



“Our RAP will direct our efforts and resources in making a sustainable difference to the health experience of our First Australians.”

CE-Health Services Linda Mellors



Mercy Health–Health Services Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan 2017/18

Our RAP art

Artist Lyn-Al Young is a 22-year-old Gunnai and Wiradjuri woman living in Melbourne.

She was inspired by her mum at an early age and has been selling her artwork and handmade jean bags at Koorie Night Markets around Melbourne since the age of 12. She had her first exhibition titled “Waradgerie Windows” with her mum and two sisters in 2011 at age 16.

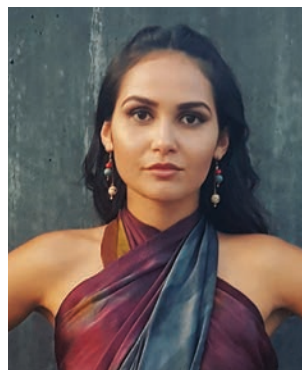
Lyn-Al works with her family’s art business, Young Art, and together they produce original artwork, silk scarves and shawl wraps for markets, corporate events and exhibitions.

Lyn-Al works with a range of media: watercolour, acrylic and burning, and sometimes combines all three. She paints the stories she has been told by her Nan and parents and also from her own experiences, including from the photos she takes.

Lyn-Al also started up her own fashion brand, ‘LYN-AL’, straight out of high school. Each garment is hand painted with natural dyes onto silk, and each has its own story. The designs used in the artwork come from her traditional Gunnai Wiradjuri markings that have been passed down generations

in her family through artwork, artefact making and stories.

In April 2014 Lyn-Al showcased her first fashion collection ‘From Tree Carvings to Silk Markings’ in the Inaugural Australian Indigenous Fashion Week group runway in Sydney. Her most recent collection was showcased in October 2016 at the prestigious Carriageworks arts centre where she opened the ‘Pacific Runway’ show with her new collection ‘Gara-Buwa-Ngarra’ (‘flourishing abundance’).



On the cover: upper left image – Mercy Hospital for Women Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer Jodie Lovett; Austin Health Aboriginal Programs Manager Leanne Bird; Manager Aboriginal Programs Mercy Hospital for Women Marika Jackomos; Chief Executive-Health Services Linda Mellors; Mercy Hospital for Women Senior Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer Jo Pappas; Mercy Hospital for Women Project and Data Support Officer Kyra Booth.

Right hand image: Patient Kea Edwards and Pete.

Dawning of a New Day

I wanted to paint a sunrise, to represent “A new day a dawning” as my great great grandfather wrote in 1929; it marks a new era for Mercy Health as it contributes to closing the opportunity gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

In an unprecedented time in our history our people have much to hope for in health, employment, training and business opportunities. I wanted to use the colour purple as a symbol of the past, how it won’t be forgotten. The sun rising up through the yellow provides a sense of excitement as it, like the Reconciliation Action Plan, represents the dawning of a new day for our people.

In this and many of my paintings I incorporate trees and birds as they remind me of the need to stay connected to our roots. This will ensure we grow strong in our cultural identity and renew as we mature, shedding the unwanted aspects of our lives and growing new hopes and dreams.

The tree uses its bark to protect the inner part of the tree, enabling sustenance to flow to all parts to help it to grow to its full potential. The tree provides plenty for our people as we have used its bark for shields, carry dishes, coolamons and canoes: all necessary for supporting life. The bark in this painting is a picture of the decades of care and protection, support and hope that Mercy Health has provided over the years. Just as the tree renews itself over time, as it sheds and regrows new bark, so does Mercy Health.

The birds I paint are mostly cockatoos because of the story my Nan tells me about how her father would climb to the top of the gum trees and collect

the baby cockatoos, teach them how to talk and then sell them to the town to provide for his family. Every time I think of this story I feel blessed to be his great granddaughter, so each cockatoo I paint is a symbol of creativity, innovation, entrepreneurial ideas, instinct, sacrifice, protection, provision and blessing. This spirit has been released in the painting and as you see each bird perched on the branches or flying through the sunrise, I hope you listen to and receive their message.

These cockatoos are one with their environment, they are at peace. My hope is that these painted birds fly in spirit within and around Mercy Health and bring peace.

The leaves symbolise an abundance of health and life and are themselves the direct result of a healthy body. The leaves bring forth many things such as fresh air, healing, medicine and clothing and many other services to our people, from cooking to shelter. The leaves won't grow if they are not connected to the branches, trunk and roots.

Like the tree, Mercy Health provides the necessary elements for a good start to life and the support to help grow and strengthen families via the many services you provide, as represented by the branches of the tree.

In the roots you can see that I burnt traditional markings to symbolise the history of this land and the stories of our ancestors. They connect the tree to the land and water; it is through our roots that we receive the knowledge of healing, wisdom, understanding and direction that will strengthen our future generations.



Mercy Health Chief Executive- Health Services Statement

On behalf of Mercy Health–Health Services I am very pleased to present this Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), which aligns closely with the mission and strategic objectives of our health service.

As a provider of a broad range of health services in Victoria and southern New South Wales, our focus is to respond to the current and emerging needs of the communities we serve. This involves providing compassionate and responsive care that improves health outcomes for the vulnerable and disadvantaged. In a first world nation, it is immensely troubling that the level of disadvantage experienced by our first Australians is so great. The extent of health disparity and the gap in life expectancy are problems that we must work to actively address.

This RAP represents the commitment of our health service to work toward closing the gap and improving health outcomes and experience for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. By documenting the actions we will take as part of this commitment, all staff are called upon to think more carefully about the factors that contribute to health disparity and the ways in which we can make a tangible difference.

The actions articulated in this plan build upon the many well-established initiatives already in place across Mercy Health–Health Services.

Going forward we will strive to improve our engagement with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and key organisations in the design and delivery of our services. We will also work to improve the cultural competence of our staff so that the services we provide are truly appropriate, accessible, and sensitive to the customs, beliefs and values of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

It is sincerely intended that this RAP will direct our efforts and resources in making a sustainable difference to the health experience of our First Australians.

Linda Mellors

Chief Executive–Health Services
Mercy Health



Mercy Health–Health Services Reflect RAP: Reconciliation Australia CEO statement

Reconciliation Australia congratulates Mercy Health–Health Services on the endorsement of its first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), which will build the foundations for the relationships, respect and opportunities essential to reconciliation.

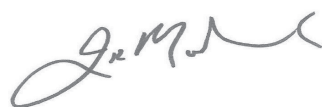
This Reflect RAP will assist Mercy Health–Health Services to develop a solid RAP governance model and build the business case for future commitments to cultural learning, practicing cultural protocols, and promoting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment.

In its first RAP, Mercy Health–Health Services has demonstrated a keen commitment to further develop and strengthen relationships with key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, communities and organisations. We see this where Mercy Health–Health Services moves to build and maintain relationships through community engagement initiatives based on mutual trust and respect.

Commitment to showing respect and understanding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories and cultures is demonstrated in Mercy Health–Health Services' RAP through its actionable goal to embed a cultural awareness education program into the organisation.

Mercy Health–Health Services' dedication to providing training opportunities and employment pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is communicated through the actionable items in its RAP that seek to increase recruitment and retention levels within the organisation.

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend Mercy Health–Health Services on its inaugural RAP and look forward to following its reconciliation journey.



Justin Mohamed
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia



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Acronyms

AHW	Aboriginal Health Worker
CAG	Community Advisory Group
MHA	Mercy Health Albury
MHHS	Mercy Health–Health Services
MHW	Mercy Hospital for Women
MMH	Mercy Mental Health
NAIDOC	National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee
OFC	O’Connell Family Centre
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan
WMH	Werribee Mercy Hospital



“Community and local agencies want to know we have someone here to support clients, where they’ll feel safe.

They can come to me for information, I’ll support them to attend their appointments, I’ll advocate for them.”

Werribee Mercy Hospital Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer
Donna Duncanson (left) with Social Work Manager Leanne Foster

Our business

Mercy Health is a Catholic organisation grounded in a 2,000-year tradition of caring for others. Our organisation was founded by the Sisters of Mercy in Dublin in 1831 by Catherine McAuley, who dedicated her life to serving people in need.

The Sisters of Mercy came to Melbourne in 1857. They provided education, social welfare and assistance to the poor. They have been at the forefront of healthcare in Victoria ever since, operating hospitals and clinics that have become hubs for teaching, nursing and social welfare. In this spirit of compassion, Mercy Health continues to care for people at every stage of life.

Mercy Health employs more than 7,000 people, including at least 13 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. We provide acute and subacute hospital care, aged care, mental health programs, maternity and specialist women's health services, early parenting services, home care services and health worker training and development. Mercy Health employs people from many cultures and backgrounds who, irrespective of their beliefs, share a common bond to care for those in need.

Mercy Health–Health Services provides services in Victoria and southern New South Wales. This includes Mercy Care Centre Young and Mercy Health Albury, Mercy Health O'Connell Family Centre, Mercy Hospital for Women, Mercy Mental Health, Mercy Palliative Care and Werribee Mercy Hospital.



*Members of the Aboriginal Reference Committee and Reconciliation Action Plan Committee;
for the complete list of RAP Committee members see page 12*

Our values

The Mercy Health–Health Services RAP is underpinned by our values.

Compassion

We are present for others in their time of need:

- We demonstrate kindness and generosity of spirit.
- We provide support in times of need.
- We display a passion to serve others.

Hospitality

We welcome people with warmth and offer comfort:

- We greet all people and make them comfortable.
- We seek to provide assistance where needed.
- We provide a consistent level of customer service, internally and externally.

Respect

We respect the sacredness of the gift of life. We act with integrity and justice and value each person's dignity:

- We recognise that each person is individual and unique.
- We strive to be open and honest in all things, at all times.
- We deliver good and bad news in ways that ensure people retain their sense of dignity and self-respect.
- We acknowledge and accept the differences between people, cultures and religions.

Innovation

We strive to create a dynamic environment which encourages creativity and diversity:

- We embrace change as an opportunity for renewal and improvement.
- We seek opportunities to try new ideas and acknowledge people for their contribution.
- We focus on present and future actions.

Stewardship

We build and strengthen the ministry and all resources entrusted to us:

- We hold in trust and build on the tradition and spirit of Mercy.
- We develop Mercy people to be accountable for the highest standard of performance.
- We seek opportunities to lead and make decisions within agreed financial frameworks.

Teamwork

We work together to progress the Mercy mission:

- We work together to serve others and provide the best possible care.
- We communicate openly and honestly; we work as a team for the collective good.
- We respect the needs and feelings of others and actively seek their perspective.



Peyton Williamson in her grandmother's coolamon

"When it comes to caring for children, in the Aboriginal community we all lean on each other. Culturally, the way we do things is different.

"So if I was concerned about what the doctor said, Jo and Jodie would sit down like family and have that aunty type of conversation. After the births they both visited me on the ward every day. So now they feel like family."

Kaylene Williamson,
mother of MHW babies
Riley and Peyton

*Aunty Rita Wirrpanda, Mercy Hospital for Women
Social Worker Michelle Hawke, patient Alisia Wirrpanda
and Mercy Hospital for Women Senior Aboriginal
Hospital Liaison Officer Jo Pappas.*

*Aunty Rita and Alisia gifted this artwork to
the Nangnak Baban Murrup Team in appreciation
of their support at Mercy Hospital for Women.*



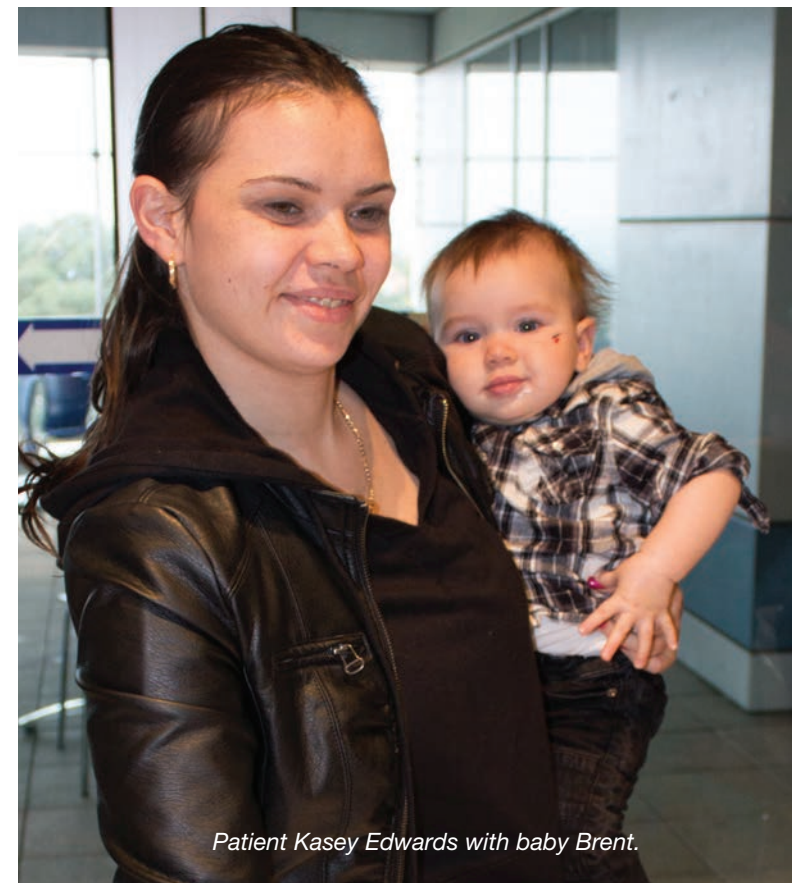
Our RAP

Mercy Health has a long history of providing culturally appropriate services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

In the lead up to considering a RAP, there were a number of already established initiatives that provided a foundation to build a more formalised plan.

They include:

- the well-established Aboriginal Programs at Mercy Hospital for Women that provide a culturally appropriate service to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and families
- the co-signing of a 'Statement of Intent' by the Victorian Minister for Health, Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner and the Group Chief Executive Officer of Mercy Health. This document outlined Mercy Health's broad commitment to 'Closing the Gap' in health between Australia's First Peoples and other Australians
- the development of a Mercy Health–Health Services Aboriginal Employment Plan as part of Karreeta Yirramboi, the Victorian Government's plan to improve public-sector employment and career development outcomes for Aboriginal People
- participation in events of significance such as NAIDOC Week, Reconciliation Week and Sorry Day
- a partnership between Mercy Health Albury (MHA) and Wodonga TAFE to develop a Practice Plan for providing culturally appropriate palliative care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples
- a partnership between MHA and Hume Regional Integrated Cancer Service/NSW Health/Albury Wodonga Health and Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service/Wodonga Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation/Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative on the Aboriginal Advance Care Planning Project
- a partnership between MHA and Murrumbidgee Local Health District to provide the "Steppin On" (falls prevention) program to the Aboriginal Community
- development by MHA of an Aboriginal Health Worker Palliative Care placement to enhance understanding of palliative care and promotion within the Aboriginal Community.



Patient Kasey Edwards with baby Brent.

Our RAP

May 2014 marked the beginning of a more coordinated approach to Reconciliation at Mercy Health. A Reconciliation Plan Working Party was established to coordinate key events such as Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week along with the appointment of an Aboriginal Project Officer to support the development of the RAP.

After further consideration it was decided that a RAP committee reporting directly to the Mercy Health–Health Services’ Leadership Team would be established. This committee would focus solely on developing the RAP. The RAP Committee held their inaugural meeting on 5 September 2014.

Since the RAP Committee’s inception, membership has included site and program representation from across Mercy Health–Health Services to ensure maximum influence across the organisation.

The committee acknowledged that the contribution from Aboriginal staff was integral to the plan and their membership was encouraged to enable Aboriginal perspectives to be embedded. We would also like to acknowledge staff that contributed in the early days of the RAP, supported its development and continue to play an active role in working towards broadening cultural understanding and recognising the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as First Australians.

RAP Committee members

Liz Murdoch, Program Director Ambulatory, Allied Health and Community Services (Chair)

Nathan Leitch, Aboriginal Community member (Co-Chair)

Marika Jackomos, Manager Aboriginal Programs

Jo Pappas, Senior Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer

Jodie Lovett, Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer

Kyra Booth, Aboriginal Project and Data Support Officer

Alicia Thomas, Group Diversity Advisor

Amber Kelly, Communications Manager

Christine Arnold, Operations Manager/Director of Nursing, Mercy Health Albury

Mary-Lou Cusack, Operations Manager/Director of Nursing, Mercy Care Centre Young

Deb Pidd, Nurse/Midwife Unit Manager

Helen Cull, Human Resources Manager, Health Services

Kerri McEgan, Director of Nursing, O’Connell Family Centre

Mario Blandin de Chalain, Program Director, Mental Health Services

Meredith Swaby, Director of Allied Health

Elizabeth Laguerre, Aboriginal Project Officer

Melissa Harrison, Reconciliation Action Plan advisor, SCP Consulting



*Matthew Clare from Dardee Balagamdail
Aboriginal Dance Group dances for our
NAIDOC Week 2016 celebrations*

"Mercy Health continues to be active in efforts to close the gap. Our RAP sets out practical, measurable steps towards increasing cultural safety in our services, a factor that we know improves access and health equity. These and other supports are underpinned by our ongoing cultural safety education program, a valuable resource for all staff."

"I feel immense pride in acknowledging this work and the people who do it. Yet this does not diminish my hope that one day, cultural safety will be so firmly embedded in every aspect of Australian life that it will thrive without the need for campaigns or comment."

Group Chief Executive Officer
Stephen Cornelissen

Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Develop partnerships with Aboriginal Community and organisations to strengthen services and health outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, Communities and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence that we could approach to connect with on our Reconciliation journey. • Develop a list of RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to connect with on our Reconciliation journey. 	June 30 2017	Manager Aboriginal Programs MHW
	Mercy Health Albury: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to participate in advance care planning workshops alongside the AHWs in the 2016 Program of Experience in the Palliative Approach (PEPA) Program. • Work with the local Aboriginal Community to raise the profile of services provided by MHA and continue to strengthen existing relationships with AHWs. 	Commence July 2016 and review Oct, Jan, April, July thereafter	Operations Manager/ Director of Nursing, MHA
	Mercy Hospital for Women: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen relationships with key Aboriginal agencies to support improved care for our patients. This includes finalising and executing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, and strengthened relationships with the Children's Protection Society and Banyule Community Health. 	July 2017	Manager Aboriginal Programs MHW
	Werribee Mercy Hospital and Mercy Mental Health: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop partnerships with community agencies in the west to facilitate community engagement and expand on support and services offered to Aboriginal Community. 	June 2017	Program Director, Ambulatory, Community & Allied Health Program Director Mental Health

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Develop community engagement initiatives to strengthen relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and services	<p>Mercy Health Albury</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and maintain relationships with local Aboriginal Communities through participation in cross-agency events and programs in the region. <p>Mercy Health–Health Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore Aboriginal-specific membership of existing Community Advisory Groups (CAGs) (Mercy Mental Health, Werribee Mercy Hospital, Mercy Hospital for Women) and nominate quarantined positions on these committees. • Include a nominated quorum of Aboriginal Community representatives on the Mercy Health Aboriginal Reference Committee (all sites and programs). • Ensure MHHS reports to the Mercy Health Board on Aboriginal health as part of Mercy Health–Health Services annual reporting. 	<p>Commence June 2016 and review every Dec, June thereafter</p> <p>August 2016 Then review August annually</p> <p>Review June 30 annually</p>	<p>Director of Nursing, MHA</p> <p>Group Manager Consumer Participation and Experience</p> <p>Chair, Aboriginal Reference Committee</p> <p>Chief Executive-Health Services</p> <p>Chairs, WMH CAG, MHW CAG, VOCCAL, MHA CAG, MH Young CAG</p>
RAP Committee actively monitors RAP development and implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP. • Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are represented on the RAP Committee. • Meet at least twice per year to monitor and report on RAP implementation. • Establish Terms of Reference for the RAP Committee. 	<p>February 2017</p> <p>Review 30 June annually</p> <p>May, August, November annually</p> <p>Review 30 June annually</p>	<p>Program Director Ambulatory, Community & Allied Health</p>
Participate in and celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage our staff to attend an NRW event. • Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff. • Ensure our Working Group participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. 	<p>27 May - 3 June 2017</p>	<p>Communications Manager</p> <p>Group Diversity Advisor</p>
Raise internal awareness of our RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness among all staff across the organisation about our RAP commitments. • Develop and implement a plan to engage and inform key internal stakeholders of their responsibilities within our RAP. 	<p>February 2017</p>	<p>Program Director Ambulatory, Community & Allied Health</p> <p>Communications Manager</p>

Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Develop and deliver culturally safe services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and families.	Mercy Health Albury <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MHA Palliative Care workers to provide joint visits to Aboriginal Community palliative care patients with the AHW to provide culturally safe support and advocacy to Aboriginal patients. 	Review 30 June annually	Operations Manager/ Director of Nursing, MHA
	O'Connell Family Centre: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify one initiative for O'Connell Family Centre (OFC) for Aboriginal clients to be completed during 2017 to leverage the work of the New Directions program and be resourced at OFC. The program will support Aboriginal early childhood development and link families to other services at OFC. 	June 2017	Director of Nursing OFC
	Mercy Hospital for Women: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a health promotion component of the New Directions program to achieve a measurable impact on patients, such that health promotion activity at the site is routine and evaluation informs improvement. This will help improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and families. Health literacy will improve for Aboriginal women as well as informing the development of appropriate resources. Ensure Aboriginal women are consulted about their preferred model of maternity care at MHW and are offered a choice that suits their individual need. 	June 2017	Manager Aboriginal Programs MHW
	Werribee Mercy Hospital: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer is supported by the Aboriginal Programs team at MHW through cultural support, supervision and inclusion in workforce development and committees. 	Review 30 June annually	Social Work Manager WMH Manager Aboriginal Programs MHW

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Embed a Cultural Awareness and Education Program across MHHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a range of strategies aimed at building the cultural knowledge, safety and competency of Mercy Health staff including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - establishing an ongoing cultural awareness program that includes workshops and a calendar of cultural content delivered via the intranet - developing learning packages targeting both clinical staff and managers including recruitment training for managers incorporated into priorities for work plans - improving identification practices by reviewing past initiatives implemented for teaching frontline staff to ask all patients “Are you Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?” and more broadly, to include a training induction program for admissions staff and ward clerks - reviewing and assessing the viability of online cultural training options for Mercy Health - ensuring 80% of the workforce receives some form of cultural competency training within 12 months of commencement and that this is prioritised for staff who have high Aboriginal patient contact and areas of targeted Aboriginal employment and training - conducting regular reviews of cultural awareness training needs within our organisation - capturing data and measuring our staff’s current level of knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievement. 	June 2017	Human Resources Manager, Health Services
		June 2017	Learning Manager, Health Services
		30 June 2017	
	Mercy Mental Health: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop models of care in mental health responsive to consultation with Aboriginal Community members. Develop culturally responsive mental health services including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identification of Aboriginal patients - cultural training for staff - development of relationships with local Aboriginal organisations. 	30 June 2017	Program Director, Mercy Mental Health

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Seek Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consumer feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routinely consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers about their experience and report collected feedback as a subset of general consumer feedback data. 	30 June annually	Group Manager Consumer Participation and Patient Experience
Raise internal awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement internal protocols advising staff of important cultural information such as Traditional Owners and highlighting key cultural and historical perspectives. • Develop a protocol advising Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country address at significant community events and gatherings. • Develop a plan to implement the protocol and educate staff around the meaning and significance behind Acknowledgement of Country, Welcome to Country and local Traditional Owners. • Develop a list of Traditional Owners and key contacts for organising a Welcome to Country. • Capture data and measure our staff's current level of knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievement. 	April 2017	Communications Manager Group Diversity Advisor
Establish a model of Aboriginal consultation at a local program/ site level that supports the implementation and monitoring of the RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the Aboriginal Reference Committee across Mercy Health sites and programs continues to review the RAP and its implementation in relation to all sites and programs. • Ensure members of the Aboriginal Reference Committee include Aboriginal staff and Community members. • Ensure the Aboriginal Reference Committee includes representation from Werribee Mercy Hospital, Mercy Mental Health, Mercy Care Centre Young, Mercy Health Albury and Mercy Palliative Care with representation from local community Aboriginal health partner agencies. 	Review 30 June annually Review 30 June annually	Program Director Ambulatory, Community & Allied Health Chair, Aboriginal Reference Committee

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Create a culturally welcoming environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance the physical environment for Aboriginal staff and patients by ensuring our facilities are welcoming and acknowledge Traditional Owners. This will be achieved by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - all sites having a land acknowledgement plaque displayed in a prominent area - cultural environmental audits completed on all sites and action plans in place to improve facilities - development of a procedure relating to appropriate and respectful commission and display of Aboriginal artwork and flags purchased for all sites. 	June 2017	Communications Manager Group Diversity Advisor
Participate in and celebrate NAIDOC Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness and share information among our staff of the meaning of NAIDOC Week which includes information about the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Communities. Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting community events in our local area. Celebrate NAIDOC Week by holding an annual event to engage Aboriginal Community, key stakeholders and MHHS staff. Develop a matrix reflecting key events in the Aboriginal Community calendar, by campus and activity. Maintain the Events Working Group with site representation to oversee the planning of key celebratory events. Ensure Mercy Health is represented at all external key events of significance (e.g. relevant councils' NAIDOC Week events). 	3-10 July annually	Communications Manager Group Diversity Advisor Manager Aboriginal Programs MHW

Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Provide training opportunities and employment pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees at Mercy Health according to Mercy Health–Health Services’ Aboriginal Employment Plan. • Implement the Aboriginal Employment Plan and report annually on targets achieved. • Develop a confidential process to invite current employees to self-identify, to inform future employment and development opportunities. • Embed cultural mentoring for Aboriginal staff with high level of staff satisfaction. • Establish an Aboriginal Employment Plan Working Group. • Identify current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment and development opportunities. <p>NSW policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aboriginal Workforce Strategic Framework 2011-2015, as practice model implemented. 	June 2017	Human Resources Manager, Health Services
Create volunteer opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit Aboriginal Community volunteers to Mercy Health through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - promotion of Mercy Health services in the Aboriginal Community - opportunities to work in a volunteer capacity on projects, fundraisers and initiatives that support the Aboriginal Community and raise the profile of Mercy Health services. 	June 2017	Volunteer Coordinator
Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an understanding of the mutual benefits of procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. • Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. 	June 2017	Communications Manager Group Diversity Advisor



Tracking and progress

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Build support for the RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RAP progress report to be delivered to the Aboriginal Reference Committee quarterly to monitor implementation.• Working groups established as necessary to oversee/progress specific activities of the RAP e.g. Events Working Group.• Complete the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia.• Define resource needs for RAP development and implementation.• Define systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on RAP activities.	June 2016 every 6 months Dec, June thereafter 30 September, annually	Chair, Aboriginal Reference Committee MHHS RAP Committee Program Director, Ambulatory, Community & Allied Health
Review and Refresh RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements.• Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal review and endorsement.	July 2018	Program Director Ambulatory, Community & Allied Health

Contact details

Name: Liz Murdoch

Position: Program Director, Ambulatory Community & Allied Health

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*Patient Kea Edwards and baby Pete Junior
at Mercy Hospital for Women with a Kogo
(Knit One Give One) care package*

"We linked up with Kogo through Uncle Ron Briggs, when he was running our Aboriginal Dads program.

"He worked closely with our young families and saw a need to help them feel welcomed and cared for, even after they leave our clinics.

"Every family coming through the clinics is offered a Kogo package. All Kogo asks for in return is a photo of the baby in their blanket or beanie so they can share it with the community."

Mercy Hospital for Women Aboriginal Hospital
Liaison Officer Jodie Lovett



Mercy Health acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the First Australians. We acknowledge the diversity of Indigenous Australia. We respectfully recognise Elders both past and present. This report was produced on Wurundjeri Country.