



ST VINCENT'S
HEALTH AUSTRALIA

UNDER THE STEWARDSHIP OF MARY AIKENHEAD MINISTRIES



St Vincent's Health Australia

Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan

August 2020 – August 2023



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

STRETCH

Cultural Disclaimer:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this document may contain images or content referring to deceased persons. It may also contain words or descriptions that may be deemed culturally insensitive. Whilst we take every effort to ensure we use the term Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, there may be instances where we use the term 'Indigenous' to refer to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, for example, in reference to a specific program or organisation.

Acknowledgement of Country:

St Vincent's Health Australia acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters where we live and work. We respect their historical and continuing spiritual connections to country and community and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. As a health and aged care ministry, we commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

Message from the CEO



From time to time, often at moments of national importance or crisis, we have cause to stop and reflect on Australia's health. Against almost any yardstick, we are a safe, secure and abundant place to live, free of political conflict, economically sound, a rich cultural life, and with a standard of living and well-being that are the envy of most. We have much to be grateful for.

However, despite our stability and wealth, many of us recognise a sense of 'incompleteness' about ourselves and our nation. It springs from an awareness that not all of us share in the gifts and opportunities of this land.

Across most indices reflecting social, economic, health, justice, education and wellbeing in Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians fare significantly worse than non-Indigenous Australians.

These inequalities – rooted in more than 200 years of injustice and neglect – are the physical symbols of our lack of completeness.

But to make us whole, to truly repair ourselves, we will need more than the policy reforms, funding and effort – however important those responses are – to address these challenges.

St Vincent's Health Australia strongly believes that practical measures designed to address disparities between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians will only achieve long-term success if they are matched with a meaningful change in our relationships with each other.

We need renewal of the spirit. Renewal in our hearts.

And that means achieving authentic and genuine reconciliation.

St Vincent's works tirelessly and strategically for a reconciled Australia, a land in which social and health outcomes, and human potential are flourishing, and are not constricted by culture or past policies.

In doing so, we become vulnerable, knowing that the hidden histories of this land must be broken open, engaged with, and understood in order to achieve personal, organisational and societal transformation.

The commitments we've made under our formal Reconciliation Action Plan over the last decade find their underpinnings in the examples set by the Sisters of Charity and their fundamental calling for us to address injustice and care for the marginalised and disadvantaged.

Our approach to reconciliation has always been about the restoration of relationships and an examination of what has been broken to enable healing. We strive to achieve the right relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, using our resources and acumen to step beyond words into action.

At St Vincent's Health Australia, we also acknowledge our place as leaders in reconciliation for Catholic health and aged care ministries nationally.

The work of achieving true and long-lasting reconciliation is constant and we – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians alike – are called to walk together on this journey.

Together we are part of an ever-unfolding story.

Toby Hall

Group Chief Executive Officer
St Vincent's Health Australia

Message from the RAP Chair



The crafting of this Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) – a plan that is about implementing longer-term strategies and embedding reconciliation initiatives into our daily business – has been challenging. But most things worth doing are.

In preparing this RAP we have had to balance organisational imperatives while working to build the collective consciousness of our organisation. We are proud of this robust, living document, which has been animated thanks to the example and heartfelt desire of our St Vincent's family to know and do more to live reconciliation in our workplaces, organisation and communities.

Our ongoing commitment to justice and equitable outcomes through our RAP is at the forefront of our thinking.

In our faith tradition, the call to reconciliation and restoration of relationship is sacred. This understanding makes us open to our vulnerabilities and helps us acknowledge that we are called to play a role in this work – both in reflection and practical action. St Vincent's Health's founding story, mission, values, and our healing ministry call us to growth and transformation, both personally and professionally. Core to this growth is the breaking down of barriers and a sharing of stories so that new and lasting understandings and possibilities are created.

St Vincent's is characterised by people who are called to care for others. We pursue initiatives that lead to the strengthening of relationships, teams and communities. Our work of health and wellness extend well beyond our facility walls.

The work of reconciliation is the work of co-creation. We draw on the wisdom and knowledge of both our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous staff to enable change, knowing that our commitment to this work, though challenging at times, is unwavering.

Darlene Dreise

Chair, Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Steering Committee
St Vincent's Health Australia

Message from Reconciliation Australia



On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I congratulate St Vincent's Health Australia (SVHA) on its formal commitment to reconciliation, as it implements its fourth Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP); it's second Stretch RAP.

Formed around the pillars of relationships, respect, and opportunity, the RAP program helps organisations realise the critical role they can play to drive reconciliation across their work and core business. The program's collective impact grows day on day, with over 2.3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

As the nation's largest non-for-profit health and aged care provider, SVHA has a mandate to provide culturally appropriate, safe, and research-driven care to the millions who come into contact with its hospitals, services, and facilities. The reach of SVHA's sphere of influence cannot be understated, as the health, well-being, and ability to thrive of its diverse stakeholders sits in its hands.

Impressively, SVHA has been a RAP partner for over decade. The RAP framework prioritises continuous evolving and adapting of reconciliation commitments; and over time, SVHA have created an extensive and considered governance structure to spearhead this development. It has fostered a multitude of partnerships with external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services and communities, as well as internal First Nations-led programs. With this cumulative experience and direction, SVHA has built solid foundations upon which to embed and expand its reconciliation commitments.

Crucial to this Stretch RAP is the aligning of SVHA's reconciliation action with its Mission, Values, and overarching strategies. SVHA is reflective and thoughtful about previous obstacles and challenges, and in response is investing in new directions, such as employing strategic national leadership for its RAP. This Stretch RAP continues to focus on employment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, understanding that capacity-building for its internal culture will extend into the efficacy and equity of its care for First Nations communities, as well. Aligning its RAP commitments with other supporting strategies, such as the Employment Parity Initiative, shows SVHA evolving and adapting, and ensuring sustainability of outcomes into the future.

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend SVHA on this Stretch RAP and look forward to following its ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

What is a RAP?

A Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is a strategic framework that assists organisations in their efforts to support reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The document is a practical, measureable plan of action that aligns with an organisation's business and operational requirements. The RAP facilitates progress towards a just, equitable and inclusive nation in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are reconciled with non-Indigenous Australians.

A 'Stretch' RAP is instituted by those organisations that are working to further embed strategies that advance reconciliation efforts both internally and externally within their sphere of influence. The Stretch model enables consolidation of efforts and integration of initiatives as 'business as usual' through the creation of long-term targets and goals.

Our Vision for Reconciliation

Our vision for reconciliation is a community where all Australians work together in a spirit of trust and openness to bring about hope, healing, love, justice and peace in our world. This community acknowledges and respects the unique cultures, histories and spiritualities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This community will create a shared sense of place through equity, inclusion and the provision of opportunities for all people. This will ensure our facilities are culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and that they receive healthcare services of the highest standard.

Right Relationships

Core to our approach will be prioritising the enabling and supporting of "Right Relationships" between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and our wider communities. Our Christian values and commitment to social justice call us to understand that for meaningful long-term positive change to occur, we must first begin by building relationships of respect and trust.



Our Mission - Our Business

St Vincent's Health Australia (SVHA) is the nation's largest not-for-profit health and aged care provider. We operate six public hospitals, 10 private hospitals and 20 aged care facilities in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria. These services are enhanced by the provision of person-centred, culturally appropriate care for all, supported by our Aboriginal Health Units in Sydney and Melbourne.

Along with three co-located research institutes – the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute, the Garvan Institute of Medical Research, and St Vincent's Institute of Medical Research – we work in close partnership with other research bodies, universities, and health care providers.

Our health and aged care services are founded on a firm commitment to our Mission and Values, based on the Gospel and Catholic social teaching in the spirit of Mary Aikenhead, founder of the Sisters of Charity. It is the legacy entrusted to us by the Sisters of Charity that continues to inspire SVHA to strengthen and grow our mission.

Our Mission:

As a Catholic health and aged care ministry, we bring God's love to those in need through the healing ministry of Jesus. SVHA reaches out to some of the most vulnerable people in the Australian community including those from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people living with mental illness, people experiencing addiction, people who are socially and financially disadvantaged and those experiencing homelessness, people in prison, refugees, and asylum seekers.

Our Vision:

We lead through research driven, excellent and compassionate health and aged care.

Our Values:

St Vincent's Health Australia's four core values are compassion, justice, integrity and excellence.

Our Services:

We are a clinical and education leader in health and aged care with a national and international reputation in medical research. Our areas of expertise include heart lung transplantation; bone marrow transplantation; cardiology; neurosurgery; cancer; clinical genomics; HIV medicine; palliative care; respiratory medicine; mental health; drug and alcohol services; aged psychiatry; homeless health; and prisoner health.

Our services employ more than 20,000 staff, are affiliated with over 2500 medical practitioners and specialists, and benefit from over 1300 volunteers. Each year our health services provide over a million occasions of service through inpatient and day-only admissions, while an additional one million episodes of care are delivered through our outpatient services.

We have a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific services and initiatives currently operating in our facilities including:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health services
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Assistant in Nursing Traineeship Program
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Support Services Assistant Program
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nursing Cadetship Program
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Graduate Nursing Program
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Physiotherapy Cadetship Program
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Physiotherapy Graduate Program
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Allied Health Assistant Program
- Bread Winners Scholarship Program
- Aunty Fay Carroll Enrolled Nurse Traineeship Program

Other health services we provide include:

- tertiary referral centres
- adult acute health services
- sub-acute care
- diagnostic services including pathology and radiology services
- public and private rehabilitation
- extensive allied health services
- inpatient and community mental health services
- public and private emergency departments
- inpatient and community based palliative care
- correctional health including mental health, inpatient and outpatient services
- community health
- a full range of aged care services, including acute, residential and community care
- research institutions

These services are enhanced through medical, nursing and allied health education, a strong commitment to research, continued growth in both outreach services and social accountability programs, and partnerships with universities.

Partnerships (outlined further under 'Our RAP') are a key part of our approach to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations, many of which have been long-standing. Some of these partnerships have been consolidated with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding. SVHA is committed to developing further relationships and welcomes the opportunity to work with interested organisations.

Our People

As part of SVHA's Strategic Plan *EnVision 2025*, the Social Justice in Health component outlines our organisation's commitment to responding to people who are experiencing poverty, marginalisation and injustice.

One of the key groups is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This RAP is the overarching strategy document to address issues of sub-optimal performance in key social determinants of health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in comparison to their non-Indigenous peers. Our primary focus remains on our core strategy of employment in accordance with our Employment Parity Initiative (EPI). We understand that the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees will result in better housing, health and wellness opportunities for these staff members, their families and communities.

Currently SVHA employs over 260 staff who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. This figure is a significant increase from the 30 identified Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff employed at SVHA in 2015 prior to the development of our EPI. We are extremely proud of our progress in employment parity, but recognise that more work is needed in order to recruit and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and to meet our ambitious target of 500 employees by July 2021.

As our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff presence increases, so too will the diversity of our workplaces, ensuring that cultural safety considerations are at the forefront of SVHA's workplace practices. For patients and residents, our expanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce will contribute to creating a more welcoming and culturally safe care environment, thus improving patient outcomes.

Below: Scott Daley (Aboriginal Health Manager) and Graham Kilby (HR Aboriginal Program Specialist), St Vincent's Hospital Sydney.



Our RAP

The development of the first SVHA RAP commenced in 2009. SVHA's involvement in and commitment to the RAP arose from our organisation's desire to progress reconciliation with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities that our facilities engage with. Our first RAP was formally implemented in 2010.

While we have made significant progress towards reconciliation since that time, we recognise that embedding cultural change takes sustained effort and cannot be rushed. Therefore, our 2020-2023 RAP will remain in the 'Stretch' model. This will allow us time to consolidate our reconciliation strategies and to effect meaningful, lasting change.

SVHA will drive this RAP via the energy and resources of key champions, including members of the SVHA RAP Steering Committee, Mission Leaders and Aboriginal Health Units.

The strategy will be implemented at a local level to ensure its success and maximise and maintain relationships between our Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous staff. Each of SVHA's facilities will develop and build relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, honouring their unique contexts, and identifying opportunities to work together.

Through this plan, we aim to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to foster and support equity and access to health care by providing culturally safe, person-centred environments, developing capacity within our facilities and in the community, and developing partnerships.

Such programs will incorporate:

- building respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- providing educational opportunities for all SVHA staff.
- developing, supporting and sustaining employment opportunities at SVHA for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- partnering with organisations working to improve the health outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- maximising opportunities to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses through our procurement and purchasing.
- engaging in research to better inform SVHA's care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- developing the research skills and capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

Reconciliation at SVHA is led by the National RAP Steering Committee. This group of senior Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous leaders meet quarterly to plan, implement and evaluate RAP activities across the organisation.



Members of the RAP Steering Committee are as follows:

- Group CEO
- Chair, Reconciliation Action Plan
- Group Mission Leader
- Group Manager, Inclusive Health
- Director, Aboriginal Health St Vincent's Health Network Sydney
- Manager, Aboriginal Health St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne
- RAP Service Leader

A sub-group of the Steering Committee, the RAP Working Party, meet at regular intervals to ensure RAP actions are progressed and culturally safe. The Working Party is made up of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members of the wider Steering Committee with direct links to the work of our facilities. The composition of the group allows space for specific cultural considerations and where possible, decision making at a local level, recognising the capability and leadership of key individuals in workplaces and communities.

Local level implementation for RAP activities are the responsibility of Facility CEOs, supported by the local Mission Leaders, RAP Committees and Aboriginal Health Units at our Sydney and Melbourne public hospitals. Individual department managers support RAP initiatives and are responsible for reporting to Facility CEOs.

At our Sydney public hospital, The Dalirinjji Committee aligns its work with the SVHA RAP. This Committee is chaired by St Vincent's Health Network Sydney's CEO, A/Prof Anthony Schembri, and an invited Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community member, and includes staff from across the hospital. The aim of the committee is to promote access to services and staff engagement, and to improve the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The Birong Committee at St Vincent's Private Hospital Sydney is responsible for local level RAP implementation. The committee acts to recognise important Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander days of significance, promote cultural understanding and acceptance, and works to ensure that St Vincent's Private is a welcoming place for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, students, patients and community members. The committee also acts to build and strengthen relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous staff.

SVHA's Mission Department actively supports RAP implementation at facility level, as part of their responsibility of ensuring the Mission and Values of the organisation permeate and guide all decision-making and activities.



RAP Governance Structure

This diagram shows the endorsement process for significant RAP initiatives. For example, the SVHA Statement of Commitment to Reconciliation would be presented to the SVHA Board, whereas regular reporting items will progress to the RAP Steering Committee.



RAP Timeline

2009

- Development of 1st RAP begins

2010

- Initial RAP formally implemented

2011

- SVHA partners with Redfern Aboriginal Health Service

2012

- SVHA extends commitment to principals and targets of 2010-2011 RAP

2014

- SVHA begins support of Western Desert Dialysis Service

2016

- EPI signed and Indigenous Employment Strategy launched
- Inaugural SVHA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Forum held
- SVHA partners with Apunipima Cape York Health Council for the delivery of on-Country palliative care
- RAP Collaborative Artwork created

2015

- SVHA partners with Nareeba Moopi Moopi Pa Aged Care facility (North Stradbroke Island)
- SVHA Stretch RAP 2015-2018 released

2019

- SVHA's EPI contract extended to 2021

2018

- SVHA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Protocol launched
 - Chair, SVHA Reconciliation Action Plan appointed

2017

- SVHA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Training Package launched

2020

- SVHA Stretch RAP 2020-2023 to be launched

Our Learnings

As an organisation, we have learned many things throughout our RAP journey and have undertaken a discernment process about what reconciliation means for us.

Most importantly, we have learned the need to listen and walk with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff, residents, patients and local communities to hear what their hopes and aspirations are for our organisation. Authentic, mutually beneficial partnerships with the local communities where our facilities are situated are crucial to our ongoing work. While we have had some achievements and continue to create opportunities, there is more to be done. The organisation needs to continue to commit to some of the bigger issues on our reconciliation agenda, such as increasing and sustaining our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.

A key learning from the previous RAP is that in order to embed reconciliation into our core business and to engage the hearts and minds of our staff, strategic national leadership is required. This has led to the creation of two new positions, dedicated to the oversight and implementation of RAP activities across our many sites and facilities. In late 2018, we appointed a senior Torres Strait Islander staff member to the role of SVHA Chair of the Reconciliation Action Plan. As well as holding responsibility for the development of this Stretch RAP, this position leads our RAP Steering Committee and is ultimately responsible for governance and reporting of all performance areas.

The RAP Chair is supported by the newly created position of RAP Service Leader. This role acts to manage the coordination of RAP meetings and the progression of RAP action items in consultation with the Chair. The RAP Service Leader is also responsible for the coordination of structured opportunities for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff to grow their organisational knowledge and assist with specific projects. It is

envisaged that in time this role will be filled by an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff member who has taken part in this mentoring and work experience opportunity.

Another key learning is the need to acknowledge and sustain our RAP Steering Committee members through professional development and leadership opportunities. To do so, we have held an annual national RAP retreat since 2017. This event is a unique opportunity for members of the RAP Steering Committee to gather and yarn about issues most important to them as leaders of this work, as well as matters of national importance. The past two years have seen this event focusing on the various perceived barriers of communication impeding the building of “Right Relationships” between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous people. Importantly, these events are facilitated by an external consultant allowing all members of our RAP Committee the opportunity to fully engage in honest and respectful ways with colleagues.

During our RAP journey, we have learnt the importance of further embedding reconciliation as core business. We have had success ensuring that traditional and contemporary perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are woven through our learning with Mission and formation opportunities, including history boards and immersive experiences. This in turn has enhanced care provision for patients and residents and support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. Our focus now is to extend these experiences to broader groups of staff as well as exploring ways to ensure that reconciliation-based activities and perspectives are further promoted, highlighted and celebrated within our organisation.

Key Reconciliation Achievements

SVHA Employment Parity Initiative

In February 2015, SVHA commenced discussions with the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet on the Employment Parity Initiative (EPI). The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees was unknown at the time of these discussions. In February 2016, SVHA signed the EPI and engaged Social Ventures Australia to develop a robust Indigenous Employment Strategy (IES). In the same year, the inaugural SVHA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Forum launched in Brisbane with 70 employees and executives in attendance.

Senator, The Honourable Nigel Scullion, Minister for Indigenous Affairs, launched the SVHA EPI during a special event at St Vincent's Hospital Sydney in December 2016. At this stage, SVHA employed 78 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in roles across our business divisions. By early February 2018, our SVHA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff had continued to increase with a total of 123 employees across the business.

In April 2019, SVHA signed a variation to the Employment Parity Initiative (EPI) to extend our contract to 2021. As of August 2020, our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff number currently sits at 262.

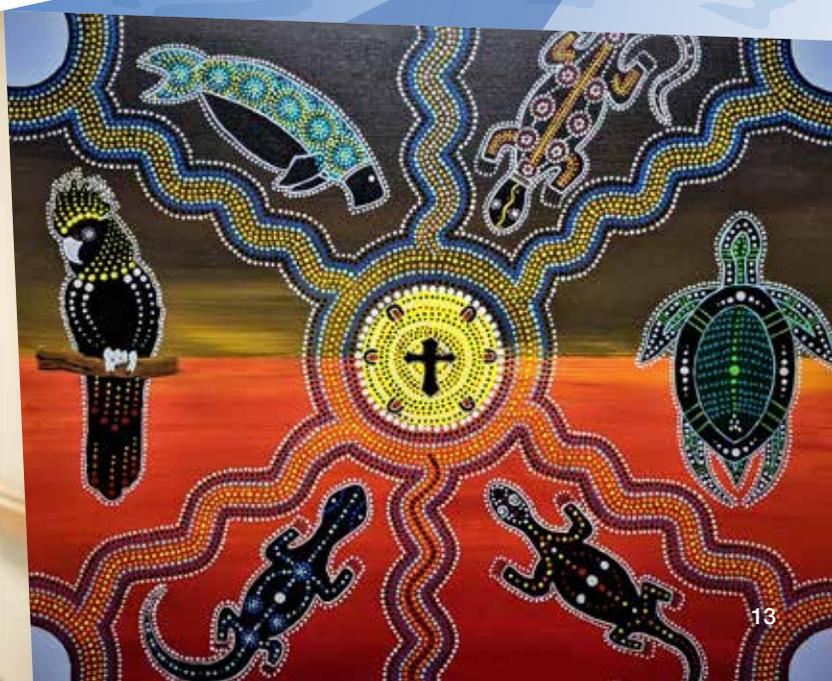
In promoting our EPI, we consistently hold our mission as the driving force for the success of this initiative. SVHA's commitment to effecting inter-generational change through employment, and desire to work with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples today, are a continuance of the ministries of the first Sisters of Charity who came to these shores. This is a legacy we are proud to uphold.

Below: Michael Carriage, Hospital Assistant, St Vincent's Hospital Sydney.

Warialda Birrang

This painting was created by Chris Delamont, one of our EPI team members, as a gift for David Bryant, former Group General Manager People & Culture. The black cross in the centre of the image recognises David's long-standing commitment to the legacy of St Vincent's founding Sisters and his dedication to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The six Totems represent the current EPI team and the four corners signify our two public hospitals and our private and aged care divisions.

Below: Artist: Chris Delamont, Wiradjuri Narri Narri, Indigenous Recruitment Coordinator, St Vincent's Public Hospital Melbourne. 5/8/2020



SVHA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Online Cultural Training Package

This purpose-built online training package was developed in 2017 by an Indigenous education and training business in consultation with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff at SVHA. By completing this package, all SVHA staff gain an understanding of how to work and engage in a culturally safe way with their Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander colleagues. This training also provides insights into our patients who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, by focusing on their experience of being in hospital: what's important to them culturally, physically, and spiritually. This package has been enthusiastically received and we are steadily moving towards achieving our target of 100% completion.

SVHA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Forum

An important retention strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at SVHA is the annual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Forum. The key purpose of this event is to provide a professional and personal development opportunity for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff to gather, connect and share story in both formal and informal gatherings.

Key to the success of this event is the inclusion of executive level leaders, including our Group and Facility CEOs, Mission Leaders, and senior People and Development Managers. The Forum's agenda is comprised of sessions intended to inspire, challenge and upskill our staff. Additionally, it is an important opportunity for our Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees to build relationships with senior leaders tasked with driving our RAP program. This event goes from strength to strength: in 2019 over 90 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff gathered in Brisbane for two days of learning, laughing and reconciliation.

Below: Staff at the 2019 SVHA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Forum.



SVHA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Protocol

Developed internally in 2018, this document provides guidance for SVHA staff in communication and cultural protocols when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. This resource is part of a suite of tools that demonstrates our commitment to providing culturally safe care for patients and residents and supporting our non-Indigenous staff to work with confidence with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Additionally, this document is presented as evidence in order to meet national healthcare accreditation standards. Perhaps the document's most significant impact has been an increased understanding and utilisation of Acknowledgement of Country. For example our aged care division now displays an Acknowledgment of Country poster in all facilities. This document has also been shared externally, with Medibank, The Mary Aikenhead Ministries, and the NSW Health Education and Training Institute all using the protocol in various ways within their organisations.

SVHA Deadly Awards

2019's annual SVHA Innovation and Excellence Awards saw the inclusion of a new award category for excellence by an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff member. The "Deadly Awards" recognises staff who go 'above and beyond' in their commitment to our Mission and Values while displaying strong cultural identity and leadership within our St Vincent's community. The winners of the inaugural Deadly Awards for 2019 were Odessa Saukuru, Andy Brigham and Wade Jackson.

Below: 2019 Deadly Award Winners with RAP Steering Committee Chairs. From left to right Darlene Dreise, Odessa Saukuru, Wade Jackson, Andy Brigham and Toby Hall.



SVHA Collaborative Reconciliation Art Project

The 2016 Reconciliation Action Plan Collaborative Art Project has been both an action and a symbol of what reconciliation means to us all at SVHA. The artwork represents the breadth of our vision for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our care as well as in the wider community, thus the final artwork is a reflection of reconciliation on an individual, state and national level.

Three leading contemporary Aboriginal artists were asked to conduct a workshop in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland with 48 staff members across our health service. The artists invited staff members to create a small circular artwork that was symbolic of what reconciliation means to them. With the assistance of a master print maker each participant was able to create an individual artwork with up to six layers of colour.

Following the state workshops, the three Aboriginal artists collaborated to bring the 48 small artworks into one cohesive design. Their aim was to arrange the individual circles into a single united artwork as a symbol of people coming together to focus on our shared vision for reconciliation. Once the circles were arranged into the final layout, the three artists painted around the circles with bands of black, red, yellow, blue and purple. Each artist then added their own "mark" to one panel by

Below: Artists left to right: Jeffrey Samuels, Vicki Couzens and Bianca Beetson.



scratching into the red lines their own symbols, signs or words associated with reconciliation. Vicki Couzens represents Victoria in the left panel, Jeffrey Samuels represents New South Wales in the centre panel and Bianca Beetson represents Queensland and Torres Strait Islands in the right hand panel.

The resulting three part panels have now been silk screened and an edition of 55 triptychs have been printed.

One complete artwork is on display at each facility across St Vincent's Health Australia. It is a vibrant symbol of our RAP document, our own reflections and of our collective experience of the reconciliation journey we are all on.

Artists: Bianca Beetson, Vicki Couzens and Jeffrey Samuels in collaboration with 48 SVHA staff members

Title: Reconciliation: Towards excellent health, happiness and equality, 2016

Medium: Silkscreen on magnani paper, 3 panels, edition of 55, 100cm x 73cm each

Project Curator: Monique Silk

Collaborator and screen work: Basil Hall Printer: Clinton Barker, Basil Hall Editions

Photography: Mirri Mirri Productions

Special thanks to Boomalli Aboriginal Arts Co-operative for the use of their premises for the making of part of this collaborative artwork.

Below: Reconciliation Action Plan Collaborative Art Project 2016





Relationships

SVHA makes a commitment that all our facilities will reach out to their local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in order to improve health and wellness outcomes.

Our ministries of health, aged care and research have gospel imperatives as their foundation which call on us to work for justice so that all may flourish. The health and wellness standards of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are yet to attain levels on par with non-Indigenous Australians. As providers of health-oriented services, we have examined how we may leverage our expertise and capacity across employment, procurement and health while recognising our priority to build “Right Relationships” of justice and dignity.

We seek to serve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples – our patients, residents, staff and community members, acknowledging that meaningful relationships will only result from authentic partnerships and sustained commitment. We, as an organisation, will be enhanced and gifted by the contributions and wisdom of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Together we will deliver compassionate care, work alongside each other, and contribute to new knowledge, always with the understanding that our relationships are mutually respectful.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
1. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	A. Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and materials to staff.	Lead: Facility Mission Leaders, Support: RAP Service Leader	May 2021, 2022 and 2023
	B. RAP Steering Committee members to participate in at least one external NRW event annually in QLD, NSW and Vic.	Chair, RAP Steering Committee	May 2021, 2022 and 2023
	C. Each SVHA facility to host or to ensure representation at one NRW event each year.	Lead: Facility CEOs, Support: Facility Mission Leaders, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Leaders	May 2021, 2022 and 2023
	D. SVHA to conduct six internal NRW events each year, including at least one organisation-wide event.	Lead: Facility CEOs, Support: Group Mission Leader, Facility Mission Leaders	May 2021, 2022 and 2023
	E. Two SVHA NRW events to be open to the public and to include invited guests from the local community each year.	Lead: Facility CEOs, Support: Group Mission Leader, Facility Mission Leaders	May 2021, 2022 and 2023
	F. All NRW events to be registered on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	RAP Service Leader	May 2021, 2022 and 2023
	G. Promote and encourage staff and senior leaders to attend community NRW events via our internal communication channels.	Lead: Facility CEOs, Support: Facility Mission Leaders	May 2021, 2022, and 2023

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
<p>2. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.</p>	<p>A. Conduct an audit of existing relationships with both Catholic and mainstream health and aged care organisations with RAPs and those considering RAP development.</p>	<p>Lead: Chair, RAP Steering Committee, Support: RAP Service Leader</p>	<p>August 2021</p>
	<p>B. Invite those organisations with an existing RAP to a twice-yearly SVHA hosted session to share learnings, experiences and ideas.</p>	<p>Lead: Chair, RAP Steering Committee, Support: RAP Service Leader</p>	<p>November 2021, April 2022, November 2022, April 2023</p>
	<p>C. Collaborate with a minimum of two health and aged care organisations on an activity or project acting to advance reconciliation.</p>	<p>Lead: Chair, RAP Steering Committee, Support: RAP Service Leader</p>	<p>August 2023</p>
	<p>D. Contact directly those organisations currently discerning an approach to RAP development and offer the opportunity to connect with SVHA to learn more about our RAP.</p>	<p>Lead: Chair, RAP Steering Committee, Support: RAP Service Leader</p>	<p>November 2021</p>
	<p>E. Promote our reconciliation commitment publicly through the development of promotional materials for use at internal and external events.</p>	<p>Lead: Chair, RAP Steering Committee, Support: RAP Service Leader</p>	<p>August 2021</p>
	<p>F. Launch SVHA Statement of Commitment to Reconciliation Charter to be displayed in all facilities and shared externally via SVHA website.</p>	<p>Chair, RAP Steering Committee</p>	<p>December 2020</p>
<p>3. Increase visibility, awareness and engagement of RAP amongst SVHA staff.</p>	<p>A. Create 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Portal' on SVHA intranet and include RAP information and updates.</p>	<p>Chair, RAP Steering Committee</p>	<p>August 2021</p>
	<p>B. Incorporate regular RAP updates/promotion into Inclusive Health Program communications strategy.</p>	<p>Lead: Inclusive Health Program Manager, Support: Chair, RAP Steering Committee</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>C. Create and implement communications plan for release of 2020-2023 RAP.</p>	<p>Chair, RAP Steering Committee</p>	<p>August 2020</p>
	<p>D. Incorporate reconciliation-based education and reflection session into Inspired to Serve formation program.</p>	<p>Lead: Group Manager Ethics and Formation, Support: Chair, RAP Steering Committee</p>	<p>August 2021</p>

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
<p>4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.</p>	<p>A. Promote internal systems such as the Ethos Program and the Whistle-blower Policy to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff so they are aware of how to report racism in the workplace.</p>	<p>Lead: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Recruitment Specialists, Support: Human Resources Specialists, Chair, RAP Steering Committee</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>B. Work with our Advocacy team to formalise SVHA responses to anti-discrimination campaigns, initiatives or stances against racism.</p>	<p>Chair, RAP Steering Committee</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>C. Senior leaders to publically support anti-discrimination campaigns, initiatives or stances against racism as they arise.</p>	<p>Lead: Group Mission Leader, Support: Chair, RAP Steering Committee</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>D. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to contribute to continuously improving HR policies and procedures concerned with anti-discrimination.</p>	<p>Lead: Group General Manager, People and Culture</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>E. Provide ongoing education opportunities for senior leaders and managers on discrimination and racism.</p>	<p>Lead: Group General Manager, People and Culture, Support: Learning and Development Department</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
<p>5. Representative facilities across all divisions to partner with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in formal (MOU) or informal relationships.</p>	<p>A. Conduct a review of existing formal and informal, state level and national partnerships.</p>	<p>Chair, RAP Steering Committee</p>	<p>August 2021</p>
	<p>B. Actively acknowledge and escalate requests for assistance arising from communities and present to RAP meetings.</p>	<p>Chair, RAP Steering Committee</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>C. Ensure that partner organisations and individuals are prioritised according to our national and local Table of Precedence protocols for invitees to events as appropriate.</p>	<p>Lead: Chair, RAP Steering Committee, Support: Mission Leaders</p>	<p>December 2020</p>
	<p>D. Develop RAP Partnership checklist for discernment of suitability in alignment with Mission and Values.</p>	<p>Chair, RAP Steering Committee</p>	<p>December 2020</p>
	<p>E. Review, update and implement an engagement guide to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners.</p>	<p>Chair, RAP Steering Committee</p>	<p>August 2021</p>
	<p>F. Establish/maintain six formal two-way partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities or organisations including Northern Peninsula Area Palliative Care and Western Desert Dialysis Service.</p>	<p>Chair, RAP Steering Committee</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>G. All facilities to report on formal or informal partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community twice per year in order to guide decision-making as to the appropriateness of continued partnerships, levels of support required/requested, and reciprocal learning opportunities.</p>	<p>Lead: Mission Leaders, Support: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Leaders</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
<p>6. Create opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous staff to interact and build relationships.</p>	<p>A. A minimum of ten ‘Yarning Circle’ or similar events to be held in total across SVHA divisions, invitees to include Senior Leadership Team.</p>	<p>Chair, RAP Steering Committee</p>	<p>August 2023</p>

Spotlight on

OUR PARTNERSHIPS

Palliative Care on Country in Cape York

In 2017, St Vincent's Health Australia committed \$450,000 to bring culturally appropriate palliative care services to five Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the Northern Peninsula Area (NPA) of Cape York as part of an MOU with Northern Peninsula Area Family and Community Services (NPAFACS) and Apunipima Cape York Health Council (Apunipima).

People living in remote Cape York communities – in particular the five Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities of Bamaga, Seisia, Injinoo, Umagico and New Mapoon – experience some of the highest levels of chronic disease and poorest health outcomes in Australia.

St Vincent's Health responded to a need, raised by NPAFACS through Apunipima, for expert guidance to develop a high quality, culturally appropriate palliative care service tailored and accessible to the communities of the Cape.

The NPA palliative care project is an extension of an ongoing partnership between St Vincent's and Apunipima that already provides primary healthcare services to 11 Cape York communities and advocates for 17 others, including those of the Northern Peninsula Area.

Below: Representatives of SVHA, NPAFACS and Apunipima sign the Palliative Care on Country in Cape York MOU, 2017.



Nareeba Moopi Moopi Pa Aged Care Hostel

Nareeba Moopi Moopi Pa Hostel is managed by the North Stradbroke Islander Housing Co-operative Society Ltd (NSI Housing Co-op), which has been providing care and accommodation to the local community since 1994. North Stradbroke Island has an ageing population with an increasing number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents. Nareeba Moopi Moopi Pa is the only aged care facility on the island.

Since 2015, St Vincent's Health Australia has partnered with the NSI Housing Co-op to ensure ongoing access to high quality, culturally appropriate care for the local Quandamooka Elders, those returning to Country, and aged people of the local community.

SVHA has provided advice and training to NSI Housing Co-op staff and assisted in the development of plans to redevelop and extend the Nareeba Moopi Moopi Pa facility, incorporating the capability and strengths of staff and the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander community.

Western Desert Dialysis Service

SVHA is proud to have formally partnered with Western Desert Nganampa Walytja Palyantjaku Tjutaku Aboriginal Corporation (WDNWPT) since 2014. WDNWPT offer remote dialysis, social support, and aged care services across the Western Desert of Central Australia, along with running a bush medicine enterprise. WDNWPT run 16 remote clinics in Aboriginal communities and operate a mobile dialysis unit called The Purple Truck, which allows patients to head back home to visit family, for festivals, funerals and other cultural business while continuing to receive dialysis treatment.

Along with fellow Catholic health organisations Caritas and Cabrini, SVHA contributes to the annual wage of the onsite dialysis nurse based at the Santa Teresa (Ltyentye Apurte) Mpwelarre Health Service, 80km south-east of Alice Springs.

Below: Members of the SVHA RAP Steering Committee with Sarah Brown, CEO Purple House (second from right), 2018.





Respect

A central part of our identity as a Catholic organisation is our commitment to social justice.

This commitment is grounded in the recognition of the dignity of the human person. Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories and cultures is a concrete expression of this core value. The following actions will allow this commitment to be embedded across the organisation.

Unique strategies include an annual retreat/dedicated professional development opportunity for RAP Steering Committee members, and a plan to identify cultural mentors within facilities for yarning support.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
1. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	A. Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of significant meetings and gatherings.	Facility CEOs	Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023
	B. Staff and senior leaders to provide Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at all public events.	Facility CEOs	Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023
	C. Increase staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country.	Chair, RAP Steering Committee	Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023
	D. Perform annual review on the SVHA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Protocol, to ensure staff have access to up-to-date cultural protocol information that is tailored to the communities we operate in.	Chair, RAP Steering Committee	August 2020, 2021 and 2022
	E. Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at five significant events each year, including NRW and NAIDOC.	Mission Leaders	Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
<p>2. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.</p>	<p>A. Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors in order to develop a cultural learning strategy for our staff.</p>	<p>Lead: Chair, RAP Steering Committee, Support: Learning and Development Department</p>	<p>December 2020</p>
	<p>B. Implement and communicate the SVHA cultural learning strategy throughout SVHA.</p>	<p>Lead: Chair, RAP Steering Committee, Support: Learning and Development Department, Group General Manager, People and Culture</p>	<p>December 2020</p>
	<p>C. Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.</p>	<p>Lead: Chair, RAP Steering Committee, Support: Learning and Development Department</p>	<p>August 2021</p>
	<p>D. 100% of new and existing staff to complete online training specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures and histories through either the SVHA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Training Package (Vic/QLD) or Respecting the Difference cultural learning package (NSW).</p>	<p>Lead: Group General Manager, People and Culture, Support: Chair, RAP Steering Committee, Learning and Development Department</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>E. All Human Resources/People and Organisational Development staff to take part in face-to-face, “Right Relationships” cultural awareness sessions, aiming to maintain a 75% annual completion rate.</p>	<p>Lead: Group General Manager, People and Culture, Support: Chair, RAP Steering Committee</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>F. Provide ongoing formal and informal cultural learning opportunities to all staff including RAP Steering Committee, Executive Leadership Team, Human Resources/People and Organisational Development team.</p>	<p>Lead: Chair, RAP Steering Committee, Support: Learning and Development Department, Group General Manager, People and Culture</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>G. SVHA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness Training Package to be formally evaluated by an external evaluator.</p>	<p>Chair, RAP Steering Committee</p>	<p>August 2021</p>
	<p>H. SVHA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness Training Package content to be reviewed and updated in line with external evaluation.</p>	<p>Chair, RAP Steering Committee</p>	<p>December 2021</p>
	<p>I. SVHA to host an annual retreat/dedicated professional development opportunity for RAP Steering Committee members.</p>	<p>Chair, RAP Steering Committee</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
3. Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	A. RAP Steering Committee members to participate in one external NAIDOC event annually in QLD, NSW and Vic.	Chair, RAP Steering Committee	July 2021, 2022 and 2023
	B. Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	Lead: Chair, RAP Steering Committee	December 2020
	C. Promote and encourage attendance at community NAIDOC events to staff and senior leaders via our internal communication channels.	Lead: Facility CEOs, Support: Facility Mission Leaders	July 2021, 2022 and 2023



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
<p>4. Recognise and acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance.</p>	<p>A. Each SVHA facility to host or to ensure representation at one Close the Gap Day event each year and to encourage staff to attend events in the local community.</p>	<p>Lead: Facility CEOs, Support: Facility Mission Leaders</p>	<p>March 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>B. Each SVHA facility to host or to ensure representation at one National Sorry Day event each year and to encourage staff to attend events in the local community.</p>	<p>Lead: Facility CEOs, Support: Facility Mission Leaders</p>	<p>May 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>C. Committee of non-Indigenous and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to be formed in Vic and QLD to coordinate celebration of significant events.</p>	<p>Lead: Facility CEOs, Support: Facility Mission Leaders</p>	<p>December 2020</p>
	<p>D. Information on significant dates in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander calendar to be shared with Mission Leaders.</p>	<p>RAP Service Leader</p>	<p>January 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>E. SVHA facilities to liaise with partners and respond to requests in support of external events as they arise.</p>	<p>Lead: Facility CEOs, Support: Facility Mission Leaders</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
<p>5. Promote and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures within SVHA in order to create a culturally safe and welcoming environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p>	<p>A. All facilities to have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags on display, either freestanding or in a prominent position at the facility entry point.</p>	<p>Lead: Facility CEOs, Support: Facility Mission Leaders</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>B. Display Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners plaques in all hospitals (private and public), aged care residential centres, and group offices in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne.</p>	<p>Lead: Facility CEOs, Support: Facility Mission Leaders</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>C. All major facilities to host at least one art exhibition per year in consultation with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.</p>	<p>Lead: Facility CEOs, Support: Facility Mission Leaders</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>D. Display SVHA Statement of Commitment to Reconciliation at each of our facilities and group offices.</p>	<p>Chair, RAP Steering Committee</p>	<p>December 2020</p>

Spotlight on

OUR PROGRAMS

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cadetship Program

SVHA are proud to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nursing and allied health students across our private and public facilities in our Cadetship Program. This program, funded in part by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, enables students to engage in paid part time employment while completing their studies. Cadets learn through practical experience working with patients and receive comprehensive education and support throughout their cadetship period. Working alongside a multi-disciplinary team builds comfort and familiarity with the workplace, offers networking opportunities, and allows the cadets to improve their professional and communication skills and knowledge in patient care. Cadets in their final year of study also receive extensive support with job applications including tips on building resumes, writing cover letters, and mock interview practice. At the conclusion of the cadetship program, nursing students are supported to apply for our Graduate Nurse Programs while allied health students are encouraged to apply for graduate positions in our hospitals and facilities.

Below: Cadets and members of the Aboriginal Health Unit, St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne.

Aboriginal Graduate Nurse Program

St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne has offered a dedicated Aboriginal Graduate Nurse Program to facilitate the transition into nursing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduate nurses since 2014. Graduates are offered two six-month rotations supported by the Graduate Nurse Program Coordinator, Practice Development Nurses and cultural mentors.

Graduate Management Trainee Program

St Vincent's Health Network Sydney recently appointed their first internal Aboriginal Graduate Management Trainee, Peter Honeyman, who previously worked as a Senior Aboriginal Health Worker at St Vincent's Hospital Sydney. This program provides participants with training and experience in all aspects of the hospital's operations and aims to prepare and encourage talented people to become future leaders within the organisation.

Below: Peter Honeyman, Aboriginal Graduate Management Trainee, St Vincent's Hospital Sydney.



Aunty Fay Carroll Enrolled Nurse Traineeship Program

Aunty Fay Carroll was a much loved and respected member of SVHA's Aboriginal health and reconciliation programs both at our Sydney Darlinghurst campus and nationally. Her contributions to our health service in mentoring, advising and supporting our Aboriginal health work and patients were immeasurable. Aunty Fay was the co-chair of the first Aboriginal Advisory Committee within St Vincent's Hospital Sydney.

In honour of Aunty Fay's commitment and contribution, in 2018, St Vincent's introduced the Aunty Fay Carroll Enrolled Nursing Traineeship Program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people wishing to start a career in nursing. This program incorporates a Diploma of Nursing from TAFE NSW Ultimo College and hands-on nursing experience at St Vincent's.

Since the program's inception, seven Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander candidates have completed the program, with five of these participants going on to be employed at SVHA.

Below: Jasmine Hamilton and Shanae Godbold, Aunty Fay Carroll Enrolled Nursing Traineeship recipients, 2018.

Aboriginal Health Units

A unique feature of our Sydney and Melbourne Public Hospitals are our Aboriginal Health Units. These units position St Vincent's as a leader in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander healthcare and research in a hospital setting, bringing together our Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer program, quality improvement, cultural awareness, training, and cadetships.

The Hospital Liaison Officers work to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients overcome the barriers that could prevent them from seeking and completing treatment by addressing not just their physical health, but their social and emotional wellbeing. The Liaison Officers work alongside the treating team, creating an environment where Aboriginal Health is everyone's business.

SVHA's Aboriginal Health Units work to deliver on our RAP and are dedicated to reaching Closing the Gap targets in health, employment and education. The Aboriginal Health Units work in close partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations to ensure a coordinated and comprehensive approach to healthcare delivery.

Below: Members of the Aboriginal Health Unit, St Vincent's Hospital Sydney.





Opportunities

SVHA would like to build upon our solid foundation of delivering culturally responsive health services in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

We will look to enhance and build the profile and capacity of our Aboriginal Health Units in both our public hospitals to ensure these services have a greater reach across our programs. We will also look to improve our employment policies and systems to ensure they are culturally supportive of an increase in recruitment, that they support the spiritual and mental health

of staff, and that this in turn supports the retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This will also include the support of career pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
1. Improve quality of health care provision at SVHA for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people leading to better health and wellness outcomes.	A. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health data to be presented to RAP Steering Committee as standing agenda item.	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Leaders	Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023
	B. Melbourne and Sydney public hospitals to develop and implement a plan to reduce Discharge Against Medical Advice, Readmission and Fail to Attend rates to at least state averages.	Lead: Facility CEOs, Support: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Leaders	August 2022
	C. Melbourne and Sydney public hospital Aboriginal Health Units to undertake one health service enhancement project in each location.	Lead: Facility CEOs, Support: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Leaders	August 2022
	D. Work in partnership with Northern Peninsula Area Family and Community Services to assist with an ongoing community palliative care advocacy campaign in Queensland.	Inclusive Health Program Manager	August 2022
	E. Examine viability and develop a business case for the establishment of a First Nations Hospital in Inala, Brisbane in partnership with Institute for Urban Indigenous Health.	Inclusive Health Program Manager	August 2022
	F. Consult with Quality and Risk department to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific National Safety and Quality Health Standards are addressed.	Lead: Chair, RAP Steering Committee, Support: Facility CEOs, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Leaders	Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
<p>Action 1 continued.</p> <p>Improve quality of health care provision at SVHA for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people leading to better health and wellness outcomes.</p>	<p>G. Perform a review of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement with our residential and community-based aged care services.</p>	<p>Lead: Chair RAP Steering Committee, Support: St Vincent's Care Services Mission Leader</p>	<p>August 2021</p>
	<p>H. Conduct a survey and/or formal discussion aiming to explore Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members knowledge and expectations of aged care services.</p>	<p>Lead: Chair RAP Steering Committee, Support: Senior Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Researcher, St Vincent's Care Services Mission Leader</p>	<p>August 2022</p>
	<p>I. Develop culturally appropriate strategy and resources to promote our aged care services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.</p>	<p>Lead: Chair RAP Steering Committee, Support: St Vincent's Care Services Mission Leader</p>	<p>August 2023</p>
<p>2. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and development.</p>	<p>A. Increase number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed in all areas of SVHA including public, private and aged care divisions to 500 (3% of all staff).</p>	<p>Lead: Lead: Group General Manager, People and Culture, Support: Divisional and Facility HR Directors, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HR Specialists</p>	<p>June 2021</p>
	<p>B. Implement, review and update an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.</p>	<p>Lead: Group General Manager, People and Culture, Support: Divisional and Facility HR Directors, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HR Specialists</p>	<p>December 2020</p>
	<p>C. Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention, and professional development strategy.</p>	<p>Lead: Group General Manager, People and Culture, Support: Divisional and Facility HR Directors, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HR Specialists</p>	<p>December 2020</p>
	<p>D. SVHA to run at least two recruitment stalls or displays annually at career expos focused on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.</p>	<p>Lead: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HR Specialists, Support: Divisional and Facility HR Directors</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>E. Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to take on management and senior level positions.</p>	<p>Lead: Group General Manager, People and Culture, Support: Divisional and Facility HR Directors</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>F. SVHA will host two Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander management trainees with a view to providing ongoing employment.</p>	<p>Lead: Group General Manager, People and Culture, Support: Divisional and Facility HR Directors</p>	<p>August 2023</p>
	<p>G. Two senior Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff to participate in an external Management Development Program.</p>	<p>Lead: Group General Manager, People and Culture, Support: Divisional and Facility HR Directors</p>	<p>August 2023</p>

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
<p>Action 2 continued.</p> <p>Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and development.</p>	<p>H. Launch the National SVHA Cultural Leave Policy.</p>	<p>Lead: Group General Manager, People and Culture, Support: Chair, RAP Steering Committee, RAP Service Leader</p>	<p>December 2020</p>
	<p>I. Commence formal mentoring program for senior Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.</p>	<p>Lead: Group General Manager, People and Culture, Support: Divisional and Facility HR Directors</p>	<p>August 2021</p>
	<p>J. 100% of job advertisements will include SVHA commitment to Reconciliation and Closing the Gap.</p>	<p>Lead: Divisional and Facility HR Directors, Support: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HR Specialists</p>	<p>December 2020</p>
	<p>K. Initiate and promote the use of Career Development Plans for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.</p>	<p>Lead: Group General Manager, People and Culture, Support: Divisional and Facility HR Directors, Chair, RAP Steering Committee</p>	<p>August 2022</p>
	<p>L. SVHA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Forum to be held annually.</p>	<p>Chair, RAP Steering Committee</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>M. Mentoring opportunity to be provided to three Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff through delivery and monitoring of RAP projects.</p>	<p>RAP Service Leader</p>	<p>August 2023</p>
	<p>N. Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.</p>	<p>Lead: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HR Specialists, Support: Divisional and Facility HR Directors</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>O. Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.</p>	<p>Lead: Group General Manager, People and Culture, Support: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HR Specialists, Divisional and Facility HR Directors</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
<p>3. Increase SVHA's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research capacity in order to improve health care provision.</p>	<p>A. Successfully negotiate a major research application in conjunction with a partner organisation focussed on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.</p>	<p>Senior Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Researcher</p>	<p>August 2022</p>
	<p>B. Identify and undertake at least one research project that addresses inequalities in health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.</p>	<p>Senior Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Researcher</p>	<p>August 2023</p>

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
<p>4. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.</p>	<p>A. Maintain Supply Nation membership.</p>	<p>Lead: Finance and Shared Services, Support: Group Procurement Manager</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>B. Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.</p>	<p>Lead: Finance and Shared Services, Support: Group Procurement Manager</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>C. Maintain commercial relationships with five Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.</p>	<p>Lead: Finance and Shared Services, Support: Group Procurement Manager</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>
	<p>D. Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy/position.</p>	<p>Group Procurement Manager</p>	<p>December 2020</p>
	<p>E. Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.</p>	<p>Lead: Finance and Shared Services, Support: Group Procurement Manager</p>	<p>December 2020</p>
	<p>F. Train all relevant staff in contracting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses through Supply Nation or an equivalent organisation.</p>	<p>Lead: Group Procurement Manager, Support: Chair, Reconciliation Action Plan</p>	<p>August 2021 and August 2023</p>
	<p>G. Increase total spend with RAP suppliers by 5%.</p>	<p>Lead: Finance and Shared Services, Support: Group Procurement Manager</p>	<p>August 2023</p>
	<p>H. Increase procurement from suppliers registered on Indigenous Business Direct from five to 10.</p>	<p>Lead: Finance and Shared Services, Support: Group Procurement Manager</p>	<p>December 2021</p>
<p>5. SVHA to develop formal advocacy approach regarding issues impacting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p>	<p>A. Develop a high level Advocacy Strategy in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and partners.</p>	<p>Lead: Group Mission Leader, Support: Chair, RAP Steering Committee</p>	<p>December 2020</p>
	<p>B. Communications team to guide development of position statements, articles and social media collateral relating to key cultural dates for internal and external publication in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.</p>	<p>Lead: SVHA Communications Team, Support: Chair, RAP Steering Committee.</p>	<p>Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023</p>

Spotlight on **OUR STAFF**



Nioka Tyson

Social Worker and proud descendant of the Gamilaroi and Yuwaalaraay people, St Vincent's Health Network Sydney

"I have always wanted to work in health, as a way to start helping to address the many negative social factors that prevent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities from seeking appropriate treatment. I have been fortunate enough to be offered a position within an organisation that lives and breathes their values, values that I share".



Ruby Tribe

Nursing Cadetship Coordinator and Gamilaroi woman, St Vincent's Public Hospital Melbourne

"I love my job, very, very much. I love recruiting young people. I love watching people who went through the same struggles as me and actually trying to assist them with that. I feel genuinely like our unit is helping to close the gap".



Lee Smith

Aboriginal Health Worker and Wiradjuri and Dunghutti man, Parklea Correctional Centre Sydney

"Going to Parklea, I'm motivated by the opportunity to be able to help in any way possible out there, to change anyone's life or way of thought. SVHA is a great organisation to work for, it really is. It's like a big family network, everyone looks after each other and that's good".



Asunta Garling

Registered Nurse, Djugun and Yawuru tribe on her mother's side and Yarrabah, Gunggandji on her father's, St Vincent's Private Hospital Northside in Brisbane.

"I've always wanted to work with my Indigenous community. I'm proud that I persevered with my studies when I had my daughter at a young age and ended up becoming a nurse and a good role model for her. I want people to know that if I can do it, anyone can."



Edward Solien

National Human Resources and Indigenous Programs Specialist and proud Torres Strait Islander man.

"Workforce diversity gets no more real than in healthcare: more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees equals more approachable and accessible services, which equals improved healthcare outcomes for our First Peoples. Closing The Gap in healthcare outcomes is not easy, but it's made easier with our diversity of our counterparts and colleagues. 'Coming together is the beginning, keeping together is progress and working together is success'. I feel honoured and blessed to work for an organisation that is so genuine about closing the gap."



Duran Cox

Aboriginal Counsellor from Ngaympaa Tribe, St Vincent's Stimulant Treatment Program, Sydney

"My dream is to continue to help Aboriginal people to break the cycle of addiction and provide support to help people to overcome, or better manage, ongoing mental health issues. The thing I enjoy most about the role is the ability to help my people. Helping people is my passion in life and to be able to do it every day is a dream come true".



Governance

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
1. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in SVHA governance systems.	A. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander guest speaker to present at a minimum of one National Board meeting per year.	SVHA Chair	Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023
	B. Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on regional committees, facility advisory committees, consultative groups and/or Human Research Ethics Committees, by two per year.	Facility CEOs	Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023
2. RAP Steering Committee actively monitor RAP development, including implementation of actions and tracking progress.	A. RAP Steering Committee to be made up of both senior Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and senior non-Indigenous staff.	Chair, RAP Steering Committee	Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023
	B. Review Terms of Reference for the RAP Steering Committee every second year.	Chair, RAP Steering Committee	July 2021 and 2023
	C. RAP Steering Committee to meet four times per year.	Chair, RAP Steering Committee	March, June, September and December 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023
3. RAP Working Party actively monitor progress ensuring cultural sensitivity is prioritised in all actions.	A. RAP Working Party to be made up of senior Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander leaders in order to create a space for culturally safe reflection on RAP activities.	Chair, RAP Steering Committee	Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023
	B. Perform second yearly review of Terms of Reference for the RAP Working Party.	Chair, RAP Steering Committee	January 2021 and 2023
	C. RAP Working Party to meet four times per year, one month prior to each Steering Committee meeting.	Chair, RAP Steering Committee	February, May, August and November 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023
4. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	A. SVHA to consider participation in Reconciliation Australia's Workplace Barometer Survey.	Chair, RAP Steering Committee	May 2022
	B. Complete RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire annually.	Chair, RAP Steering Committee	September 2020, 2021 and 2022
	C. Complete formal SVHA RAP Progress Report twice yearly and submit to Board.	Chair, RAP Steering Committee	January and July, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE
Action 4 continued. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	D. Provide quarterly RAP progress updates to all staff via internal communication channels such as Workplace Connect and 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Portal'.	Chair, RAP Steering Committee	January, April, July, October 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023
	E. Publically report against our RAP commitments annually, outlining achievements, challenges and learnings.	Chair, RAP Steering Committee	August 2021, 2022 and 2023
5. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	A. Include our RAP as a standing agenda item at Executive Leadership Team meetings.	Chair, RAP Steering Committee	Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023
	B. Maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	Chair, RAP Steering Committee	Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023
	C. Embed appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	Chair, RAP Steering Committee	Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023
	D. Embed resource needs for RAP implementation.	Chair, RAP Steering Committee	Ongoing, review December and June 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023
	E. Explore opportunities to embed key RAP actions in performance expectations of senior management and all staff.	Group General Manager, People and Culture	August 2021
6. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	A. Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	Chair, RAP Steering Committee	August 2022

For further information please contact:

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**ST VINCENT'S
HEALTH AUSTRALIA**

UNDER THE STEWARDSHIP OF MARY AIKENHEAD MINISTRIES