

Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

May 2019 – May 2021



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Nathan Patterson is a Wagiman man from the Northern Territory and lives in Wadawurrung Country (Geelong, Victoria)

The artwork represents Reconciliation between Aboriginal peoples and communities with non-Aboriginal people and communities. The centre represents a meeting place with two people sitting together representing the two communities. On either side of the meeting place are two journey paths symbolising the past and future. The circle in which the meeting is taking place represents an unbroken agreement, the people outside of the circle symbolise Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities.





Message from Traditional Owner



Corrina Eccles
Traditional Owner



As a Traditional Owner of Wadawurrung I proudly endorse and applaud Barwon Health’s successes and achievements on their Reconciliation Action Plan journey.

The strategies Barwon Health have implemented to date to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been done so with the genuine commitment and dedication of the Barwon Health Board, Executive and members of the Aboriginal Health Unit. As Aboriginal people we cannot achieve all of this on our own.

“Aboriginal Health is everyone business” – The work that Barwon Health does contributes more broadly to National objectives to closing the health gap and the inequities that exist between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians.

I look forward to seeing the progression of Barwon Health as it undertakes the next Reconciliation Action Plan phase – Innovate - and will provide support in any way that I can.

Gobata.

Acknowledgement of Country and Traditional Owners



We, Barwon Health, acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land, the Wadawurrung people of the Kulin Nation.

We pay our respects to the Elders both past and present.

We thank the Traditional Owners for custodianship of the land, and celebrate the continuing culture of the Wadawurrung people acknowledging the memory of honourable ancestors. We also welcome all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people present today.



Message from Community Elder

Aunty Colleen Howell
Community Elder/
Respected Person



I was honoured to be asked to represent the Geelong community as an Elder/Respected person on Barwon Health's Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group.

Although I am not originally from Geelong I have spent many years working and raising my family in the Geelong region. I have been involved with the Wathaurong community for over twenty years and am proud to say that each one of my children, and most of my grannies, are engaged with the community in their own unique way.

I am passionate about the social and emotional health and wellbeing of my people and believe greatly in the work that Barwon Health does and sets out to do in the future. Many of these aims are outlined in the Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan and I will be assisting the organisation to achieve these goals in any way I can.

There are many stories that tell the story of our land – the story of Bunjil tells us about the creation of our country



The Creator of the Kulin land and its people was the work of the Great Creator Ancestor Spirit, Bunjil.

Bunjil summoned six men to assist him in the creation of the land, people and all living things and to pass on his teachings and knowledge to all men and women. The six men were:

- Turnung - Feather Tailed Glider
- Tadjeri - Bush Tail Phascogale
- Yukope - Great Paraket
- Dantun - Blue Mountain Parrot
- Djurt-Djurt - Nankeen Kestrel
- Thara - Black Shouldered Kite

All were capable of mighty deeds, all in the name of Bunjil.

After he had made all the country and the living things in it, he taught the people how to make and use their tools and the rules of social behaviour.

When he had finished, Bunjil gathered his wives (one of whom was Gunanwarra, the black swan) and children (one of whom was Binbeal the rainbow) and instructed Bellin-Bellin (the musk crow), who is in charge of the winds, to open his bag and let out all the wind.

Bellin-Bellin opened his bag and released a wind so strong that it carried big trees into the air, roots and all. Bunjil wanted more wind, so Bellin- Bellin opened all his bags and released a wind so great that it carried Bunjil and his family to Tharangalk-bek (the heavens) where they now live as stars, looking down on the world.

Bunjil and his family are known in European terms as follows:

- Bunjil is the star Altair in the Eagle constellation and the two stars beside him are Gunanwarra and her spirit.
- Bunjil's brother is the star Antares in the Scorpion constellation.
- Turnung is Venus.
- Tadjeri is the star Alchernar in the Eridanus constellation.
- Yukope is the star Alpha Crucis, in the Southern Cross.
- Dantun is the star Beta Crucis, in the Southern Cross.
- Djurt-Djurt is the star Beta Centauri, one of the pointers and Thara, the star Alpha Centauri, the other pointer.

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Message from the Chair of Barwon Health Board



Brian Cook



Barwon Health has been working hard over the past few years to strengthen services for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in our region and to promote acknowledgement, understanding and respect of Aboriginal culture.

The next phase of the Reconciliation Action Plan journey (RAP) for the organisation builds on the work that was done in successfully implementing deliverables and actions of its first 'Reflect' Reconciliation Action Plan across Barwon Health and its many sites.

Barwon Health takes great pride in its Aboriginal Programs. The Board and Executive strongly supports and endorses approaches taken by the Aboriginal Health Unit team and Aboriginal Champions across the organisation to continue to demonstrate a high level of care and commitment to Aboriginal Health.

We have been fortunate to see the development of a specific Aboriginal Health Unit in 2018 which includes a designated family room 'Yanabil' - meaning visitor in Wadawurrung language. This is an example of Barwon Health embracing the inclusion of Wadawurrung language into its services.

I look forward to the continued work of Barwon Health towards achieving results in Aboriginal Health and Reconciliation.



Message from the Interim CEO of the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative

Lisa Briggs



The Barwon Health Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) provides a platform for both tertiary and comprehensive primary health care providers such as Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative to work together in partnership with the shared vision and purpose to Close the Gap by ensuring our local traditional owner group, people of the Wathaurong, local Aboriginal community, our Elders and future generations have improved experiences as part of their patient journey. The RAP enshrines the principles of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and will strengthen Barwon Health's ability to be culturally responsive and provide culturally appropriate services to our people. Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative looks forward to walking alongside Barwon Health as part of our shared journey.

Aboriginal Co-operative Staff member

Recently escorting a highly agitated and suicidal Aboriginal male into the Emergency Department for psychiatric assessment was a smoother transition compared to previous attempts. The fantastic work of having a Koorie Mental Health Liaison Officer to hand through the transition. The KMHLO was engaged and grounded and with a strong sense of compassion, which contributed strongly into the success of maintaining the process of being admitted into Emergency.

Our vision for reconciliation

Barwon Health's vision for reconciliation is to close the unacceptable and ongoing health gap that still exists between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and non-Indigenous Australians.

Barwon Health's values will be reflected as we collaborate with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Participation, access and engagement in all aspects of our health service will be equitable, collaborative supportive and culturally appropriate. Our relationship with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community will be built on Barwon Health's values of compassion, respect, commitment, accountability and innovation. All Australians will have the opportunity to make informed choices about their lives and realise their full potential as a result of mutually beneficial partnerships in health care.

Registrar Mental Health Drug & Alcohol Services

The Koorie Mental Health Liaison Officer also positively contributes to the team by educating us on the complex history and its impact on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community today. This is something that we have been very privileged to learn more about these past few months. I feel that this will be an important contribution to closing the health gap and I also believe that the upcoming generation of professionals are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of this role.

Our Business

Barwon Health's vision is to work with our community to build healthier lives, inspired by world-class standards. By working together with our consumers, stakeholders, staff and volunteers, we have continued to work towards bringing our vision to reality.

As Victoria's largest regional health service, Barwon Health is a touch point for more than 500,000 people living in the Barwon south west region, from the beginning of life until the end.

We provide a comprehensive range of services, from emergency and acute medicine to mental health, primary care, community services, aged care and sub-acute care and rehabilitation across 23 sites. Our priority is to ensure the care and experiences we deliver to the community are of the highest standards. We have strong

links with our regional partners to support our service delivery infrastructure and information communication and technology mechanisms.

We are also a major teaching facility with partnerships with Deakin University, The Gordon and numerous other tertiary education facilities from throughout Australia.

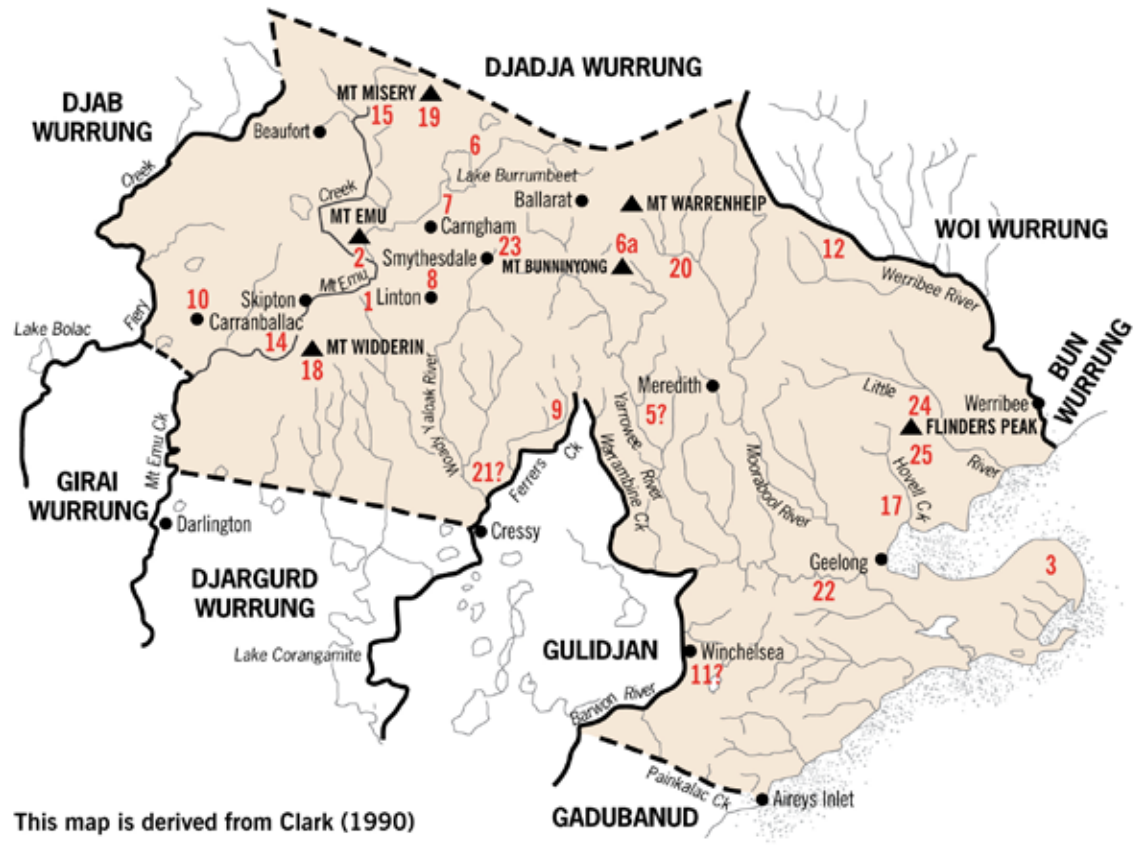
Barwon Health currently employs over 7,000 people across all disciplines and sites, and is supported by more than 1,000 volunteers.

Barwon Health currently employs 36 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff in the organisation across the areas of medicine, mental health, community health, surgical and critical care and corporate services. This is captured via the Aboriginal Employment Plan, which works towards increasing these numbers to a total of one percent of the overall employment figure.

Barwon Health Graduate Program Coordinator

We feel lucky to have the opportunity to employ Aboriginal Graduates and support them as they transition to the health workforce; it is important that we make the most of this opportunity to contribute to Closing the Health Gap.

Wadawurrung Country



This map is derived from Clark (1990)

--- Language Boundary

Note: Continuous lines indicate boundaries along rivers, streams and lakes



Our Reconciliation journey so far

Barwon Health is committed to providing culturally responsive care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accessing its services, and to making an impact on improving the length and quality of the lives of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The organisation has been on its reconciliation journey since becoming a signatory to the *Statement of Intent to Close the Gap*. Geelong has an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of over 3,000 people, the biggest outside the Melbourne metropolitan area, Barwon Health also provides support services to another 2,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the Barwon south west region.

At Barwon Health, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health is considered everyone's business. Participation in the Reconciliation Action Plan process and its associated functions has significantly increased the goodwill, knowledge and confidence of staff, giving them opportunities to consider, express and advocate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues. Additionally, our commitment has been demonstrated across the organisation through the employment of an experienced Aboriginal senior leader, the formation of the Aboriginal Health Unit, facilitation of Aboriginal outpatient speciality clinics and the development of a Koorie Birth Room.

Barwon Health will continue to strengthen relationships with the Wathaurong Aboriginal community and the other Aboriginal communities across the Barwon South West region and to build mechanisms for healthy and resilient communities necessary to *Close the Gap*.



The Reconciliation Action Plan is a highly influential document with strong commitment at all levels across the organisation. It is a standing agenda item at each of the Barwon Health Board sub-committees to monitor progress, actions and deliverables. These committees include the Consumer Advisory Committee and the Executive Governance Committee. The Reconciliation Action Plan also forms a significant part of the Wurru Ki Ngitj Aboriginal Gathering group agenda and meeting discussion.

The Reconciliation Action Plan is internally championed by a number of people within the organisation, many of whom sit on one or more of the internal committees including the Wurru-Ki Ngitj Aboriginal Gathering Group and the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group. The Chairperson of the Barwon Health Board, Mr Brian Cook, is a staunch supporter of Aboriginal health and its functions within the organisation. At the Board level, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander portfolio is led by Ms Robyn Davis; Robyn is also a member of the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group.



Laura Smith, Aboriginal Pharmacy Technician Barwon Health

Since commencing in the Pharmacy Department of Barwon Health in May 2018 I have increased my knowledge and support of the Close the Gap (CtG) prescriptions program. Whilst Barwon Health is not technically enrolled in CtG I am pleased and proud that Barwon Health are proactive in this space. The Pharmacy Department continues to honour the program and provide medication to the Aboriginal Community at little to no cost easing the financial burden.

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN WORKING GROUP

Our Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group is comprised of many more members than is common in the development of such a document. When the 'expression of interest' was published, Barwon Health received a high number of responses from interested persons wanting to be involved. All of these members have been able to contribute effectively and productively to the overall process, and their participation has raised the profile of the Reconciliation Action Plan and its importance for our organisation.

Barwon Health

- Board Member
- Chief Operating Officer
- Executive Director, Strategy, Planning and Partnerships
- Deputy Executive Director, Foundation & Volunteer Services
- *Program Manager, Aboriginal Health
- *Aboriginal Health Liaison Officer (Male)
- *Aboriginal Health Liaison (Female)
- Aboriginal Health Policy and Projects Worker
- Koorie Mental Health Liaison Officer
- Aboriginal Workforce Officer
- Aboriginal Cadets x 2
- Aboriginal Hospital Medical Officer x1
- Senior Social Worker

- Director of Pharmacy
- Head of Patient Experience/Safety and Quality
- Director, Clinical Education and Training
- Director, Public Affairs and Communication
- Director, Cancer Services
- Director, Community Rehabilitation, Palliative Care
- Co-Director, Allied Health Governance
- Director, Medicine, Specialist Medicine and Emergency Directorate
- *Aboriginal staff member – Outpatients

Primary Health Network

- Indigenous Health Consultant

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative

- *Chief Executive Officer

Aboriginal Community

- *Elder/Respected Person
- *Department of Health and Human Services Advisor Population Health and Community Health & Wellbeing-Barwon

Individuals denoted with * in the above, are all long standing Aboriginal community members with high levels of respect in the community and with sound understanding and knowledge of the local Aboriginal community.



Barwon Health completed its Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan journey, and as a result, numerous changes have been made, and goals achieved across the organisation. Highlights include: the securing a dedicated space for the Yanabil Aboriginal family room and co-location of key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff - including the Aboriginal Workforce Officer and the Koorie Mental Health Liaison Officer within the Aboriginal health team.

Some of the most significant pieces of work that have been undertaken are:

- the development, endorsement and adoption of specific Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policies, processes and guidelines (for example Culturally Appropriate Care, Koorie Maternity Service protocol, Cultural and Ceremonial Leave, Confirmation of Aboriginality, and
- Inclusion and reference to the Aboriginal Employment Plan in the Barwon Health recruitment and selection Policy and procedure).

The process of implementing the deliverables of the Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan was not without its challenges. The initial timeframe to implement the Reconciliation Action Plan was extended by a number of months, this was mainly due to organisational changes at both Barwon Health and Wathaurong. Additionally, there was also some lack of understanding of key elements of the Reconciliation Action Plan and the necessity to implement them, for example the procurement framework and ongoing funding arrangements.

The organisation understands that some of the more significant requirements will require systemic change in order to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and well-being.

The Aboriginal Health team have also played a major part in Aboriginal specific research and promotion projects. Some of these include the Regional Eye Health Project, Regional Ear Health Project, Barwon Health's Smoke Free Project and the recent refurbishment of the outdoor podium at University Hospital Geelong to include local Aboriginal artwork.





Lyndon Perry playing didgeridoo at a Traditional Smoking Ceremony at the McKellar Centre Town Square.

Pictured: Artwork from the Barwon Prison Artwork Project on display on Heath Wing 4 at University Hospital Geelong.



CASE STUDY

Barwon Health – Barwon Prison Artwork Project

Barwon Health recognises that culture plays an important part in the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and strengthening these cultures is a strategy that can be used not only in reducing disadvantage, but equally, contributing to Closing the Gap outcomes. Keeping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures strong is a necessary part of the solution to addressing health issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Barwon Health, Barwon Prison and Marngoneet and Karenga Correctional Centres have developed a program which provides an avenue for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offenders participating in the Indigenous 'Art in Prison' program, to display their work. Barwon Health is very pleased to participate in the program, and display artwork developed by offenders across a number of our health sites. The program

provides an opportunity to enable offenders to explore their identity and culture through art and hopefully define new pathways upon release. The program also assists Barwon Health to become a more culturally welcoming environment through the display of Aboriginal art throughout the organisation and helps us better understand the multidimensional concept of health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Cultural awareness and cultural safety, as it applies to health care, is the need to be recognised within the health care system and be assured that the system reflects something of your cultures, languages, customs, attitudes and beliefs. The Aboriginal artwork program contributes to addressing this cultural safety, and aligns with our responsibility to increase the cultural awareness of our staff.



Relationships

Through our workplace, Barwon Health seeks to build relationships of trust and understanding that positively affect individual and population health outcomes to close the gap in life expectancy between Aboriginal and non-Indigenous Australians. This includes relationships with our workforce (including students, contractors and volunteers), with individuals and families accessing care across our health service, and with local communities, organisations and government with whom we engage.

FOCUS AREA

Barwon Health values of

Respect

We respect the people we connect with

Commitment

We are committed to quality and excellence in everything we do

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. RAP Working Group (RWG) actively monitors the Reconciliation Action Plan development and implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting	RWG oversees the development, endorsement and launch of the Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan.	May 2019	Chief Executive Officer
	Review and update Terms of Reference outlining aims, objectives, composition, quorum and responsibilities of the group.	May 2019	Aboriginal Health Program Manager
	Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are represented on the RWG.	Jan 2020	Aboriginal Health Program Manager
	Encourage staff and community to attend the official launch of the Reconciliation Action Plan.	May 2019	Chief Executive Officer
	The RWG will meet at least four times per year to monitor implementation and progress of the Reconciliation Action Plan.	Mar/June/ Sept/Dec 2019 & 2020	Aboriginal Health Program Manager

NOTE: Throughout this RAP the term Aboriginal is used to refer and is inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
2. Celebrate and participate in National Reconciliation Week by providing opportunities to build and maintain relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians	Encourage staff to attend National Reconciliation Week events at Barwon Health.	27 May- 3 June 2019/2020	Chief Executive Officer
	Encourage staff to participate in the National Reconciliation Week state-wide event.	27 May- 3 June 2019/2020	Chief Executive Officer
	Encourage staff participation in the National Reconciliation Week event at Wathaurong, and to participate on the Wathaurong events committee.	27 May- 3 June 2019/2020	Aboriginal Health Program Manager
	Organise at least one internal event for National Reconciliation Week each year.	27 May- 3 June 2019/2020	Aboriginal Health Program Manager/ Chair Byerrngitj Event Group
	Support an external National Reconciliation Week event.	27 May- 3 June 2019/2020	Chief Executive Officer
	Ensure our RAP working group participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate National Reconciliation Week.	27 May- 3 June 2019/2020	Executive Director Strategy Planning and Partnerships
	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will be encouraged to share their reconciliation experiences and stories at the Reconciliation events at Barwon Health.	27 May- 3 June 2019/2020	Aboriginal Health Program Manager



Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations to support positive outcomes	Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	Dec 2019	Aboriginal Health Program Manager
	CEO, board and executive of Barwon Health will meet biannually with Wathaurong CEO, senior leadership group and board and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholder groups and individuals to develop guiding principles for future engagement.	Jun & Dec 2019 Jun & Dec 2020	Chairperson Board of Directors
	Apply for corporate sponsorship and membership of Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association (AIDA) and Indigenous Allied Health Association (IAHA).	June 2019	Executive Director Strategy Planning
4. Raise internal and external awareness of our RAP to promote reconciliation across our business and sector	In collaboration with Public Affairs and Communications develop and implement a strategy to communicate our Reconciliation Action Plan to all internal and external stakeholders.	Aug 2019	Director Public Affairs and Communications
	Promote reconciliation through ongoing active engagement with all stakeholders.	May 2019 ongoing	Chief Executive Officer
	Continue to promote awareness and progress of Barwon Health's Reconciliation Action Plan on the intranet and website.	May 2019 ongoing	Director Public Affairs and Communications



CASE STUDY

Barwon Health NAIDOC Awards

For the first time in 2017, during NAIDOC week, Barwon Health acknowledged and celebrated the achievements of non-Indigenous staff and their contribution to Closing the Gap within their respective roles and departments.

The three award categories that have been developed include:

- *'Aboriginal Engagement and Participation' Award*
- *'Leadership and Governance in Aboriginal Health' Award*
- *'Innovation and Change' Award*

These awards acknowledge and celebrate the achievements and recognise the inspiring and hard work undertaken to make Barwon Health a culturally safe place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Each recipient received a personalised piece of Wathaurong Glass and a set of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags for their workspace.

Pictured: NAIDOC Week guest speakers Aunty Denise Charles, Lyndon Perry and Melissa Carroll.



Respect

Barwon Health seeks to create and embed a culture of respect through listening and learning that supports reconciliation and cultural responsiveness across our health service. The importance of connections with place and people to the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities will be demonstrated through promotion and celebration of our shared histories and cultures.

FOCUS AREA

Barwon Health values of

Respect

We respect the people we connect with

Compassion

We show compassion for the people we care for and work with

Simone Lucas, Barwon Health Maternity Services patient - First Koorie mum to birth in new Koori Birth Room

It was an awesome experience. I felt calm and focused on my labour looking the beautiful mural. I felt culturally safe and I would love to have more babies in that room in the future.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Engage employees in continuous cultural learning opportunities to increase understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness training strategy for our staff which 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).	Jan 2020	Director Workforce
	Investigate opportunities to work with local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultants to develop cultural awareness training.	Jan 2020	Director Workforce
	Develop and review cultural learning packages specific to our staff's training needs e.g. administration staff, maternity, mental health drug and alcohol services and cancer services staff.	Jan 2020	Aboriginal Health Program Manager
	Provide opportunities for RWG members, Reconciliation Action Plan champions, workforce managers and other key leadership staff to participate in cultural training.	Jan 2020	Aboriginal Health Program Manager
	Ensure key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander referral points and organisation contacts are available for staff access on 'One Point' intranet page.	June 2019	Director Public Affairs and Communications
	Promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health specific educational and promotional information on internal TV system across Barwon Health and on notice boards in outpatient departments.	June 2020	Director Public Affairs and Communications
	In collaboration with Traditional Owners investigate utilising Wathaurong language for the naming of the Barwon Health peer support program.	May 2019	Aboriginal Health Program Manager



Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
6. 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	Ensure staff include the Acknowledgement of Country on Barwon Health email signatures and in the footer of the staff intranet and website.	June 2019	Director Public Affairs and Communications
	Ensure any new Barwon Health sites display Acknowledgement of Country statements.	May 2019 ongoing	Director Public Affairs and Communications, Aboriginal Health Program Manager
	Celebrate/recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance by creating and publishing a calendar of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance for all staff.	July 2019/20 May 2019/20	Director Public Affairs and Communications
	List on One Point the key contacts for organising a Welcome to Country and maintaining respectful partnerships.	June 2019	Director Public Affairs and Communications
	Implement, communicate and review a cultural protocol document for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	July 2019	Executive Director Strategy Planning and Partnerships
	Provide and display Acknowledgment of Country statements at all Barwon Health sites.	May 2019	Director Public Affairs and Communications
	Include an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of all important internal and external meetings.	June 2019	Chief Executive Officer
	Include Barwon Health's Acknowledgement of Country on printed minutes, agendas and posters in meeting rooms.	June 2019	Director Public Affairs and Communications
	Invite a Traditional Owner to provide a Welcome to Country at Barwon Health's Annual Meetings and use opportunities to explain the significance of Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country at these events.	June 2019	Director Public Affairs and Communications
Encourage staff to include an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of all meetings and provide Acknowledgement of Country lanyard cards for staff.	December 2019	Director Public Affairs and Communications	

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
7. Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to engage with their culture and communities by celebrating NAIDOC Week	During NAIDOC week 2019/20 a bush tucker menu will be designed by Aboriginal staff and items will be available in the cafeteria for purchase e.g wattleseed scones & kangaroo stew.	July each year	Chairperson Byerrngitj Events Group
	Provide opportunities for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to participate with their cultures and communities during NAIDOC Week, and to attend the NAIDOC Week events at Wathaurong, and the NAIDOC march in Melbourne.	July each year ongoing	Chief Executive Officer
	Encourage staff representation on our local NAIDOC Week committee.	July each year ongoing	Aboriginal Health Program Manager
	Review Workforce policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week i.e. Cultural and Ceremonial leave policy.	October 2019	Director workforce
	Barwon Health will host the annual BH NAIDOC Awards acknowledging staff members who have driven change in the organisation either individually, as a group or made systemic change across the organisation.	July each year ongoing	Chairperson Byerrngitj Events Group
8. Expand opportunities for promotional participation in cultural events through the year	Barwon Health will explore holding an Aboriginal cultural event in the second half of the year e.g Remembrance Day – acknowledging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have fought for Australia across the various conflicts.	Nov 2019 and 2020	Chairperson Byerrngitj Events Group

CASE STUDY

Development of a Koorie Birth Suite at Barwon Health

Getting maternity care right for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women is critical to Closing the Gap. This includes strengthening our relationships with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community through increased understanding, recognition and trust and building on our connections with the Koorie Maternity Service.

Our goal is to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and families receive culturally safe and high-quality maternity care. We are committed to providing flexible, person-centred care, strengthened by Aboriginal cultural knowledge provided by our local Aboriginal community.

Barwon Health were very pleased to officially open the new addition to our maternity service, a Koorie Birth Suite.

Barwon Health has an 8-bed birth suite unit that cares for women in active labour in an environment that creates a sense of safety, trust and empowerment. The new Koorie Birth Suite adds a further dimension to this care, providing a symbolically spiritual connection to Wadawurrung land and Aboriginal cultures, paying our respects to the Traditional Custodians of this land on which Barwon Health works today.



Pictured: Artist Ammie Howell pictured in the Koorie Birth Suite with her artwork.



The new Koorie Birth Suite provides a powerful first impression for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service users and non-Indigenous people, and signifies how we value our relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We are proud to have on display the Acknowledgement of Country; and to be able to hang the original artwork from our local Aboriginal artist, in an area where everyone has the opportunity to appreciate it and contributes to a welcoming and respectful environment.

Barwon Health had the support of local Elders, respected people and community members in the planning and development of this Koorie

birth suite. Barwon Health is committed to Aboriginal self-determination and we are privileged to have had the development of the unit identified and directed by the Aboriginal community. Their input and decision making has assured the development of the most appropriate physical and safe environment for our maternity patients and their families.

In 2017 – 2018, 55 Aboriginal babies were born in our maternity ward, and we are anticipating even higher numbers in the future. Our new Koorie Birth suite is named 'Darrabarruk Pupup' meaning 'new baby'.



Opportunities

We aim to be an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in the Greater Geelong Region and are highly committed to increasing and retaining our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce across all areas of within our organisation. Additionally we provide many opportunities and modes of cultural learning to our non-Indigenous employees whilst also mentoring, coaching and professional development to advance career opportunities to our Aboriginal employees. Opportunities to advance the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians starts with education, employment, and self-determination; closing the unacceptable and ongoing health gap.

FOCUS AREA

Barwon Health values of

Innovation

We drive innovation for better care

Accountability

We take accountability for what we do

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9. Explore opportunities for recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members to raise the awareness of Aboriginal engagement and engagement programs	Promote awareness of opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on Barwon Health committees and Board sub-committees as Aboriginal community representative and to provide guidance and advice on cultural issues.	June 2019	Chief Executive Officer
	Promote awareness of volunteering opportunities within Barwon Health.	Aug 2020	Manager Volunteer Services
	Explore opportunities for recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander volunteers.	Aug 2020	Manager Volunteer Services

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Investigate opportunities to improve and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes within our workplace	Provide regular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data to the Executive Governance Committee and other relevant committees i.e. Workforce Governance committee.	June 2019 ongoing	Executive Director Strategy Planning and Partnerships
	Barwon Health will evaluate the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and retention strategy policy and procedure guideline.	December 2020	Director Workforce,
	Review the formal 'selection and recruitment' procedure as part of Workforce Governance systems to include cultural considerations to better engage prospective Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. e.g. formal education vs lived experience.	June 2019	Aboriginal Health Program Manager
	The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce will increase from 37 to a total of one percent Barwon Health employees by 2020 as per Barwon Health's existing Aboriginal employment Plan.	December 2020	Director Workforce
	Barwon Health will ensure inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on recruitment and selection panels.	June 2019	Director Workforce
	Develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professional development strategy to engage with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff through staff performance & development review audits.	December 2020	Aboriginal Health Program Manager
	Advertise all vacancies in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media including Koorie Mail, social media and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations including Wathaurong.	May 2019 ongoing	Director Workforce
	Review job advertisements to ensure inclusion of 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are encouraged to apply'.	May 2019 ongoing	Director Workforce
	Develop and implement Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment pathways (e.g. traineeships or internships) through Department of Health and Human Services workforce grants.	December 2019	Aboriginal Health Program Manager



Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Investigate opportunities to improve and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes within our workplace (<i>continued</i>)	Develop a range of different positions in multiple clinical and non clinical Departments and directorates in the organisation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.	June 2019 ongoing	Chief Executive Officer
	Engage with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on employment strategies, including professional development.	December 2020	Aboriginal Health Program Manager
	Review Workforce 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.	December 2020	Director Workforce
	Develop an Aboriginal staff network and a regular communique for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees of Barwon Health.	Mar/October 2019 & 2020	Aboriginal Health Program Manager
	Explore Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander placement and simulated learning opportunities.	December 2020	Director Clinical Education & Training
	Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to undertake further training and development opportunities - formal and informal, internal and external.	June 2019 ongoing	Executive Director Strategy Planning and Partnerships
11. Investigate opportunities to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity within our organisation	Barwon Health will continue to participate on the Aboriginal Economic Board with other signatory organisations and agencies.	July 2019 ongoing	Aboriginal Health Program Manager
	Become a member of 'Supply Nation'.	July 2019	Chief Financial Officer
	A RWG member champions Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity.	June 2019	Executive Director Strategy Planning and Partnerships
	Develop and pilot an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	December 2019	Executive Director Strategy Planning and Partnerships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11. Investigate opportunities to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity within our organisation (<i>continued</i>)	Develop and communicate to staff a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses that can be used to procure goods and services.	December 2019	Chief Financial Officer
	Develop at least one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander owned business.	December 2019	Chief Financial Officer
	Review and update procurement policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers for procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	December 2020	Chief Financial Officer
12. Explore opportunities to strengthen support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients accessing Barwon Health Services	Develop formalised and flexible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patient feedback process.	December 2020	Head of Patient Experience
	Modify GP referral templates for outpatient appointments to include identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status.	June 2019	Chief Medical Officer
	Initiate and conduct trial of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander access clinics within outpatients: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal ear, nose and throat (ENT) clinic • Aboriginal ophthalmology clinic • Aboriginal pain management clinic • Aboriginal liver clinic. 	December 2020	Aboriginal Health Program Manager
13. Build capacity for accommodation space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and families visiting Barwon Health from rural areas	Scope the availability of accommodation options for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and families visiting Barwon Health from rural areas at <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barwon Health's existing accommodation options • Kitjarra residence Deakin Institute of Koorie Education • Salvation Army Geelong Conference Centre <p>To ensure the accommodation options offered are fit for purpose, responsive to individual family needs and available for the duration of the request.</p>	December 2019	Executive Director Strategy Planning and Partnerships



Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
14. Build capacity of the Strengthening Health Service Response to Family Violence Initiative to respond to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients, staff and volunteers experiencing family violence	Explore the opportunity for an Aboriginal Health Liaison Officer to act as Family Violence Officer and provide support and advocacy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and volunteers seeking support for family violence.	December 2019	Strengthening Hospital Response to Family Violence Manager
	Explore the opportunity to develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family violence clinical champion within the Aboriginal Health Team.	December 2019	Strengthening Hospital Response to Family Violence Manager
	Investigate the opportunity to incorporate culturally specific and appropriate information into existing family violence training, policies and procedures.	December 2019	Strengthening Hospital Response to Family Violence Manager
	Ensure culturally specific family violence resources are available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients, staff and volunteers accessing Barwon Health.	December 2019	Strengthening Hospital Response to Family Violence Manager
	Investigate opportunities to develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family violence training package to ensure staff are appropriately trained to respond to Aboriginal Family Violence.	December 2019	Strengthening Hospital Response to Family Violence Manager
15. Increase employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders through community engagement program in pharmacy	Investigate the appointment of an Aboriginal Liaison Officer within pharmacy to engage the local Aboriginal community and local pharmacists to develop and enhance the quality use of medicines activities.	December 2020	Director Pharmacy
	Barwon Health clinical pharmacists in collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health workers and registered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners (internally and externally) to investigate addressing medicine management needs within mental health, maternity services and the liver clinic.	December 2020	Director Pharmacy



Governance, tracking progress and reporting

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
16. Report Reconciliation Action Plan achievements, challenges and learnings to Reconciliation Australia	Complete and submit the Reconciliation Action Plan Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia annually.	September 2019 and 2020	Aboriginal Health Program Manager
	Investigate participating in the Reconciliation Action Plan Barometer.	May 2020	Executive Director Strategy Planning and Partnerships
17. Report Reconciliation Action Plan achievements, challenges and learnings internally and externally	Publically report our Reconciliation Action Plan achievements, challenges and learnings by highlighting at events, on Barwon Health media platforms, and in the Wathaurong newsletter.	Jan 2020	Chief Executive Officer
	Develop and implement systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on Reconciliation Action Plan activities using relevant Victorian State Government frameworks.	June 2019 and June 2020	Executive Director Strategy Planning and Partnerships
	Provide reporting of the Reconciliation Action Plan achievements challenges and learning to the Barwon Health Board and sub committees.	June/ December 2019 & 2020	Chief Executive Officer
18. Review, refresh and update Reconciliation Action Plan	Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new Reconciliation Action Plan based on learnings, challenges and achievements.	June 2020	Executive Director Strategy Planning and Partnerships
	Send draft Reconciliation Action Plan to Reconciliation Australia for review and feedback.	October 2020	Chairperson RWG
	Submit draft Reconciliation Action Plan to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement.	December 2020	Chairperson RWG







Dr Mel Carroll, Aboriginal Junior Medical Officer

The opportunity to secure a Junior Medical Officer position at Barwon Health in 2017 gave me the opportunity to enhance my knowledge, practice and skills in clinical delivery. Over a two year period I was able to work in a fast paced Emergency Department and across various medical and surgical specialty units including aged care, gastroenterology and Neurology.

There is a lot of work being undertaken to improve Indigenous health and employment in the Barwon/ Geelong region. I have been lucky to be involved with activities within Barwon Health as well as Deakin University and the local Aboriginal Medical Service. Barwon Health's RAP and Aboriginal Employment Plan is an important part of increasing the Aboriginal workforce and supports the careers of Aboriginal Graduates, Cadets and Trainees. When I first started at Barwon Health I was the only Aboriginal JMO. In 2019 there are two, and the aim is for this to continually increase as the years go by.

grindstone

Concept and design / Grindstone Creative

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OUR VALUES

RESPECT
COMPASSION
COMMITMENT
ACCOUNTABILITY
INNOVATION

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