

Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

2016–2018



Meaning of the artwork



The cover artwork was created by Riki Salam, artist and Creative Director of Gilimbaa – Indigenous Creative Agency. Gilimbaa are Supply Nation certified.

This artwork depicts a stylistic interpretation of the human heart. The large concentric circle motif surrounded by dots central in this piece represents the Heart Foundation.

Travelling from left to right, the small red and white motifs represent blood cells. They also represent the many and varied communities around Australia that the Heart Foundation engages with; from government agencies, corporate businesses, all aspects of the health sector, through to the general public. The four white U-shaped motifs represent people seated, poised and ready to engage in a national dialogue for reconciliation. The three pathways that lead to the top of the piece represent the three foundational objectives of Reconciliation Australia – Respect, Opportunities and Relationships.

The four circular motifs around the outside of the heart symbol represent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities contacting and connecting with the Heart Foundation, trading knowledge and ideas of better health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The colours represented within the Heart Foundation artwork reference a variety of country (landscapes): saltwater, freshwater, desert and rainforest. From warm to cool, the colours hold great meaning and cultural significance – some are in reference to ochres that are used in ceremony, and some represent life, gathering and growth. The blue patterned background represents the rich diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures across Australia. These 'Culture Lines' represent the foundation and uniqueness of Australia.

The National Heart Foundation of Australia would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land and pay respects to Elders past and present. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should be aware that the following information may contain images or names of deceased people and may cause distress to certain viewers.



A message from our CEO



Building upon the work of our inaugural *Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2014–2015*, the Heart Foundation is proudly continuing its journey of respect for and our work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. As part of our strategy for 2013–2017, the Heart Foundation committed to developing and integrating the RAP into our core business and this RAP signifies a further strengthening of the organisation's commitment to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to reach a truly reconciled Australia, one in which health equality is no longer an issue and where the unacceptable health gap is closed.

The Heart Foundation's Innovate RAP builds upon the learnings of our inaugural RAP. It will be supported by a commitment to work across the Federation to identify and overcome barriers for implementation, recognising moving forward that each of the states and territories may be at different stages of implementation.

Improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is everyone's business and we recognise that we can only attain better outcomes by working with, not on behalf of, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The RAP will continue to provide a strong foundation for the work that we do with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to improve the cardiovascular health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Professor Garry Jennings
Chief Executive Officer – National





Our business

Our organisation

For more than 55 years, the Heart Foundation has been a leader in improving heart health and reducing premature death and suffering from heart, stroke and blood vessel disease for all Australians.

As a charity, we work with the trust and support of the community to:

- help all Australians live in heart healthy environments
- identify and help those most at risk of heart disease
- recognise and respond appropriately to the warning signs of a heart attack
- care for people living with heart conditions.

We are committed to health equity and have embarked on a significant strategic commitment in this area. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are a focus for us due to the disproportionate levels of heart disease they experience.

Our core values are Visionary, Collaborative, Dynamic, Integrity and Passionate. These values are solidly connected to our reconciliation vision and the plan we will follow to achieve our vision.

The Heart Foundation operates throughout Australia as a federation, employing approximately 300 people, and benefits from the input of a substantial number of honorary health and business professionals. We have offices in each state and territory capital city, and associated regional offices across the country. Our national office is based in Melbourne.

The Foundation has 11 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees across the federation. We are committed to increasing this number by becoming an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our vision for reconciliation

*Our reconciliation vision
is one where we walk alongside
Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander peoples in respectful
partnership to achieve equity
in life expectancy and to reduce
premature death and suffering
from heart disease, stroke and
blood vessel disease.*





Our Innovate RAP

Our Innovate RAP maps out the next phase of the Heart Foundation's path towards reconciliation. We recognise that reconciliation is an ongoing and evolving process, and this RAP signifies our commitment to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to reduce the unacceptable disparity in health outcomes that are suffered by First Nation's peoples.

Our Innovate RAP builds on the achievements of our inaugural RAP, which include:

- Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country protocols established for board and executive meetings
- incorporation of Supply Nation's membership as part of our procurement policy and procedures
- celebration of pivotal cultural days across the Federation in each state and territory
- ongoing engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners in health and research
- establishment of guidelines that highlight the importance of considering the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in program and policy development.

As a co-signatory to the national Close the Gap campaign, we are dedicated to improving the life expectancy and quality of life of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. No plan or strategy can successfully address the gap unless it specifically addresses heart, stroke and blood vessel disease. It is estimated that if the death rate from cardiovascular disease for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were the same as the total population, life expectancy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples would increase by around 6.5 years for men and women.

With this in mind, for more than a decade the Heart Foundation has been building knowledge and experience in improving the cardiovascular health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Cardiovascular disease continues to result in deaths among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at a rate 30% higher than the rest of the Australian population.

We strive to ensure that a strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focus is integrated into our everyday work, which is dedicated to making a real difference to the heart health of Australians. Every day, our work includes:

- supporting people living with heart conditions
- funding world-class cardiovascular research
- guiding health professionals on preventing and treating heart disease
- supporting Australians to make healthy choices through education and creating heart healthy environments
- advocating to government and industry to improve heart health in Australia.

We recognise that there is much more to do and it is important to renew our commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to build on our current work.

The RAP is an identified objective under the Health equity goal of the Heart Foundation's 2013–2017 strategy, *For all hearts*.



The development of the Innovate RAP was supported by many internal groups. Importantly, the National Board and Executive Management Group (EMG) both unanimously endorsed its development within the organisation. The RAP will be reviewed and reported on annually.

A steering committee and working group of employees from all parts of the organisation,

including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives, reviewed and developed the RAP. Members of the RAP Steering Committee (RAP SC) and RAP Working Group (RAP WG) are listed below. The RAP WG assisted in the development of the RAP as well as the implementation of the previous RAP. The RAP SC will remain in place to assist the EMG to implement the RAP.

| Member | Position | Role |
|--------------------|--|--|
| Steering Committee | | |
| Leonie Scott | General Manager – Health Outcomes | RAP SC Chair |
| Vicki Wade | Cultural Lead | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Lead |
| Mark Dupe | General Manager – Corporate Services | RAP SC |
| Simon Dixon | CEO NT | RAP WG Chair |
| Kerry Doyle | CEO NSW | EMG representative |
| Rachel McKay | Director of Health | Cardiovascular Health Manager representative |
| Working Group | | |
| Daniel James | Program Manager | National Aboriginal Health Unit |
| Annie Campbell | Project Officer | National Aboriginal Health Unit |
| Louise Robertson | Administrative Assistant | National Aboriginal Health Unit |
| Andy Mark | Regional Health Promotion Co-ordinator (Illawarra) | NSW representative |
| Penny Milson | Regional Health Promotion Co-ordinator (New England) | NSW representative |
| Karen Uhlmann | Clinical Manager – Acute Sector | QLD representative |
| Megan Collier | Primary Care Manager | QLD representative |
| Trevor Shilton | Director, Cardiovascular Health | WA representative |
| Lyn Dimer | Aboriginal Health Manager | WA representative |
| Diane Percy | Walking Co-ordinator | ACT representative |
| Tony Stubbs | CEO ACT | ACT representative |
| Bruce Lee King | Healthy Hearts Manager | NT representative |
| Greg Ford | Policy Manager | VIC representative |
| Bill Stavreski | National Director, Data & Evaluation | Data & Evaluation representative, National Division representative |
| Sabine Drilling | Cardiovascular Health Project Officer (Heart Care & Health Equity) | SA representative |
| Gillian Mangan | Health Director | TAS representative |



1 Relationships

We believe that by building stronger relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, we will have a positive impact in reducing heart, stroke and blood vessel disease. We will also work to ensure strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the broader Australian community are at the forefront of our plans to achieve reconciliation. Without a solid foundation for relationships, we would be unable to design, construct or implement meaningful health initiatives to assist in closing the gap in the disparities of care facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|--|---|--|
| 1.1 Actively monitor RAP development and implementation across the organisation. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAP SC oversees implementation and quarterly reporting to (EMG). • Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are represented on the RAP WG and RAP SC. • RAP SC meets at least twice per year to monitor and report on RAP implementation. • Establish Terms of Reference for the RAP SC. | <p>May, September, December and March 2016–2018</p> <p>June and January annually May 2017</p> | <p>CEO –National</p> <p>EMG</p> |
| 1.2 Celebrate and participate in National Reconciliation Week (NRW) by providing opportunities to build and maintain relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise at least one internal event for NRW each year. • Register our NRW event via Reconciliation Australia's NRW website. • Support an external NRW event. • Ensure our RAP WG participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. • Encourage staff to participate in external events to recognise and celebrate NRW. • Host NRW events across the areas in which we operate. • Download Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and circulate to staff. • Commit to organising guest speakers to speak to staff and board members regarding the range of issues negatively affecting the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. | <p>27 May – 3 June, annually</p> | <p>Manager, National Aboriginal Health Unit (NAHU)</p> |

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|--|--|--|--|
| 1.3 Develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations to support positive outcomes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. • Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement. • Build upon and maintain meaningful relationships with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) across Australia. | Commence May 2016, review annually | EMG NAHU |
| 1.4 Raise internal and external awareness of our RAP to promote reconciliation across our organisation and sector. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement and review a strategy to communicate our RAP to all internal and external stakeholders. • Promote reconciliation through ongoing active engagement with all stakeholders. | December 2016 Ongoing until December 2017 | EMG Brand, Comms and Digital (BCD) team NAHU |
| 1.5 Raise awareness and support constitutional recognition for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to advocate for recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Australian constitution. • Make staff aware of current campaigns and initiatives including Recognise, Change the Record, Close the Gap. | Commence May 2016, review May 2017, 2018 | NAHU |



2 Respect

We acknowledge the importance of creating a stronger awareness and an understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures, histories and protocols. We seek to ensure that our employees are culturally aware, sensitive and confident to engage respectfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, particularly in relation, but not isolated, to our commitment to Close the Gap targets. We also believe that effective and respectful partnerships built on trust and integrity will help us achieve the positive health outcomes we desire for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|--|-----------|--|
| 2.1 Engage employees in cultural learning opportunities to increase understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop and implement a cultural awareness training strategy for our staff that defines cultural learning needs of employees in all areas of our business and considers various ways cultural learning can be provided (online, face-to-face workshops or cultural immersion).• Provide opportunities for RAP champions, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in cultural training.• Identify cultural learning requirements specific to our staff's training needs.• Investigate opportunities to work with local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultants to develop cultural awareness training. | July 2016 | Cultural Lead NAHU National Human Resources Department |



| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| 2.2 Engage employees in understanding the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols, such as Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country, to ensure there is a shared meaning. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a list of key contacts for organising a Welcome to Country and maintaining respectful partnerships. • Invite a Traditional Owner to provide a Welcome to Country to at least one significant event. • Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country. • Include Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of important internal and external meetings. | Commence July 2016, review annually | EMG NAHU |
| 2.3 Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to engage with their culture and communities by celebrating National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week. • Provide opportunities for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to participate with their cultures and communities during NAIDOC Week. • Provide opportunities for all staff to participate in NAIDOC Week activities. • Support an external NAIDOC Week community event. • Contact our local NAIDOC Week Committee to discover events in our community and promote them. | First week of July, annually | EMG Group Manager, Human Resources Department |
| 2.4 Raise internal and external awareness of our RAP to promote reconciliation across our organisation and sector. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and distribute a calendar of events to celebrate and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance. | May 2016 | EMG NAHU |



3 Opportunities

We will endeavour to create career and supplier opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples based on an appreciation of the strengths we share by using the experience and expertise of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We will enjoy mutual learning and ensure the success of our reconciliation journey is embedded within our organisation in working to reduce premature death and suffering from heart, stroke and blood vessel disease within Australia.

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|--|
| 3.1 Investigate opportunities to improve and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes within our workplace. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment and Retention Strategy that includes the following key activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professional network • develop a cultural mentoring network for existing staff and managers • develop and implement Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment pathways, e.g. traineeships or internships • support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership. • Engage with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on employment strategies, including professional development. • Advertise all vacancies in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media. • Collect information on our current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment opportunities. • Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to ensure there are no barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and future applicants participating in our workplace. • Develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professional development strategy. • Include 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are encouraged to apply' in all job advertisements. | Commence May 2016, ongoing until May 2018 | Group Manager, Human Resources Department NAHU Cultural Lead |



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4 Tracking progress and reporting

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|---|--|--|
| 4.1 Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings to Reconciliation Australia. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia annually. Investigate participation in Reconciliation Australia's RAP Barometer. Develop an evaluation framework to track, measure and report on RAP activities. | 30 September, annually June 2016, 2018 December 2016, 2017 | NAHU RAP Steering Committee Chair |
| 4.2 Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings internally and externally. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings. | December 2016/2017 | BCD team Manager NAHU |
| 4.3 Review, refresh and update our RAP. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements. Send draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal feedback and endorsement. | December 2017 | NAHU NAHU |
| 4.4 Improve internal evaluation and reporting mechanisms to report accurately on RAP progression. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a comprehensive implementation plan to allow for in-depth internal evaluation and reporting related to key actions. | June 2016 | NAHU EMG |





For heart health information,
please contact us

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heartfoundation.org.au

Enquiries about this RAP should be directed to Daniel James, Program Manager, National Aboriginal Health Unit, 03 9090 2038 or daniel.james@heartfoundation.org.au

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