital to become a great place to work for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. As we implement this Reconciliation Action Plan, we aim to build a better understanding of our current workforce, and the barriers and opportunities in place; with the ultimate vision of becoming an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander healthcare professionals.

We would like to thank each person who has contributed to the creation of this first Reconciliation Action Plan, particularly our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Governance Committee, which has led the process, and Nyuka Wara Consulting for delivering invaluable education and cultural awareness sessions for so many of our staff.

Reconciliation is a shared responsibility and we ask each of you to read this document carefully and reflect on what you can do to be part of this important journey.

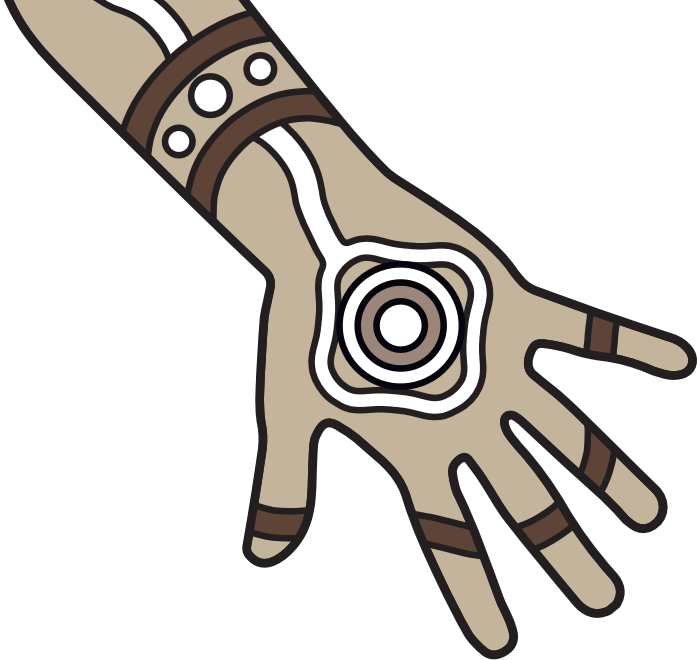
Linda Bardo Nicholls AO

Board Chair

Professor Christine Kilpatrick AO

Chief Executive





About us

The Royal Melbourne Hospital is a leading public health service in Victoria with a history of providing the best possible care to our patients and consumers. With more than 100,000 admissions each year, we are committed to applying evidence-based research to drive improvements in clinical outcomes and patient and consumer experience. We have a strong focus on teaching and education, and encourage lifelong learning to enable our 10,000 staff members to realise their potential, including the 19 staff who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Our world-class reputation had its beginnings at Victoria's first public hospital – The Royal Melbourne Hospital. Now 172 years old, the hospital is one of the major trauma centres for the state, and provides services such as infectious diseases, neurosciences, nephrology, surgical oncology, cardiology and genomics.

The Royal Melbourne Hospital provides rehabilitation, aged care and community-based services, as well as being the state's largest provider of mental health services, known as NorthWestern Mental Health (NWMH), for youth, adults and aged people across northern and western Melbourne.

Our partnership with the University of Melbourne, The Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity, combines research into infectious disease and immunity with teaching excellence, reference laboratory diagnostic services and epidemiology.



Our RAP


As one of the largest public health services in Victoria, The Royal Melbourne Hospital (the RMH) has a leading part to play in improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The effects of more than 200 years of dispossession, racism and discrimination have left Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with unequal access to services and health outcomes. At the RMH we acknowledge this history, understanding that reconciliation is not an outcome or goal as much as it is a relationship and an ongoing journey.

There are significant health gaps between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and non-Indigenous people. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples suffer the worst health of any population group in Australia, with a high burden of disease and low life expectancy. It is estimated that chronic diseases are responsible for 80 percent of the mortality gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and non-Indigenous peoples. Rates of depression, anxiety and suicide are also significantly higher than non-Indigenous populations.

Across our organisation, we currently have varied skill levels and knowledge about working in a culturally sensitive manner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients, consumers and visitors. Developing this Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) will support staff to better understand the cultures and histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and in doing so, better tailor our care to ensure that each patient or consumer experience is the best it can be.

This RAP also aligns with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Plan, which aspires to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, make our organisation more accessible to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates, and to be recognised as 'a great place to work'.





The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Governance Committee was established in 2019 to develop and implement a RAP, with a focus on building a plan committed to closing the gap in health outcomes and life expectancy between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the broader Australian population across RMH's local catchment area, including but not limited to, mental health, chronic disease and preventative health, and a long-term vision for reconciliation. The committee membership includes:

- Executive Sponsor and Executive Director Nursing Services Denise Heinjus (RAP champion)
- Committee Chair and Director Allied Health Genevieve Juj
- Community Engagement Manager Jenny Barr
- RMH NWMH Inner West Area Manager Gail Bradley
- Cardiologist Luke Burchill
- Surgical Registrar Jordan Cory
- People & Culture Business Partner Jacinta Cunningham
- Occupational Therapist Ellen Druce
- Cultural Diversity Co-ordinator Kerrie Dunn
- Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer Gabrielle Ebsworth
- RMH NWMH Inner West Senior Social and Emotional Wellbeing Clinician Jacara Egan
- Psychologist Caroline Fisher
- Emergency Medicine Physician Glenn Harrison
- Social Work and Cultural Diversity Manager Alison Hocking
- National Standards and Clinical Governance Manager Catherine Humphrey
- Hospital Medical Officer Lucy McPhate
- Aboriginal Social Worker Sharon Mongta
- Director of Nursing and Operations, Cardiac Services Kate Murphy
- RMH NWMH Manager Quality and Innovation Suzanne Turner
- Social Work and Cultural Diversity Manager Lisa Wojciechowski



Partnerships and current activities

Over many years, the RMH has taken steps to improve our relationships and health initiatives with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and this has paved the way for us to embark on our first Reflect RAP.

Working in partnership to Close the Gap

The RMH has multiple partnerships and connections across Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCO) including the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service (VAHS), Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, The Bouverie Centre – Indigenous Program, Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) and Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO). Across the health service, a variety of communities and ACCO's are also represented within memberships of our Community Advisory Committee, RMH Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Governance Committee and NWMH Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Working Group. These partners play a vital part in providing an inclusive and collaborative approach toward service provision and improvement. Our recently developed *Healthcare Needs Plan* works with these organisations and communities to improve access, care and research across key health priorities for the communities we serve, including mental health, cardiovascular disease, renal disease and diabetes.

Established community partnerships have led to the development of direct referral pathways from VAHS and First People's Health and Wellbeing to our community mental health programs. This includes intensive outreach support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experiencing homelessness and enduring mental illness via Widamba Wilam, and social and emotional support offered within hospital via the Balit Djerring project, a partnership between NWMH, VAHS, Austin Health, and St Vincent's Health.

With The Royal Women's Hospital, The Royal Children's Hospital, and Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre, the RMH forms the Parkville Precinct Aboriginal Health Working Group, a partnership to improve services for our patient populations and increase culturally-responsive care, as well as to celebrate and acknowledge culturally significant events.

Direct patient care partnerships are also valued, with the roles of the Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer and, Senior Aboriginal Social and Emotional Wellbeing Clinician in mental health, supporting and advocating for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our care.



Providing workforce opportunities

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Plan is underway to make the RMH an employer of choice and a great place to work for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It includes medical internship, nurse graduate placements, cadetships, mentorships and a work experience program, as well as efforts to improve cultural capability of managers to support staff. This plan has included input from current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members and consultation with Nyuka Wara Consulting.

Celebration and acknowledgement of culturally significant events

RMH recognises events that seek to acknowledge, promote and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and practices, such as Close the Gap Day, National Reconciliation Week and National Sorry Day.

NAIDOC Week includes a medical grand round (Professor Ian Anderson Oration) hosted by Wotjobaluk man and emergency physician Dr Glenn Harrison, focusing on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander healthcare. Previous years have also included a Welcome to Country by Aunty Di Kerr and performance from the Jindi Worakbak dance group. A rare and special Smoking Ceremony was also performed in 2011 by Aunty Di Kerr and Uncle Ringo to acknowledge the negative past history and significant hurt that occurred at the RMH Royal Park campus.



Improving staff cultural awareness

In collaboration with Nyuka Wara Consulting, the RMH provided staff with cultural awareness education, including important sessions about asking patients whether they identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. A film for staff has also been created with SistaGirl Productions featuring Jack Charles and Lisa Maza, which now forms part of online cultural awareness training. A second film was also made for communities about what to expect when accessing services at the RMH.

Transforming spaces

To assist in keeping language alive and create a culturally welcoming space, the RMH incorporates the Woi wurrung language of the Wurundjeri people when naming spaces. This includes consultation with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation. These spaces include 'Mooroop Wa-lam-buk' (renew soul) garden at RMH City Campus, 'Ngarra Jarra' (healing) Allied Health conference room, 'Narrkwarren Wilam' (family home) relatives room in our Emergency Department and a new NWMH site in Mill Park was named 'Noogal' (belong). The Narrkwarren Wilam relatives room and entrance to the Emergency Department also includes artwork from Wurundjeri-wilam artist Mandy Nicholson, while artwork from Latje Latje artist Trevor Turbo Brown features in the NWMH space at RMH City Campus.

About the Artwork

Community, culture and connection are central to a person's wellbeing. This artwork represents the community coming together in support of Reconciliation and walking together in support and understanding. The pathways represent our learning journey. The outreached hands represent support, guidance and nurturing.

The ripples depict connection and how everything affects everything else. In this instance, the water depicts healing and the ripple effect that has on individuals, families and the broader community.

Gum leaves are significant to Kulin people, as they are used for ceremony and in particular; 'Welcome to Country'.

Bunjil flies over the Birrarung (Yarra River), protecting and guiding us.

Walk Together

Artist: Dixon Patten

Tribes: Yorta Yorta, Gunnai and Gunditjmarra





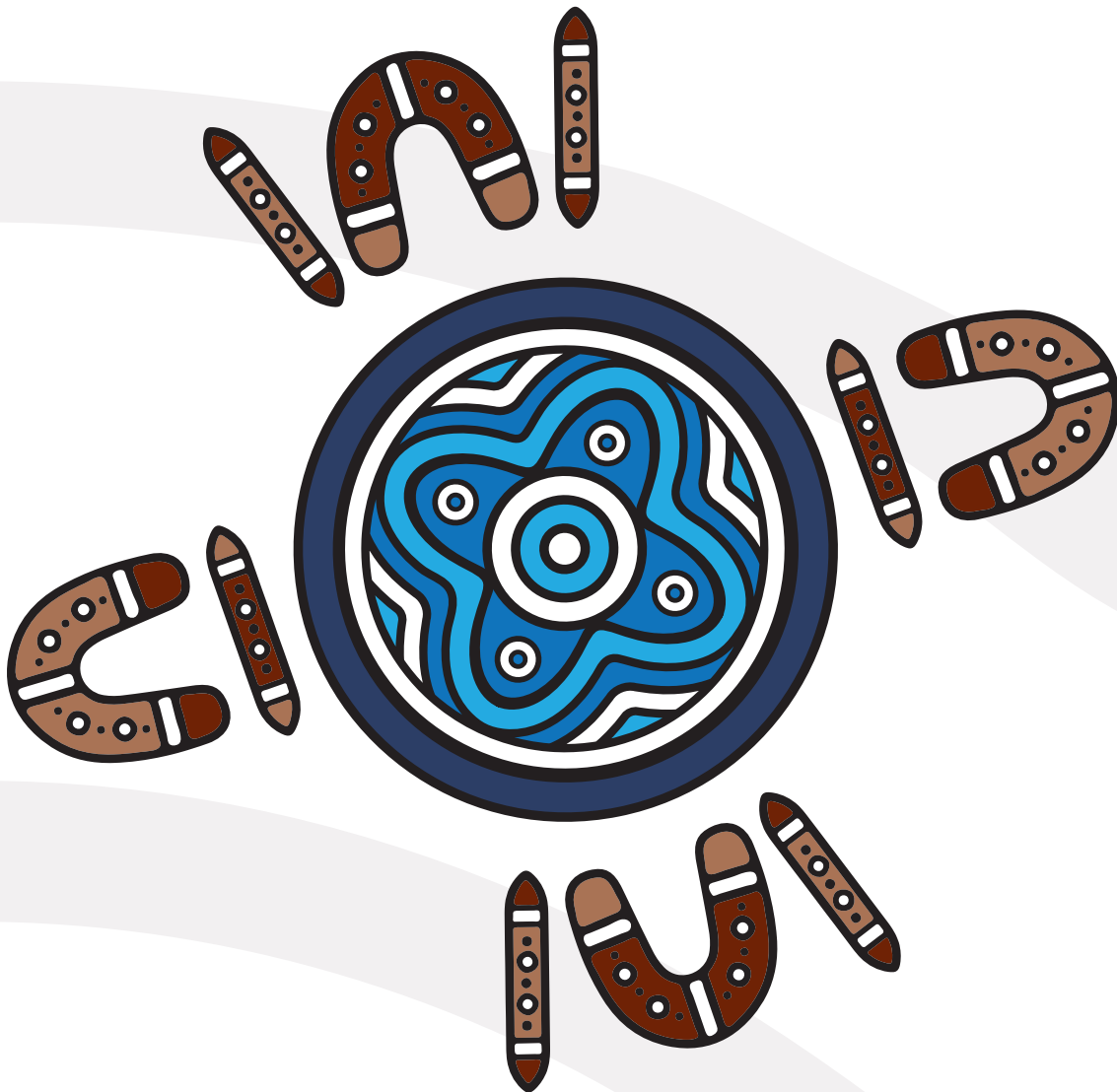
Relationships



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Memorandum of Understanding with current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence. 	Apr 2021	Executive Director, Nursing Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a list and commence relationship building with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations not currently connected to The Royal Melbourne Hospital. 	Apr 2021	Executive Director, Nursing Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. 	Jun 2021	Cultural Diversity Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish The Royal Melbourne Hospital Aboriginal Health Needs Plan, including future relationships with key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders in priority clinical areas. 	Sep 2021	Lead: Executive Director, Quality Strategy and Improvement Support: Heads of units for priority areas
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain membership on the Melbourne Academic Centre for Health and Melbourne Biomedical Precinct Indigenous Health Subcommittee. 	Sep 2021	Director Allied Health
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiate and implement Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander calendar of important dates with Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre partners. 	Dec 2020	Director Allied Health
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate National Reconciliation Week resources (both The Royal Melbourne Hospital and Reconciliation Australia's resources) to our staff. 	May 2021	Cultural Diversity Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Celebrate National Reconciliation Week with an internal event, encouraging all executive and staff to attend, with advertising through The Royal Melbourne Hospital communication channels. Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website. 	May 2021	Lead: Director Allied Health Support: Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Governance Committee

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure The Royal Melbourne Hospital Board, Executive, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Governance Committee participate in an external event to recognise National Reconciliation Week. 	May 2021	Executive Director, Nursing Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate National Reconciliation Week. 	May 2021	Lead: Director Allied Health Support: Director, Business Intelligence Unit
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commence The Royal Melbourne Hospital Reconciliation Action Plan communication plan to raise awareness and promote reconciliation across the organisation. 	Nov 2020	Director Allied Health
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the RAP launch, invite staff members of The Royal Melbourne Hospital (Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identifying and non-Indigenous) to promote the importance of The Royal Melbourne Hospital's first RAP via 2 short videos across to be shared across the organisation. 	Nov 2020	Director Allied Health
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In consultation with local Traditional Owners, ensure that the naming of any new buildings or wards includes consideration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander names. 	Jan 2021	Chief Executive
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey. 	Nov 2020	Executive Director, Nursing Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey. 	Nov 2020	Executive Director, Nursing Services

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination. 	Nov 2020	Cultural Diversity Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement recommendations from a review of human resource policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs. 	Nov 2020	Executive Director, People and Culture
5. Improve the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patient experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review report of first twelve months of Key Performance Indicator metrics relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and service delivery and review the effectiveness of a new dashboard for monitoring and reporting. 	Mar 2021	Lead: Director Allied Health Support: Director, Business Intelligence Unit





Respect



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation. 	Apr 2021	Lead: Executive Director, Nursing Services Support: Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Governance Committee
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation. 	Nov 2020	Executive Director, People and Culture
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the Aboriginal eLearning package from the Department of Health and Human Services for Victorian health services, with individualisation by The Royal Melbourne Hospital and include the Aboriginal Cultural Awareness eLearning module within The Royal Melbourne Hospital Orientation. 	Nov 2020	Executive Director, People and Culture
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review implementation of Cultural Awareness Training programs provided to The Royal Melbourne Hospital staff in 2019. 	Nov 2020	Director Allied Health
2. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install a plaque at The Royal Melbourne Hospital's Royal Park Campus to commemorate the Smoking Ceremony conducted in 2011, recognising the past history of the campus for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. 	Nov 2020	Lead: Executive Director, Nursing Services Support: Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Governance Committee
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols. 	Apr 2021	Lead: Executive Director, Nursing Services Support: Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Governance Committee
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a communication strategy for The Royal Melbourne Hospital cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgment of Country. 	Dec 2020	Executive Director, Quality Strategy and Improvement

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Celebrate NAIDOC Week with annual Grand Round presentation – the ‘Ian Anderson Oration’. 	Jul 2021	Executive Director Nursing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute resources, and promote internal and external NAIDOC Week events to staff members. 	Jul 2021	Cultural Diversity Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week . 	Jul 2021	Cultural Diversity Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure The Royal Melbourne Hospital Board, Executive, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Governance Committee participate in external NAIDOC Week events hosted across the Parkville Precinct. 	Jul 2021	Executive Director, Nursing Services







Opportunities



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement The Royal Melbourne Hospital Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Plan. 	Nov 2020	Executive Director, People and Culture
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities. 	Apr 2021	Executive Director, People and Culture
2. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement The Royal Melbourne Hospital's key priority area identified in the Social Procurement Strategy of 'to create and/or promote sustainable Victorian social enterprise and Aboriginal business sectors and investigate Supply Nation membership. 	Nov 2020	Director of Procurement





Governance



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Maintain an effective Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Governance Committee to drive governance of the RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Governance Committee will meet monthly. 	Sep 2021	Director Allied Health
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review reporting on Key Performance Indicators through The Royal Melbourne Hospital Quality Committee. 	Nov 2021	Director Allied Health
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Terms of Reference for The Royal Melbourne Hospital Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Governance Committee. 	Jun 2021	Lead: Executive Director, Nursing Services Support: Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Governance Committee Director Allied Health
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments through an Executive Sponsor for The Royal Melbourne Hospital Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Governance Committee, and ensuring executive and senior leadership membership and attendance. 	Sep 2021	Lead: Executive Director, Nursing Services Support: Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Governance Committee Director Allied Health
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation at The Royal Melbourne Hospital Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Governance Committee. 	Sep 2021	Director Allied Health
2. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define resource needs for RAP implementation. 	Nov 2020	Lead: Executive Director, Nursing Services Support: Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Governance Committee Director Allied Health
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Governance Committee will discuss, progress and write quarterly reports. 	Nov 2020	Executive Director Nursing Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments. 	Nov 2020	Lead: Executive Director, Nursing Services Support: Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Governance Committee Director Allied Health

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<p>3. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia. 	<p>Sep 2021</p>	<p>Cultural Diversity Coordinator</p>
<p>4. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP. 	<p>Jul 2021</p>	<p>Cultural Diversity Coordinator</p>





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