



Reconciliation *Action Plan*

March 2025 – March 2027



Peninsula
Health



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

INNOVATE



Artwork Description

Travelling the Song Lines that connect Country where we gather under Grandfather Sun.

About the Artist

Eamon Roberts, a proud Gomillaroi man living on Bunurong Country, infuses the Dreamtime and Song Lines into his contemporary traditional art at Miri Art Creations, where 'Miri' signifies 'Star' in Gomillaroi.

Acknowledgement

Peninsula Health acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where its Health Services are located. We acknowledge the Bunurong/Boon Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Peninsula Health also acknowledges the ongoing connection First Nations Peoples have to Country across our nation, and that Sovereignty has never been ceded.

We acknowledge that for many First Nations Peoples, intergenerational loss and trauma as a result of dispossession, colonisation and removal from Country, homelands and family has had a significant impact on health and wellbeing.

We support the Uluru Statement from the Heart's request to walk together in a movement for a better future for First Nations Peoples, Country and the broader community.

Warning

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples should be aware that this document may contain images of a deceased person.

Terminology

The terms First Nations Peoples and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are used throughout this document. The term First Nations Peoples refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. Both terms refer to the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, remembering that some individuals will identify as a person of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent, family and Country connection.

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Message from Aunty Helen Bnads

Elder/Cultural Lead, Peninsula Health

It's important to remember when reading this document that Peninsula Health recognises and respects Traditional Custodians and our community members who have been removed from their homelands and cultures as part of the Stolen Generations.

As a result of past government policy of protection and assimilation, community members of all ages may be unable to articulate their ancestry, cultural and homelands connections. Their connection to Country, culture and home may be on the lands where they have lived most of their lives.

The numbers of community members and young people who have come to live in Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula from across Australia are high, and this is why the continuous cultural safety education of our teams across Peninsula Health is critical.

Some young people today may also be unable to make connections due to early removal from families; and intergenerational removal, loss, trauma and grief within their families that continues to impact them today.

While the Victorian Aboriginal Child and Community Agency (VACCA) and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) throughout Victoria, along with good practice mainstream organisations, work towards family finding and reunification, this is not always possible.

Many First Nations People, including young people today, are at a loss about their Country and culture, and so their identity and health may suffer. This is a deeply traumatic experience for many across the community and directly impacts health and wellbeing.

We ask that great care is taken in the use of language when working with community members and staff, in acknowledgement that some may find it difficult to answer the question, "Do you identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander?", if yes, any further questions relating to culture and homelands may or may not be difficult to respond to. Recent Voice Referendum outcomes have also left many rejected and unwelcome in their own Country and home.

What is possible for us at Peninsula Health is to celebrate culture and identity – directly and indirectly – through continuing to create culturally safe and welcoming environments, services and opportunities with our community members. This can have a healing impact for many – critical in an organisation where our core charter is to improve physical, social and emotional health and wellbeing for all.

Peninsula Health acknowledges and respects a holistic view of health, as expressed in the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) charter. We work towards embedding this view across all we do to build respect, relationships, opportunities and good governance in our reconciliation actions.

'Aboriginal Health means not just the physical wellbeing of an individual but refers to the social, emotional and cultural wellbeing of the whole Community in which each individual is able to achieve their full potential as a human being thereby bringing about the total wellbeing of their Community. It is a whole-of-life view and includes the cyclical concept of life-death-life.'

The following message from Uncle Shane Clarke at Bunurong Council captures this holistic view of health and wellbeing. I encourage you all to deeply listen to this message.

Aunty Helen Bnads

Message from Uncle Shane Clarke

Bunurong Land Council
Aboriginal Corporation

Bunurong Land Council is pleased to acknowledge the commitment of Peninsula Health in paying respect to the spirit of this land, ocean and waterways and its First Peoples.

It is important for all Victorians to understand and appreciate the history and culture of the Indigenous people of Melbourne, the Kulin People, who have played a significant role in the development of Melbourne, both before and after European arrival. This is Bunurong Country and part of Victoria's Kulin Nation. Our Ancestors had a deep, cultural connection with the Country, the ocean and waterways on Bunurong Country. They had a deep understanding on every living thing, every tree, every animal and the key to the complex balance of all things, which our People had managed to evolve and sustain. Every rock, leaf, dune, and artifact in our Country has significance and people today are still learning of the complexities of our Ancestors.

There are many sites that contain evidence that span thousands of years, that our People continued to visit where they sat to make fire, cook food, eat together and tell stories. The whole region is connected by thousands of generations worth of tradition, stories and song. Some of our sites were created at a time when our People could look back over Nairm (Port Phillip Bay) to see a grassy plain with the Yarra River winding its way out to sea over a beautiful waterfall. Trying to quantify our connection to this land is difficult due to its long history. Words barely scratch the surface when explaining our connection, so any attempts to describe the significance of this land seem understated.

The Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation is a large and inclusive organisation that represents Bunurong/Boon Wurrung people, their culture and heritage. We provide a unified voice for our 300+ members and support our People's cultural goals and aspirations. Over 2,000 generations of our people have been here before us. Over the last 50,000 years our People have adapted to a range of significant changes within their Country.

Our stories of the Bay flooding with water, asteroid impacts near Cranbourne, Arthurs Seat once being an Island, volcanic activity in the western suburbs, the great floods, fires and earthquakes all speak of such events.

We continue to adapt today reaching high levels of corporate governance and expanding our enterprises. We work with schools, universities, government, shire councils, health-care providers, developers, archaeologists, Friends groups, artists, filmmakers, the local community and others in a range of ways to ultimately protect and promote Bunurong/Boon Wurrung culture and heritage.

We have a very special relationship with Peninsula Health, who respectfully works together with all the Aboriginal organisations along the Mornington Peninsula. Their unrelenting support has been very humbling for our community. The BLCAC has been involved in and support the Peninsula Health Reconciliation Action Plan and we look forward to working with Peninsula Health to achieve the positive and necessary goals within it.

Uncle Shane Clarke

Message from Our Chief Executive

Our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) marks Peninsula Health's ongoing and significant reconciliation journey with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

As an organisation, we are committed to improving care and service provision for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and we will continue to engage with our community to inform this.

This RAP has been developed by a Working Group, with staff from across the organisation and consumer advisors, as well as representatives from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

In harmony with the objectives of the Healthy Lives Strategic Plan 2028, our RAP pledges to deliver culturally safe care tailored to the unique requirements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Our vision, outlined in this plan, is to provide the best of care that is self-determined, culturally safe, welcoming and close to home for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.



This vision will drive our commitments to strengthen and further develop our relationships, respect, and the opportunities we have not only to improve health outcomes, but to contribute to the socioeconomic determinants of health, including education and employment.

We will play our role in addressing Council of Australian Governments (COAG) targets, as set out in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. In particular, we will work to contribute to closing the gap in life expectancy by 2031, by supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to access the care and services needed, to live long and healthy lives.

We will also continue to embed the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards, ensuring we provide a welcoming environment at all of our sites, which recognises the importance of the cultural beliefs and practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

While we have a RAP Working Group that guides and drives our commitments, we consider all our staff as leaders in our workplace who have opportunities to raise awareness and demonstrate our reconciliation values, culture and commitments with each other and the community we serve.

This Innovate RAP provides a platform and specific actions and deliverables, across our organisation, to convert our vision into action.

I commend the work undertaken in developing this robust plan. I look forward to working with Peninsula Health staff, consumer advisors and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members to achieve our vision for reconciliation, as outlined in this RAP.

Adjunct Associate Professor Helen Cooper
Chief Executive, Peninsula Health



Message from

Karen Mundine

Chief Executive Officer,
Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia commends Peninsula Health on the formal endorsement of its third Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

With close to three million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. Peninsula Health continues to be part of a strong network of more than 3,000 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and transformed it into action.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously strengthen reconciliation commitments and constantly strive to apply learnings in new ways.

An Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey. It is a time to build the strong foundations and relationships that ensure

sustainable, thoughtful, and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

An integral part of building these foundations is reflecting on and cataloguing the successes and challenges of previous RAPs. Learnings gained through effort and innovation are invaluable resources that Peninsula Health will continuously draw upon to create RAP commitments rooted in experience and maturity.

These learnings extend to Peninsula Health using the lens of reconciliation to better understand its core business, sphere of influence, and diverse community of staff and stakeholders.

The RAP program's emphasis on relationships, respect, and opportunities gives organisations a framework from which to foster connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples rooted in mutual collaboration and trust.

This Innovate RAP is an opportunity for Peninsula Health to strengthen these relationships, gain crucial experience, and nurture connections that will become the lifeblood of its future RAP commitments. By enabling and empowering staff to contribute to this process, Peninsula Health will ensure shared and cooperative success in the long-term.

Gaining experience and reflecting on pertinent learnings will ensure the sustainability of Peninsula Health's future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, providing meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Peninsula Health on your third Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer,
Reconciliation Australia

Message from Our RAP Working Group

In line with Reconciliation Australia's 2025 theme, 'Bringing Now to Next', our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is crucial.

It is our pledge to rebuild trust by actively listening to and acting on feedback from our community members. Despite challenges like the recent impact of the Voice Referendum outcome and COVID-19 on the community, we are committed to using our resources and influence to the best of our ability to achieve our vision for reconciliation.

In looking forward, we are excited about the implementation of our RAP and working with our RAP advisors, alongside continued collaboration with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, local Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) including Gathering Places, the Victorian Aboriginal Child and Community Agency (VACCA), First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing, Bunjilwarra, and all those who share our vision and interests in accelerating reconciliation.

The RAP Working Group will continue to seek and embed the voices of our First Nations staff and community in our work across Peninsula Health to convert the commitments and intentions of our 2025-2027 Innovate RAP into action.

RAP Working Group

Our Vision for Reconciliation

Best of care, self-determined,
culturally safe, welcoming
and close to home

Our vision for reconciliation is about self-determined, quality, accessible and equitable care across the life continuum from birth through to aged and palliative care. We want to see all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members experience a welcoming and culturally safe environment when accessing our services and support.

We know that to achieve this vision we need to embrace all areas of our work and relationships: from direct service delivery, through to the capacity building of our employees and building partnerships with local Aboriginal organisations to influence change and support the reconciliation movement.

We acknowledge a holistic view of health as part of making our vision work, as defined by First Nations Peoples, and the importance of capturing First Nations voices, lived experiences past and present, and knowledge about health and wellbeing as we go about implementing our vision and RAP actions to support that vision.

Our vision is to also create pathways from school through to higher education and employment at Peninsula Health. To do this, we will build stronger relationships and opportunities with our local community stakeholders and partners, education providers, internal and external business partners to create and support training and employment pathways, across all business areas. We have significant influence and partnerships and therefore opportunities to drive greater education and employment outcomes for First Nations Peoples, particularly in health-related professions such as procurement, administration, health promotion and many more, where First Nations Peoples remain significantly under-represented.

We know how important it is for the whole community to see and experience Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples at work, or in business in the health industry. We at Peninsula Health recognise that reconciliation is everyone's responsibility.

**Bringing Now to Next
- we acknowledge
the path to true
reconciliation is
about truth-telling
and partnerships,
internally and
externally, to build
the best possible
health and life
outcomes with
Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander
Peoples, families and
organisations.**

Introducing Peninsula Health

Our Core Business

Peninsula Health is the major metropolitan health service for Frankston and the Mornington Peninsula. We have undergone significant growth and transformation in recent years and are recognised as a leading metropolitan health service. Our services for the community include care across the life continuum from obstetrics, paediatrics, emergency medicine, intensive care, critical care, surgical and general medicine, rehabilitation and oncology, through to aged care and palliative care. We also provide extensive services in community health, education and promotion, ambulatory care and mental health. We are a major teaching and research health facility, training the next generation of doctors, nurses, allied health professionals and support staff.

We care for a population of around **300,000** people, which swells to over **400,000** people during the peak tourism season between December and March.

Our health service consists of five major sites:

Frankston Hospital, Rosebud Hospital, Golf Links Road Rehabilitation Centre, The Mornington Centre and Frankston Public Surgical Centre. We also have five community mental health facilities and five community health centres in Frankston, Mornington, Rosebud, Hastings and Carrum.

The Community We Support

Our local community has some unique demographic features and challenges, including:

- higher than average rate of population ageing
- mix of wealth and extreme disadvantage
- higher than average rates of vulnerable children, homelessness and family violence
- higher than average rates of chronic diseases and mental health issues.

The 2021 Census established that **1803** individuals living in Frankston and the surrounding suburbs identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and **1720** individuals identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Peoples in the Mornington Peninsula Shire.

Important to note that the First Nations age profile differs from the demographic features noted above for the broader population. This fact is taken into account in our RAP and service planning. Demographic differences of most relevance are that the median age for First Nations community members is somewhere between 5-24 and that rates of disadvantage are high, not only in our catchment but across Australia. In a socioeconomic determinants view of health, this data is critical in informing the actions with this RAP, and our service delivery more broadly. This includes the role we can play in improving direct health-care service delivery and health outcomes, community engagement, education and employment.



Employment at Peninsula Health

Peninsula Health employs approximately **7500 staff** and around **550 volunteers**, consumer advisors and auxiliary members. Currently we employ **26 staff** who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Employment roles at Peninsula Health include care across the life continuum from obstetrics, paediatrics, emergency medicine, intensive care, critical care, surgical and general medicine, rehabilitation and oncology, through to aged care, allied health and palliative care. We also provide extensive health services in community, education, promotion, ambulatory care and mental health.

We are also a major teaching and research health facility, training the next generation of doctors, nurses, allied health professionals and support staff. We have strong partnerships with Monash University, Deakin University, La Trobe University, Chisholm Institute and Holmesglen Institute.

Peninsula Health Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2021-2024

Our Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2021-2024 affirms Peninsula Health's ongoing commitment to Closing the Gap in employment and economic outcomes. We are committed as part of our RAP actions to review and update our approaches to the attraction, recruitment, development and retention of First Nations Peoples into our workforce.

Peninsula Health has spent significant time and effort to remove systemic and other barriers to employment. We need to address how our organisation can do better, as we seek to become an employer of choice across all of our service, administration and business areas.

Our RAP commitment to review and update our Aboriginal and Employment Strategy will be championed by our Chief Executive, Elder/Cultural Lead, RAP Working Group and People, Workplace Safety and Wellbeing Team. Our review will include a revisit of the intent and potential of the Local Jobs First Act 2003 (Vic) and where Peninsula Health can assist a strong move towards local jobs for local people, including our First Nations community.

We will also refresh our knowledge of State and Commonwealth directions and incentives in employment and procurement (for indirect employment opportunities). Our goal is to increase our direct employment ratio to two per cent of our workforce by 2030, over five years. A three per cent target is aligned with Victorian State Government targets for the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in the health industry.

In summary, post COVID-19 and in a competitive Aboriginal employment environment, our new Aboriginal Employment Strategy will include innovative strategies to better attract, develop and retain staff, including how we increase pathways from local schools, vocational and tertiary partners and the community to further education and employment at Peninsula Health. It will also explore how procurement can create indirect employment outcomes through the purchase of goods and services from First Nations businesses.



Image: First Nations Fellows
Dr Angela La Macchia and Dr Tim Smith

Our Sphere *of Influence*

Peninsula Health is a major employer and service provider in south-east Victoria. We maintain a significant number of key relationships and stakeholders who can influence and support our RAP commitments. Internally, our approaches to RAP development and implementation is championed by our Board of Directors, Chief Executive and Executive Team, with an Elder/Cultural Lead appointment to advise the leadership team, and RAP Working Group.



Image: Leesa Gogorossis, Director Complex Services, Nadine Mallah, Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer and Kunal Mahajan, Aboriginal and Allied Health Manager

By way of example in external relationships, we have strong partnerships with Monash University, Deakin University, La Trobe University, Chisholm Institute and Holmesglen Institute with a significant influence and opportunity to develop the next generation of First Nations health professionals from schools through to higher education.

We also have strong partnerships with all levels of Government with a clear charter to work collaboratively and in compliance with National and State standards and targets for health-service delivery, employment, purchase of goods and services, and addressing disadvantage, access and equity across all areas of our business.

Peninsula Health is also a major purchaser of goods and services, with a redevelopment of the Frankston Hospital underway as a result of a public private partnership (PPP) and investment to build the new hospital. PPP arrangements, where State and Commonwealth funding has been attracted, bring a significant opportunity for the client, in this case Peninsula Health and Government, to influence opportunity creation in relation to employment and procurement of goods and services. The intent is to leave a legacy of social and economic improvements in the lives of those most disadvantaged in a community where the major project is being delivered. This includes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, vulnerable youth, women and disadvantaged people.

Peninsula Health is committed to working with the Exemplar Health consortium, as part of our RAP delivery, and at all stages of the project from design, construction and ongoing maintenance to make sure these opportunities are realised. Peninsula Health will also be reviewing other areas of influence including its key relationships and procurement of goods and services, so that it can influence and accelerate opportunity creation that advances reconciliation, and overall health and wellbeing with First Nations community members, and the broader community.

Our Elder/Cultural Lead also holds a position on Peninsula Health's Community Advisory Committee.

Introducing Our Reconciliation Action Plan

Why We Are Developing Our RAP

Peninsula Health - 'Bringing Now to Next' - is committed to the development and successful implementation of its reconciliation commitments and actions. We acknowledge and take seriously our role as a significant employer and provider of integrated health and related services, working alongside all sections of the community, including Traditional Custodians, community members, governments, the private sector, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), our stakeholders and partners to establish action that can directly or indirectly impact for the better the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and the broader community.

While we are proud of our reconciliation journey, we know we can always do better, and stand ready to do so.

The primary goal of this RAP is to dig deeper into all areas of our business and service delivery to realise our potential to drive reconciliation, including increased levels of respect, strong relationships, opportunity creation and excellent governance of our RAP activities. Our RAP document will be used as a roadmap, a 'living document', as we believe through continuous review, adjustment and collaboration internally and externally we will turn our intentions into impactful actions and change on-the-ground.

'Hospitals are in a position to lead the way, directly and indirectly, about racism. Hospitals can create education for their own people, but they can also desensitise the community to racism, such as staff and little kids seeing a glass display of artefacts in reception, artwork and the stories of the artists, healing gardens with local plants and information about them where all can meet such as those with mental health challenges, kids' rooms with murals.'

ACCOs First Nations Lead

The Minya Barmah room at Shepparton Hospital is often referred to as an example of what is possible.

Our RAP Journey So Far

Peninsula Health commenced its formal reconciliation journey in 2013 with the development of our Statement of Commitment to Reconciliation, followed by our first Reflect RAP. Since then, Peninsula Health has progressed to an Innovate RAP, with this RAP (2025-2027), being its second Innovate RAP.

The decision to remain at the Innovate level was made to enable Peninsula Health, the community, stakeholders and partners to be consulted with time and space to reflect, recover and rebuild post COVID-19, and the demands and final outcome of the Voice Referendum in 2023. Traditional Custodians, peak bodies, ACCOs and community members were significantly impacted by both these events.

We are appreciative that our internal voices and leadership have been strengthened through these events, and our commitment to reconciliation has not wavered. There is now a clear understanding that reconciliation is all our business at Peninsula Health.

Through consultations with Traditional Custodians, ACCOs, including Gathering Places, and with key individuals and stakeholders, the current RAP research team led by the Elder/Cultural Lead and supporting consultant, were often advised that there is exhaustion, disappointment, anger and rejection being felt by many community members on the ground. This required validation, sensitivity and acknowledge that this RAP, and Peninsula Health itself, remains strongly committed to a more impactful reconciliation journey going forward.

Issues and Opportunities Raised

Those consulted were very positive about their relationship with Peninsula Health, and have an interest in continuing to work collaboratively going forward. Issues raised were mainly about the potential for Peninsula Health to increase its focus on employment pathways, attraction, development and retention of staff across the organisation. Employment pathways need to start early, be innovative and apply to all business areas within the organisation.

Procurement was also referred to as an opportunity area as Peninsula Health was noted as a significant employer and purchaser of goods and services. With a major redevelopment project underway, the opportunity exists to approach and engage local community organisations and their goods and services.

Other issues raised relate more directly to improved service delivery, cultural safety and cultural competency. These issues included:

- › Pre- and post-birthing experiences for young women and babies, where removal is likely to occur as traumatic for both mother/parent and child. Noted was the Welcome Baby to Country with Willum Warrain Gathering Place as an example of what is possible.
- › Better and bespoke arrangements when supporting children and young people in out-of-home care, including foster parents, kinship carers and service providers accompanying children and youth into the hospital. Leaving Care young people was noted as a high priority for connection to health services, with VACCA and Berry Street doing some specific work together, that Peninsula Health could support
- › Increased and urgent support needed for parents and carers of children and young people with disability, including for neurological assessments, suspected autism and behavioural management support needs. Delays can lead to significant distress for the child and care-givers. Examples were given of 12-month waiting periods for children with complex needs. This can lead to families being unable to care for children
- › Prioritising children and young people with disability, including neurological disorders such as autism, in Emergency Departments and providing a quiet, culturally affirming, child friendly waiting areas
- › More outreach and health promotion/education activities in collaboration with Gathering Places, and also with First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing
- › Bespoke cultural competency professional development with staff (all levels) following cultural safety training. For example, those working in mental health, birthing, nurses and doctors and people management
- › Continue to develop the Peninsula Health relationship with Bunjilwarra and for collaboration in support of young people with healing, alcohol and other drugs support needs.

An updated Cultural Audit was suggested as a good starting point to embrace and plan actions to resolve these issues, and to progress opportunities for improved access, cultural safety and quality of care.

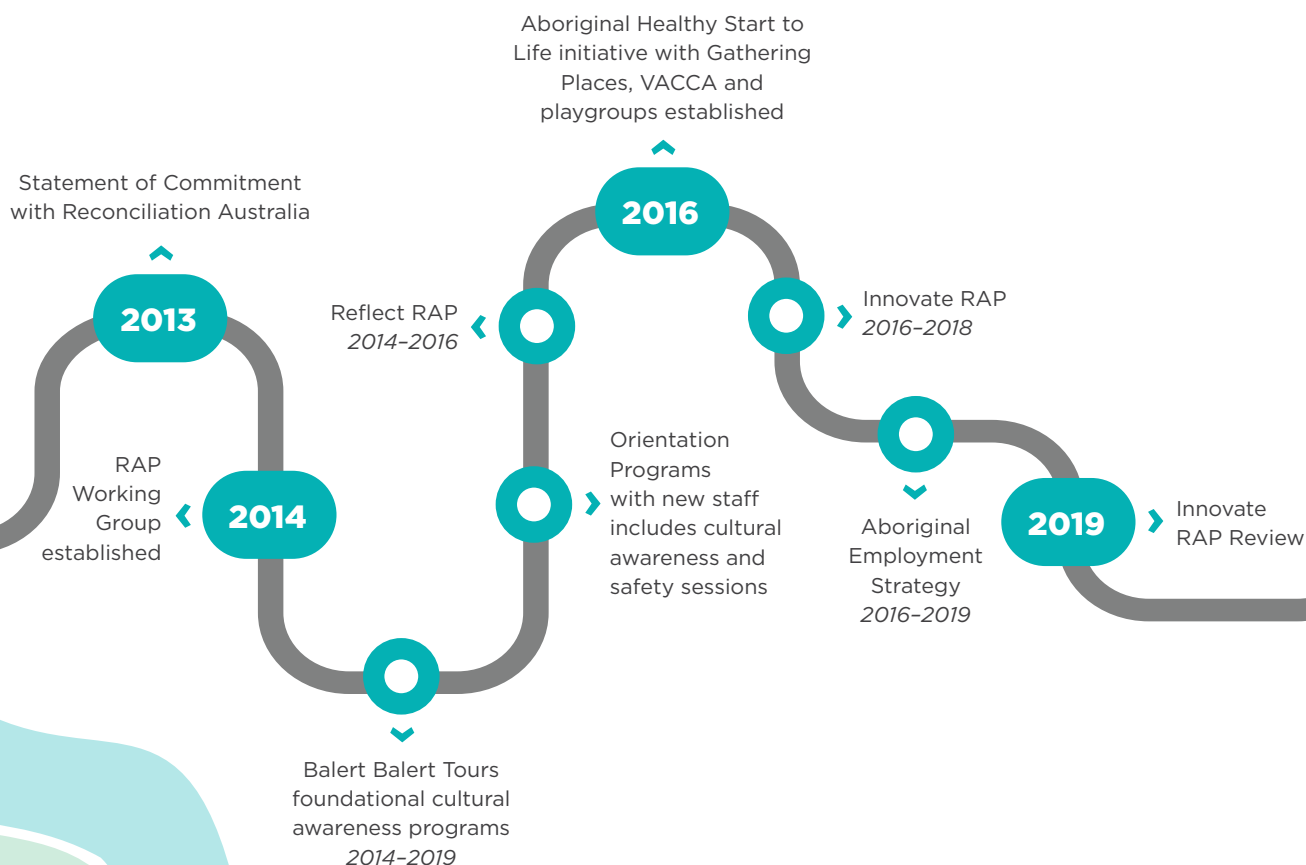
Peninsula Health remains committed to the development of its RAP, with a goal post this RAP to have clearly reached capacity and demonstrated ability to move to a Stretch RAP level for 2027. The development of our RAP provides a roadmap for this goal, and for us to listen, plan, implement and measure how impactful we have been in achieving our commitments and actions. The RAP development has provided us with an opportunity to revisit our key community relationships and partnerships, internally and externally, and to design a RAP we believe is courageous and achievable, reflecting issues and opportunities raised throughout consultations.

As the chair of our RAP working group, our Executive Director Operations provides senior leadership and champions our RAP internally and externally, supported by the Board and Executive Leadership team.

The Elder/Cultural Lead advises the Chief Executive and the Executive leadership within Peninsula Health. In 2024, two new members of the RAP Working Group were invited to support Peninsula Health: a representative from the Bunurong Land Council and the broader community (male and female). This will increase the voices of First Nations Peoples, not only to the RAP Working Group, but to the business areas in which RAP Working Group members operate.

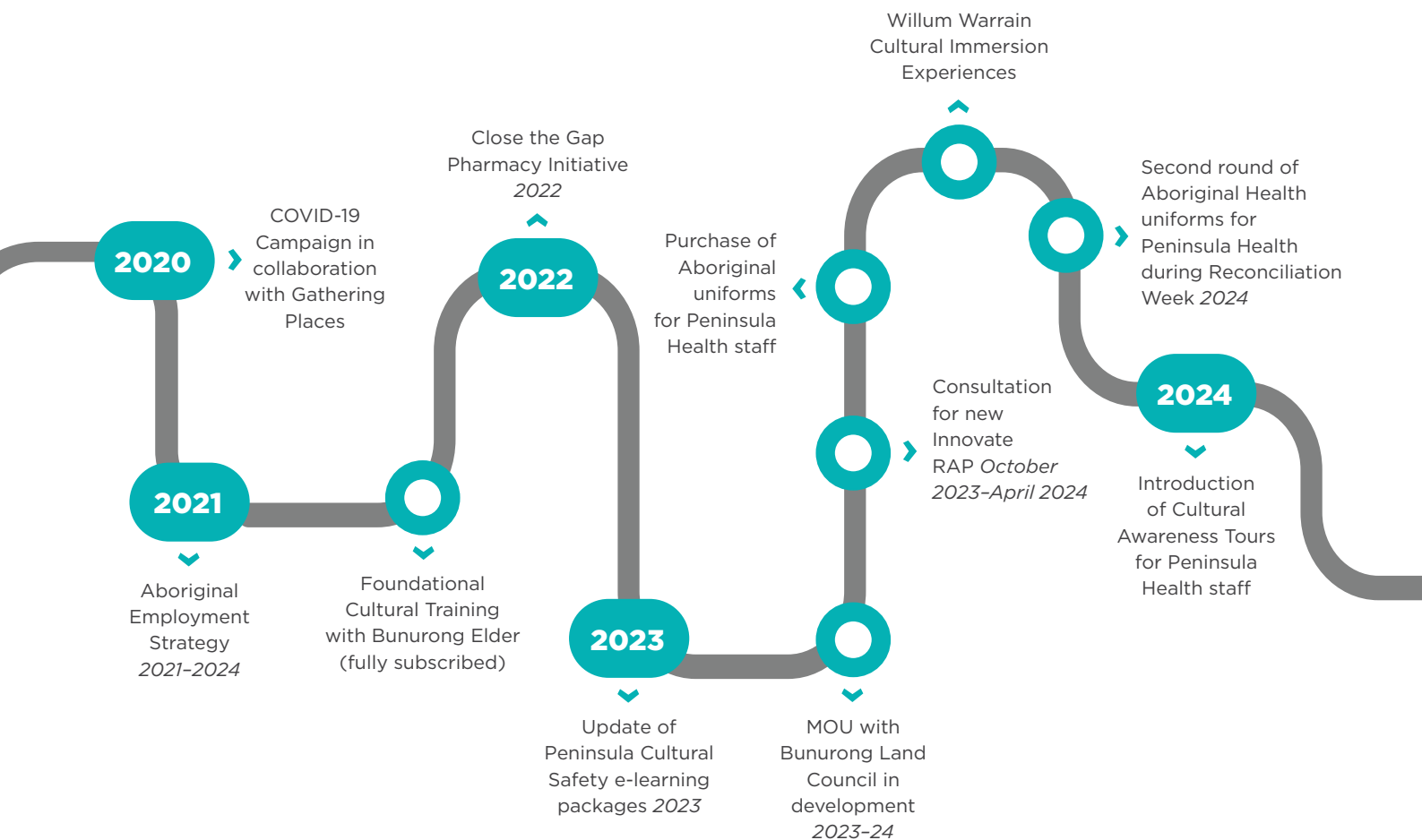
Our RAP Working Group actively engages and empowers their team members to be proactive and innovative in their areas of business, control and influence.

Some Highlights of Our Journey So Far



The RAP Working Group consists of the following Peninsula Health roles:

- › Executive Director Operations
- › General Manager Acute, Medicine, Sub-Acute and Integrated Care
- › Operations Director Community Health
- › Aboriginal Elder/Cultural Lead
- › Executive Director People, Workplace Safety and Wellbeing
- › Director Complex Services
- › Procurement Manager
- › Procurement Officer
- › Operations Director, Women’s Children’s and Adolescent Health
- › Director Safer Care
- › Clinical Director Integrated Care and Ambulatory Health
- › Head of Communications
- › Manager Employee Capability and Engagement
- › Manager Aboriginal and Allied Health, Community Care
- › Director Communications and Philanthropy
- › Community Representative
- › Aboriginal Healthy Start to Life Worker
- › Koori Maternity Services Midwife
- › Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officer
- › Operations Assistant Community and Ambulatory Care



Our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan



Image: Aunty Helen Bnads with Murrundindi, Ngurungaeta (Head Man) and Elder of the Wurundjeri tribe

RELATIONSHIPS

Peninsula Health is committed to strengthening its existing and emerging relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members who seek our services. Our RAP will place a high priority on consumer feedback, advice and actions to implement our vision.

Peninsula Health is committed to working alongside Traditional Custodians, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) such as Gathering Places, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHOs), peak bodies, services and education providers, governments, businesses, philanthropists and the broader community to support our RAP. We appreciate that all these organisations, and more, have a role, value, knowledge and relationships that can support our vision, and genuine commitment to partnership in progressing reconciliation for all.

We will explore and act on our sphere of influence to advance reconciliation, and to improve health and life outcomes for First Nations Peoples. We also acknowledge the critical role relationships and partnerships play in creating opportunities to impact the social determinants of health including economy, education and employment.

At Peninsula Health we will be focusing on relationships that can assist us to do better on education and employment pathways into our workforce. We are committed to building relationships internally and externally that can support our goal of increasing the number of First Nations Peoples choosing a career in the health industry.

In particular, we will seek to build strong relationships with all those organisations within our sphere of influence including ACCOs, schools, TAFEs and universities that share our commitment to building an increased First Nations workforce, including as doctors, nurses and allied health professionals.

We can have this impact. Our consultations for this RAP also tell us we need to think innovatively and build strong relationships with our business partners on the ground. Internally we need to encourage relationships between our business teams, as together we can lead and support practical action to build reconciliation. We know that without respect and relationships there is no opportunity for reconciliation.

We will build innovative, respectful and strong relationships for a future that sees reconciliation embedded across all our services and business operations, from direct to indirect service delivery, but within our sphere of influence.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement, including Traditional Custodians (MOU is in development with the Bunurong Land Council), the Gathering Places, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHOs) and key Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations such as VACCA and First Peoples' Health and Wellbeing 	Review Annually June 2025, June 2026	Elder/Cultural Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Develop and implement user-friendly and achievable engagement plans to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. Scope the areas where Peninsula Health can collaborate to support stand-alone or partnership activity in support of improved health outcomes and reconciliation 	March 2025	Dir. Comms and Philanthropy
Establish an annual gathering of local stakeholders and organisations to bring together community members with the RAP Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Community members attend a gathering to share what is happening at Peninsula Health, and to also share their views about reconciliation with Peninsula Health; information can be used to reflect on and adjust RAP actions for greater impact 	June 2025, June 2026	Dir. Complex Services
Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff 	May 2025, May 2026	Dir. Comms and Philanthropy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event 	27 May-3 June 2025-2026	Chair, RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW 	27 May-3 June 2025-2026	Elder/Cultural Lead, via local manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Organise and host at least one NRW event each year 	27 May-3 June 2025-2026	Chair, RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website 	May 2025, 2026	Dir. Complex Services

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence	› Develop, implement and embed strategies to engage Peninsula Health staff and service providers in reconciliation	August 2025	Chair and Co-Chair, RAP Working Group
	› Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly	August 2025	Dir. Comms and Philanthropy
	› Explore opportunities to engage our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes, including developing a First Nations Procurement of Goods and Services policy and practice guideline	August 2025	Dir. Procurement
	› Collaborate with RAP and other like-minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation as a partnership	August 2025	Elder/Cultural Lead
Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies	› Conduct a review of People, Workplace Safety and Wellbeing policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs	August 2025	Dir. People, Workplace Safety and Wellbeing
	› Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to promote and continue to review our anti-discrimination policy	August 2025	Elder/Cultural Lead
	› Develop a bespoke leadership professional development experience that includes how racism is identified and responded to in the organisation	January 2026	Dir. Complex Services, Learning Hub, People and Culture
	› Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism	April 2025	Dir. Complex Services, Learning Hub, People and Culture, Executive Leadership



Image: Josephine Onufryk, Community Care

RESPECT

Peninsula Health acknowledges and respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' unceded and continuing connection to the lands and waters across our nation. We acknowledge the continuing impacts of dispossession and colonisation on the individuals, families and communities we support today. These impacts are far-reaching and intergenerational.

The physical, spiritual, cultural, social and emotional health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have been directly impacted by past and recent events, including the YES Campaign and result (October 2023). It affirmed for us, including through consultations for this Reconciliation Action Plan, that community members, now more than ever, need to be embraced and included in our efforts to build respectful and equitable policy and health practice.

At Peninsula Health, we acknowledge that our efforts to build respectful and impactful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples must include truth-telling, education, reflective and collaborative practice across the business to achieve respectful relationships and opportunity for change, within in our sphere of influence, impacting the delivery of our services.

Peninsula Health also acknowledges and is committed to listening and hearing about the vast knowledge together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples about health and wellbeing.

We are committed to embedding as part of our service delivery approaches that are advised as good, culturally safe practice that is likely to contribute to improved health and wellbeing, across the life cycle. We are committed to respectful and reciprocal sharing of knowledge with First Nations health, social, cultural and emotional wellbeing leaders and community members as we strive to continuously improve our own levels of respect, knowledge and practice.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<p>Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning, including with Traditional Custodians and the broader First Nations community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation 	September 2025	Elder/Cultural Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Continue delivery of the foundational cultural safety and relationship building training with Traditional Owners and local Aboriginal community-controlled organisations 	September 2025	Elder/Cultural Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Celebrate and share positive cultural practice, innovation and progression 	September 2025	Elder/Cultural Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Consult local Traditional Custodians and our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisation partners to inform our cultural learning strategy 	March 2025	Elder/Cultural Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Develop, implement and communicate a new Peninsula Health Cultural Learning Strategy document for our staff that includes a variety of learning modalities and experiences 	June 2025	Dir. Education and Training
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Provide specific opportunities for RAP Working Group members, People, Workplace Safety and Wellbeing managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and informal structured cultural learning 	March 2025	Elder/Cultural Lead & Dir. Complex Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Conduct annual Cultural Audits across all areas of Peninsula Health business and service delivery and use this information and team to engage in continuous improvement, monitoring and support to reconciliation. 	August 2025, 2026	Elder/Cultural Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Establish with Monash University, and relevant other tertiary providers, tailored professional development programs for Peninsula Health staff (all levels) that build cultural competency skills with staff working in discrete professional areas 	July 2025	Dir. Education & Training

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols 	July 2025, 2026, 2027	Elder/Cultural Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh our cultural protocol documents, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country 	August 2025, August 2026	Elder/Cultural Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to invite a local Traditional Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year 	RCW and NAIDOC week 2025 & 2026	Elder/Cultural Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings 	July 2025, 2026	All staff, supported by Elder/Cultural Lead
Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event 	July 2025, 2026	Chair, RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an opportunity for staff and community to work together to prepare and deliver an on-site celebration of NAIDOC Week 	July 2025, 2026	Elder/Cultural Lead & Dir. Complex Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week. 	April 2025, 2026	Dir. People Operations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support managers to encourage staff to participate in NAIDOC Week events 	July 2025, 2026	Chair, RAP Working Group



Image: Cliff Morris and Nadine Mallah, Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officers, with Kunal Mahajan, Aboriginal and Allied Health Manager at the Bay Mob Expo

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Connecting you and your family
to culturally appropriate
community services.
Peninsula Health

OPPORTUNITIES

Peninsula Health is a significant organisation in the local community with a critical role in integrated health care and sphere of influence.

We are committed to exploring and acting on the opportunities we can create internally and with our partners and stakeholders in areas such as employment, procurement, professional development, attraction, retention and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and improvement of internal systems and processes that will support opportunity building and access to equitable health care for First Nations Peoples.

Peninsula Health, as a major employer and purchaser of goods and services, aims to explore and implement significant opportunity that will contribute to improved socioeconomic determinants of health and wellbeing.

We will achieve this by focusing on employment and retention opportunities, including pathways from secondary to tertiary education into employment across all areas of our business.

We will explore the possibility to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses within our procurement policy and practice.

In doing so, Peninsula Health can contribute to improved socioeconomic and health outcomes, including indirect employment.

We are committed to working towards the Victorian Government's target of one per cent of procurement spend annually, over the next three to five years.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update our Aboriginal Employment Strategy to include a target of two per cent of the total staff group outcome 	July 2026	Chair, RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on the new Strategy for attraction, recruitment, retention and professional development 	July 2026	Chair, RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities for employing an Aboriginal Workforce Officer to promote employment and retention strategies including collaboration with local stakeholders and educational institutions 	July 2026	Chair, RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult and collaborate with education and training providers that can support early and other pathways to employment at Peninsula Health 	July 2026	Chair, RAP Working Group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities to better advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders 	July 2026	Dir. People Experience
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide peer support opportunities to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff through means such as cultural supervision and Ngulu Meetings 	April 2025	Elder/Cultural Lead

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes	› Review and update existing procurement policies to embed processes for supporting local social and other enterprises with business readiness and opportunity	July 2025	Dir. Procurement
	› Ensure our policies capture how Peninsula Health will establish and measure social, economic, and employment outcomes	July 2025	Dir. Procurement
	› Maintain Supply Nation membership	July 2025, 2026	Dir. Complex Services/Dir. Procurement
	› Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses, including for major projects, ongoing maintenance of gardens and facilities, catering, goods and services	January 2026	Dir. Procurement
	› Explore opportunities to develop and expand partnerships with First Nations-owned businesses	March 2025	Dir. Procurement
Increase First Nations Peoples' access to Peninsula Health's services	› Explore innovative models to construct culturally secure services and deliver Peninsula Health services with flexibility, in collaboration with local Aboriginal-controlled organisations with a goal to narrow the access gap and ensure equitable health care for all	June 2025	Chair, RAP Working Group
	› Build partnerships with specialist teams within Peninsula Health (i.e. NDIS, Children's services) to facilitate improved access to Paediatric supports	June 2025	Chair, RAP Working Group



Image: Smoking Ceremony for Reconciliation Week 2024

GOVERNANCE

Peninsula Health is committed to on-going Board and Executive leadership and accountability for our Reconciliation Action Plan actions.

This includes approaches to feedback, monitoring and adjustments that are needed as advised by our RAP Working Group, consumers, staff, partners and stakeholders. We promote reconciliation as everybody's business.

Peninsula Health will continue to drive transparent and collaborative approaches to achieving our reconciliation vision and actions.

Our RAP Working Group and Cultural Audit will keep us accountable through regular monitoring and feedback to enable our RAP to be implemented as a 'living document'.

Now more than ever, we know many of us need to rebuild trust and belief in reconciliation, through every part of our business and where we can bring change and influence.

We are also committed to having our Board well informed and engaged, with portfolio areas mapped for respect, relationships and opportunity building that can be supported from our governance leadership team.

Our actions

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Maintain the RAP Working Group (RWG) with Executive leadership and a governance structure that will oversee the RAP	› Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG	June 2025, September 2025	Chair, RAP Working Group
	› Re-establish a First People's Consumer Advisory Group, which regularly meets and is available to provide input when requested and deemed appropriate by the Elder/Cultural Lead	January 2026	Elder/Cultural Lead
	› Review and update the Terms of Reference for the RWG and Cultural Audit	March 2025, 2026	Chair, RAP Working Group
	› Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation	April, July, October 2025, January, April, July, October 2026, January 2027	Chair, RAP Working Group
Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments	› Define resource needs for RAP implementation	March 2025	Dir. Complex Services & RAP Working Group

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments [continued]	› Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments	March 2025, 2026	Chair, RAP Working Group
	› Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments	April 2025	Chair, RAP Working Group
	› Maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management	July, October 2025, 2026	Chair, RAP Working Group
Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally	› Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence	June annually	Dir. Complex Services
	› Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire	1 August annually	Dir. Complex Services
	› Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia	30 September, annually	Dir. Complex Services
	› Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly	April, July, October 2025, January, April, July, October 2026, January 2027	Dir. Comms and Philanthropy
	› Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually	May 2025, 2026	Dir. Comms and Philanthropy
	› Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer	April 2026	Dir. Complex Services
	› Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP	March 2027	Chair, RAP Working Group
Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP	› Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP	September 2026	Chair, RAP Working Group



References

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