# INNOVATE

## RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN
## JUNE 2025 – JUNE 2027

phn NORTHERN TERRITORY
An Australian Government Initiative

RURAL Workforce AGENCY NT

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN
INNOVATE



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Northern Territory PHN acknowledges the many Traditional Owners of the Country on which we work and live across the vast landscapes of the Northern Territory. We recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to Elders past, present and future.

# ARTWORK RECOGNITION

The Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) artwork has been designed by Cian Mungatj McCue. Born and raised in Darwin, Cian is a descendant of the Larrakia, Yanyuwa and Mulluk-mulluk peoples. The artwork is representative of the great expanse of the Northern Territory (NT) and each region's distinguishing art styles. From cross hatching and line work in the Top End, to circle and dot work in Central Australia. The artwork also represents Northern Territory Primary Health Network's (Northern Territory PHN) jurisdiction, which extends across the entire NT.

The artwork used in this RAP was developed for Northern Territory PHN's previous Stretch RAP and represents the different regions and people across the Territory, coming together with us to meet the vision of a healthier Territory. Cian has expanded on the idea of the initial artwork from the Northern Territory PHN RAP 2017–19 to illustrate the further development of our reconciliation journey. When previous RAP documents sit side-by-side, they complement each other as part of a suite and reflect this growth.

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# CEO AND EXECUTIVE MESSAGE

## It is a pleasure to share with you the Northern Territory PHN Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2025 – 2027 (The Plan) This Plan serves to reconfirm our commitment to cultural safety and Closing the Gap in healthcare.

Our focus for this plan is on community. Whether through community-led programs or community managed initiatives, our aim is to support the self-determination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

It is a privilege to work alongside communities and the dedicated and passionate NT Healthcare sector, to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes. We continue our commitment to grow and strengthen our investment in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health through meaningful collaboration in the health sector, where we both listen and respond to feedback.

In 2025, we will be launching our Cultural Safety Framework. The framework supports this RAP and our Strategic Plan 2024 – 2029 to ensure we deliver on our commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing.

To achieve positive change in the community, we also need to ensure cultural safety and responsiveness within our organisation. Our vision is to foster Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership in the Northern Territory PHN, while continuing to grow and support the wider health workforce. This includes supporting young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people embarking on a career in health.

This is reflected in our decision to introduce a distinct focus for our commitment to Closing the Gap through the introduction of a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Branch in our organisation's structure. We have also increased the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within our advisory Councils, reflective of the diverse communities that we serve.

It is these small but significant steps that will see us continue to build our organisation's commitment to reconciliation and 'Closing the Gap'.



**Paul Connolly**
Chief Executive Officer
Northern Territory PHN



**Ebony Abbott-McCormack**
Executive Manager, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health
Northern Territory PHN

# RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA STATEMENT



## Reconciliation Australia commends Northern Territory PHN on the formal endorsement of its second Innovate 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 3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. Northern Territory PHN 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 Northern Territory PHN will continuously draw upon to create RAP commitments rooted in experience and maturity.

These learnings extend to Northern Territory PHN 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 Northern Territory PHN 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, Northern Territory PHN will ensure shared and cooperative success in the long-term.

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

Congratulations Northern Territory PHN on your second Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

**Karen Mundine**
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia



# OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

Our vision for reconciliation is for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to enjoy their best health and wellbeing. Where people and communities inform our work, creating a thriving healthcare system with quality services for all Territorians.

**Image:**
Sourced from NT PHN Image Library





**Image:**
Raelene Brunette, an Aboriginal Health Practitioner, Sunrise Health Service in the Big Rivers region

Northern Territory PHN will significantly contribute to this through nurturing relationships and respecting and deeply learning about the diverse range of cultures, beliefs, histories and traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the NT to ensure all Territorians reach their full potential.

Northern Territory PHN is dedicated to honouring reconciliation by acknowledging the rich and complex history of the NT. Our commitment is to stride towards a unified Australia that values the heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We recognise the profound connection that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have with the land and sea, acknowledging them as the First Australians with unique ways of being, knowing and doing. We recognise the strength and resilience of our NT communities and aim to build on the strength of these communities and are committed to increasing participation to enhance health service delivery. Our focus is on creating a primary healthcare system that is responsive, culturally safe and supportive of family and community wellbeing, driving improved health outcomes and fostering lasting community resilience. We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health encompasses not only physical wellbeing, but also social, emotional, spiritual and cultural wellbeing. We are guided by these and are committed to ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a genuine voice in decisions affecting their health, lives and communities. With support from our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Branch, we aim to build confidence in our organisation throughout the NT.

Relationships, Respect and Opportunities are the three core pillars of a RAP. These pillars guide the development and commissioning of culturally competent, safe and appropriate services in genuine collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Northern Territory PHN is dedicated to continuous reflection and improvement through diverse engagement strategies and are committed to listening and learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Recognising the right of all staff to work in a culturally safe and transparent environment, free from racism and discrimination, is paramount. We understand that true reconciliation is an ongoing journey, requiring collective effort and commitment to positive, lasting and sustainable relationships for the improved health of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

# OUR BUSINESS

## At Northern Territory PHN we seek to improve the primary healthcare outcomes of communities across the Northern Territory.

As a commissioner of primary healthcare on behalf of the Australian Government's Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, we have a system wide view that ensures considered coordination of integration of health services and workforce that are culturally responsive. We work with local health service providers and stakeholders to ensure the delivery of accessible, high-quality, and culturally appropriate programs and services that meet the needs of the diverse, vulnerable and unique populations we serve.

As a primary health network, our core objectives are to:

- Build capacity in primary and mental health service provision
- Commission health services
- Coordinate health system integration
- Champion health workforce reform.

Northern Territory PHN operates from a head office in Darwin and has two regional offices based in Alice Springs and Katherine. It's unique amongst other PHN's, as we are the only PHN with a Rural Workforce Agency. The NT Rural Workforce Agency supports the recruitment and retention of primary healthcare professionals across the NT.

We partner closely with the health sector with a join commitment to improving the wellbeing of Territorians. Drawing on a spirit of collaboration, we also seek to build productive relationships with those who share our aspirations for health equity outside of the sector such as education, housing, public safety, justice, local government, social inclusion and early childhood development. Together with our partners, we provide a person-centred place-based, integrated and accessible primary healthcare system for the Northern Territory.

As of February 2025, the Northern Territory PHN employs 97 staff, with 12 staff who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, making up approximately 12.37% of the workforce.

**Image:** Nhulunbuy Community



# OUR RAP

Our first RAP was endorsed and launched by our Board and Reconciliation Australia in late 2017. This marked the start of our formalised commitment to reconciliation in all aspects of our business. A Statement of Reconciliation was approved by the Board and our RAP Working Group was established to oversee the development of an Innovate RAP in 2017.

Throughout our first Innovate RAP, Northern Territory PHN made significant progress in delivering on our commitment to reconciliation. The implementation and whole of organisation engagement has been led by the CEO and Senior Executive Leadership Team (SELT), with acknowledgement of the Executive Manager of Improvement and Integration as the senior RAP Champion in the early stages of our RAP journey. The executive support has continued throughout our recent Stretch RAP, with support from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team and the CEO.

The RAP has been driven by the RAP Working Group since its introduction in 2017, with representation across the whole organisation. The RAP Working Group ensures there are representatives from each branch, region and from all levels within the organisation. It has been chaired by an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff member since its creation and currently has 6 members identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

Members of the current Northern Territory RAP Working Group:

| Branch | Position |
|---|---|
| Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Branch | • Aboriginal Health Workforce Lead<br>• Project Officer<br>• Relationships lead – Barkly Region |
| Corporate Services Branch | • People and Culture Officer Cultural Support Specialist<br>• Marketing and Communications Manager |
| Strategy, Commissioning and Integration Branch | • Health Strategy and Planning Manager<br>• Regional Health Partnerships Lead |
| Workforce & Primary Care Support Branch | • Health Workforce Programs Manager<br>• Capacity Building and Health Reform Lead |



Image:
Sourced from
NT PHN Image Library

The organisation has been on a journey of reconciliation that has seen an Innovate RAP from 2017-2019 and a Stretch RAP from 2020-2023. During 2024, our business undertook a year of strategic planning to develop our Cultural Respect Framework and our Strategic Plan 2024-2029. This year of planning allowed us to gain a deeper understanding of reconciliation and how it can be embedded into our activities, behaviours and values. These learnings will form part of this Innovate RAP 2025 – 2027.

We have learned the value of building meaningful, positive relationships and maintaining sustainable engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and communities and have seen how these partnerships strengthen our RAP journey. We understand the importance of providing opportunities for all staff to learn and engage in discussions that will support Northern Territory PHN's journey and ensure that we are all contributing to reconciliation in the wider community.

We have emphasised the importance of focused and ongoing engagement with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Branch to ensure their views are heard and their insights are valued, enabling us to offer the right support both individually and as a collective. We also know that setting a strong foundation is important for the future and sustainability of our RAP journey, Through the development of this RAP, the organisation engaged Cross Cultural Consultants who guided and supported the organisation in the proposed shift of focus to include cultural safety in everything we do. This is also supported by the Cultural Respect Framework.

# CASE STUDIES

## Shared Medical Appointments: embracing culture to deliver care

In 2022, Northern Territory PHN commissioned three organisations – Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation and Danila Dilba Health Service – to start the initiative Shared Medical Appointments (SMAs). This program represents a step forward in our ongoing commitment to improving healthcare access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

### What are Shared Medical Appointments?

SMAs, rooted in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander wisdom and cultures, stand as a unique model of care. They create a communal space where individuals sharing similar health concerns come together in a culturally safe environment. Each group is guided by a trained facilitator and a general practitioner.

During SMAs, participants receive individual consecutive consultations, which open opportunities for mutual learning and understanding. By shifting the traditional power dynamics inherent in one-on-one doctor-patient interactions, SMAs play a pivotal role in enhancing primary healthcare access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations.



Image:
Sourced from
NT PHN Image Library



Image:
Sourced from
NT PHN Image Library

### Collaboration and support

To ensure the success of SMAs, Northern Territory PHN enlisted the expertise of the Australasian Society of Lifestyle Medicine (ASLM). Their role involved assisting each Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service (ACCHS) in crafting culturally appropriate, sustainable and community responsive SMA models. Professors John Stevens and Bob Morgan, experts in this field, provided invaluable face-to-face facilitator training and mentoring to each service.

In addition to ASLM's involvement, Northern Territory PHN fostered a critical partnership with the Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory (AMSANT). This collaboration ensured that the SMA models developed were deeply rooted in local context and culture. Together with ASLM and the participating ACCHS, AMSANT played a pivotal role in creating culturally appropriate resources that resonated with the unique needs of each community.

## East Arnhem Health Partnerships Symposium

In partnership with HOT NORTH, Miwatj Health, Menzies School of Health Research and the Northern Territory Government, the East Arnhem Health Partnership Symposium was held at Gulkula.

Local health professionals, workers, researchers and academics attended the two-day event to share knowledge and learn about various programs that highlight Aboriginal Health in Aboriginal Hands in the East Arnhem Region, and the barriers that are faced when accessing the health system. This included sessions from representatives from the local Yolngu community, Mitwatj Health, Flexible Aged Care and Kaunitz Yeung Architects, who spoke about their 20-year co-design project that aims to take care of the elderly, while encouraging young people to care for their elders in paid health worker roles. A women's session was also held, that included local women from Galiwin'ku who spoke about their djäkamirr program. A djäkamirr is an Indigenous doula or childbirth companion who is skilled in providing cultural, emotional and spiritual support to Yolŋu women during childbirth, especially when they have to leave their country to give birth.

The symposium emphasised the importance of meaningful partnerships and sharing of knowledge and culture to ensure all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can be empowered to access health, and for the wider community to work alongside communities to achieve health equity.




Image:
Sourced from
NT PHN Image Library

"It's very hard when the language used is in Western medical terms. We need to put those terms into language Yolŋu people can understand."

– TERRENCE GULUYA. COMMUNITY MEMBER

## Aboriginal Future Workforce Development Project

The development of the Aboriginal Future Workforce within the primary healthcare sector is a priority for Northern Territory PHN, including developing the capability of locals and increasing professional development.

Northern Territory PHN supported Mala'la Health Service Aboriginal Corporation to deliver a Certificate II in Aboriginal Primary Health Care in Maningrida between July 2022 – December 2022. The course was tailored to be delivered On-Country, providing students with the ability to continue their family, cultural, work and community responsibilities whilst undertaking studies. It also allowed students to have a shared learning in multiple languages, with examples from lived experiences or workplaces and in a culturally safe environment with in-class support.

Students made history in March 2023, when they became the first-ever cohort to obtain their qualifications On-Country.



Image:
Sourced from
NT PHN Image Library

## Providing safe spaces for all staff to learn

The RAP Working Group understands the importance of positive education and providing safe spaces for all staff to learn, listen and share. Significant dates such as NAIDOC Week and Reconciliation Action Week provide the opportunity for all staff to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.

## Rise Up Leadership

In September 2022, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at Northern Territory PHN attended a two-day forum facilitated by Tanyah Nasir Consulting, that incorporated elements of their Rise-Up training and development workshop. Through critical thinking, problem solving and confidence building activities, the team were empowered to discuss personal and professional goals and to collaborate on ways to influence change and to discuss how to ensure that Northern Territory PHN is a culturally safe workplace for everyone.

The group later presented their ideas to the SELT, including the need for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support network. The support network aims to provide a safe space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to support each other, share knowledge and continue the work that was done in the forum.





## On-Country Training Network Group and On-Country Training Advisory Committee

In 2023, Northern Territory PHN formed and led an On-Country Training (O-CT) Network Training Group. This group consists of internal and external stakeholders who commission and coordinate O-CT programs as a method of developing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island health workforce. This group is tasked with sharing progress of individual programs and identifying opportunities to work together by combining efforts and resources to co-design and implement O-CT in partnership with remote Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs). The O-CT group member numbers have increased and currently has a wide number of external agencies represented. This provides a wider perspective and contribution to the group. The network's support will follow recommendations outlined in the Northern Territory PHN On-Country Training report. These recommendations will be prioritised accordingly. An Aboriginal Workforce Advisory Committee is in the process of being formed and will meet for the first time in February 2025. This Committee will be formed to oversee any recommendations from the O-CT group.

## Cultural Aftercare pilot program

This pilot program's aim was to break down the barriers between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Aboriginal people through addressing the common misconceptions and misunderstandings. Through guidance of principles and practices, participants were enabled and supported by increasing their cultural knowledge to better work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The training consisted of a three-hour cultural mentoring learning by Cultural Journeys to explore the participants current level of cultural knowledge, exploring the nuances of culture, current prejudices, traditional learning methods and how they apply today, historic events that impact today, the relevance of the application to the participants role and to reflect, commit and make a difference. This was followed up with ongoing support over a 12-month period with personal access via Whatsapp. This is currently being evaluated to ascertain its effectiveness.

## Aboriginal Health Practitioner Mentoring Project

In August 2024, a project was delivered by Miwatj in conjunction with Northern Territory PHN and NAATISWHP to deliver and provide professional development opportunities to the Miwatj Aboriginal Health Practitioner (AHP) Workforce.

The project offered:

- Delivery of face-to-face training
- Development of new skills meeting training standards
- Update of industry changes
- Celebrate the AHP profession
- Network and sharing knowledge and information
- Build and strengthen a workforce.

Miwatj AHP Workforce have had very limited monitoring and limited full-time support. Clinical care in remote Australian regions is regularly confronted with shortages of resources.

The AHP Workforce are seeking new innovative ways to move forward as a collective united workforce to further develop skills sets, upskill industry knowledge, create new ways of working and strengthen the pipeline of this evolving changing profession.

Eight AHPs successfully attended this training, and it is envisaged that this may be extended in 2025 to other locations.



# INNOVATE
## RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN 2025 – 2027

An Innovate RAP sets out actions to achieve the organisation's reconciliation vision, helping to deepen understanding of its influence and identify effective strategies for progress.It focuses on building strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people while piloting initiatives for future commitments that empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Implemented over two years, it lays the foundations for sustainable reconciliation action efforts.

**(Reconciliation Australia, 2021)**



# RELATIONSHIPS

Northern Territory PHN is dedicated to an integrated, high-quality primary healthcare system through collaboration with stakeholders, communities, and organisations. We actively engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, ACCHOs, and related organisations to ensure culturally competent health services and meaningful connections while supporting reconciliation. We recognise that building genuine relationships requires time, trust, and respect. Through our Innovate RAP, we will strengthen and expand our partnerships beyond health, reinforcing our role in Closing the Gap. Additionally, we aim to influence the primary healthcare sector at all levels to promote reconciliation. With strong relationships with ACCHOs and Traditional Owners, we aim to share our journey and support others in theirs.

**Image:**
Central Australia Aboriginal Congress staff, Alice Springs



## FOCUS AREA:
Integrating locally responsive health systems

| Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|
| **ACTION 1** Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. | | |
| • Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement. | December 2026 | CEO |
| • Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. | September 2025 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |

| Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|
| **ACTION 2** Collaborate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to improve the quality of health care services. | | |
| • Represent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health needs in workforce policy and strategy initiatives. | October 2025 | Workforce and Primary Care Support Team |
| • Commit to genuine co-design processes that champion the health needs in workforce policy and strategy initiatives. | October 2025 | Strategy, Commissioning, and Integration Team |
| • Apply culturally appropriate practices to all commissioning activities that serve to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. | December 2025 | Strategy, Commissioning, and Integration Team |

| Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|
| **ACTION 3** Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW). | | |
| • Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff. | May 2026, 2027 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Organise an annual series of National Reconciliation Week events focusing on a mix of historical, educational, and cultural experiences. | May 2026, 2027 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event. | 27 May - 3 June 2026, 2027 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. | 27 May - 3 June 2026, 2027 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Organise at least one NRW event each year. | 27 May - 3 June 2026, 2027 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website. | May 2026, 2027 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |

| Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|
| **ACTION 4** Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence. | | |
| • Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce. | July 2025 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly. | August 2025 | Corporate Services Team |
| • Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes. | May 2025 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Collaborate with RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation. | December 2025 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |

| Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|
| **ACTION 5** Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies. | | |
| • Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs. | September 2025 | Corporate Services Team |
| • Develop, implement, and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation. | July 2025 | Corporate Services Team |
| • Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy. | July 2025 | Corporate Services Team |
| • Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism. | September 2025 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |

**Image:** Sourced from NT PHN Image Library





Image: Katherine

# RESPECT

Northern Territory PHN is committed to understanding and respecting the cultural perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories, beliefs and their stated preference for health services to be delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and staff. We recognise that without considering the histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, we cannot improve services so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can achieve their best health and wellbeing. We will focus on supporting each individual employee, and ultimately the organisation, to adopt tangible behaviours that demonstrate an improved understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, perspectives and protocols. By embedding the foundations for cultural respect within the organisation, employees will be better equipped to support and engage our stakeholders to address the challenges that negatively impact the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health status in the NT.



**Image:**
Alice Springs staff

## FOCUS AREA:
Fostering cultural respect, safety and responsiveness

| Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|
| **ACTION 6** Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning. | | |
| • Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation. | April 2026 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to inform our cultural learning strategy. | February 2026 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural learning strategy document for our staff. | May 2026 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning. | June 2026 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Cultural orientation (online modules) is mandatory for all new starters within 4 weeks of commencement of employment. | December 2027 | Executive Manager Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health |
| • All staff to complete place-based Cultural Awareness training within 6 months from commencement of employment. | December 2027 | Executive Manager Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health |

| Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|
| **ACTION 7** Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols. | | |
| • Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols. | August 2025 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Display and Acknowledgement of Country within all public meeting spaces and Northern Territory PHN's Statement of Reconciliation at the entrance of all offices. | July 2025 | Corporate Services Team |
| • Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country. | October 2025 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year. | July 2025 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings. | July 2025 | Relevant Chair of meetings |

| Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|
| **ACTION 8** Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week. | | |
| • RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event. | First week in July 2025, 2026 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week. | June 2025 | Corporate Services Team |
| • Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff. | First week in July 2025, 2026 | CEO |

**Image:** Sourced from NT PHN Image Library





**Image:**
Sourced from
NT PHN Image Library

# OPPORTUNITIES

Northern Territory PHN is committed to strengthening its organisational culture, making it more welcoming, inclusive and supportive of all staff. We are committed to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff by creating leadership pathways to support a diverse and skilled workforce that promotes professional advancement and personal development for all. Northern Territory PHN also recognises the importance of supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to be able to access resources and support available through Northern Territory PHN and its funding. Creating opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, stakeholders and businesses to be a part of our everyday work ethos is fundamental to our RAP journey. The RAP will further strengthen and influence organisational workplace culture to create an environment in which all employees and stakeholders feel welcomed, supported, respected and valued. Northern Territory PHN will revise and further develop our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy to encourage the recruitment, growth and strengthening of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce, with a renewed focus on internal relationship and mentoring opportunities.

**Image:**
Sourced from NT PHN Image Library



**FOCUS AREA:**
Evolving our organisation capability and growing our workplace culture and supporting the rural health workforce.

| Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|
| **ACTION 9** **Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development.** | | |
| • Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities. | September 2026 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy. | October 2026 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy. | November 2026 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. | December 2026 | Corporate Services Team |
| • Identify traineeship opportunities across Northern Territory PHN which could be identified positions. | August 2026 | Senior Executive Leadership Team |
| • Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace. | June 2026 | Corporate Services Team |

| Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|
| **ACTION 10** **Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.** | | |
| • Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy. | December 2026 | Corporate Services Team |
| • Investigate Supply Nation membership. | November 2026 | Corporate Services Team |
| • Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff. | December 2026 | Corporate Services Team |
| • Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses. | August 2026 | Corporate Services Team |
| • Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses. | December 2026 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy which includes a Commissioning policy aligned to the Cultural Safety Framework. | August 2026 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |

| Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|
| **ACTION 11** Collaborate effectively to develop the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce in the NT. | | |
| • Incorporate cultural training, awareness and immersion in future workforce and student initiatives. | December 2025 | Workforce and Primary Support Care Team |
| • Support the development and expansion of new workforce models for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers. | December 2025 | Workforce and Primary Support Care Team |

**Image:** Remote Laundry Project





**Image:** Katherine Gorge

Northern Territory Primary Health Network

# INNOVATE

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN
JUNE 2025 – JUNE 2027



## GOVERNANCE

Northern Territory PHN is committed to ensuring our reconciliation goals are achieved through implementing robust governance frameworks and systems that are supported by strong monitoring and evaluation processes. Sound governance and quality reporting with a high degree of transparency must be at the foundations of all activities as we progress on our reconciliation journey.



**Image:**
Alice Springs staff

**Image:** Sourced from NT PHN Image Library




## FOCUS AREA:
Implementing robust governance frameworks and systems that are supported by strong monitoring and evaluation processes.

| Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|
| **ACTION 12** Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP. | | |
| • Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG. | June, September, December 2025, March, June, September, December 2026, March, June 2027 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG. | July 2025 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation. | June, September, December 2025, March, June, September, December 2026, March, June 2027 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |

| Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|
| **ACTION 13** Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments. | | |
| • Define resource needs for RAP implementation. | September 2025 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments. | December 2026 | CEO |
| • Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments. | June 2025 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management. | June 2025 | CEO |

| Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|
| **ACTION 14** 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 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey. | 1 August annually | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia. | 30 September, annually | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly. | June, September, December 2025, March, June, September, December 2026, March, April 2027 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually. | June 2026, 2027 | CEO |
| • Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer. | April 2026 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |
| • Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP. | June 2027 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |

| Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|
| **ACTION 15** Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP. | | |
| • Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP. | January 2027 | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team |





# CONTACT

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RURAL Workforce AGENCY NT

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