

INNOVATE

Reconciliation Action Plan

Townsville
Hospital
and Health
Service



July 2023 - June 2025



Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional and Cultural Custodians of the lands, waters and seas on which our health facilities are placed. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and recognise the role of current and emerging leaders in shaping a better health system.

We acknowledge First Nations peoples in North Queensland are both Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and support the cultural knowledge, determination and commitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in caring for the health and wellbeing of First Nations peoples for millennia.

Townsville Hospital and Health Service is committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters, and seas and their rich contribution to society.

Townsville Hospital and Health Service is proud to recognise and celebrate the cultural diversity of our communities and workforce at the following locations:

Location	Traditional Custodians
Townsville	Bindal (Birri Gubba) and Gurrumbilbarra Wulgurukaba
Palm Island	Manbarra Bwgcolman (historical)
Ayr/Home Hill	Juru (Birri Gubba) Bindal (Birri Gubba) - still to be determined
Charters Towers	Gudjal
Ingham	Nywaigi Warrgamay Bandjin
Cardwell	Girramay
Richmond	Wanamara / Woolgar Valley
Hughenden	Yerunthully

Townsville Hospital and Health Service Reconciliation Action Plan July 2023 - June 2025

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WARNING:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are advised that this publication may contain images of deceased people.

Contents

Our vision for Reconciliation	4
Achieving our vision	4
Message from Reconciliation Australia	5
Message from the Health Service Chief Executive	6
Our business	8
Our Reconciliation Action Plan	9
Our inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan	11
Our future Reconciliation Action Plan	12
Statement of Reconciliation	14
Our actions - Relationships	16
Our actions - Respect	19
Our actions - Opportunities	22
Our actions - Governance	24



Our Vision for Reconciliation

Townsville Hospital and Health Service employees will work together in achieving Health Equity through reconciliation – together way; and by becoming a culturally proficient organisation

Achieving Our Vision

We will achieve our vision by working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families, and communities to improve health journeys, service experiences and access to care across our whole health system, and by transforming relationships, defining respect, creating opportunities and accountable governance.

Uncle Alfred Smallwood performing smoking ceremony at the High Dependency Unit



Message from Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia commends Townsville Hospital and Health Service (Townsville HHS) on the formal endorsement of its second 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 3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. Townsville HHS continues to be part of a strong network of more than 2,200 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 Townsville HHS will continuously draw upon to create RAP commitments rooted in experience and maturity.

These learnings extend to your organisation 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 Townsville HHS 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, your organisation will ensure shared and cooperative success in the long-term.

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

Congratulations Townsville HHS on your second Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine

Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

Message from the Health Service Chief Executive

I am delighted, along with my executive colleagues, to present the Townsville Hospital and Health Service Reconciliation Action Plan 2023-2025 (RAP).

This plan builds on the HHS's inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan 2019-2021 which delivered important outcomes for First Nations staff and patients, and contributed to making them feel safe, supported, and included.

These achievements included the development of culturally appropriate care models which considered the unique needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and families, introduced staff to cultural practice training to enhance their understanding of Indigenous culture and history, and focused on nurturing and developing our First Nations workforce.

Our plan does not exist in isolation. Alongside our First Nations Health Equity Strategy 2022-2025 and our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce

Strategy 2022-2031, it's key to our goal to achieve health equity and Close the Gap in health outcomes for Indigenous peoples.

As we take our next steps, knowing there is still work to do, our plan recognises that reconciliation is an ongoing journey to strengthen the bonds between us and promote inclusivity, diversity, and unity for us all.

Our journey to reconciliation is underpinned by mutual cultural respect and empowers First Nations patients, staff, and community to speak their truths in a safe and supportive environment.

Whoever you are, and wherever you work in our health service, you have an important role to play in creating an equitable, safe and inclusive place where we all belong.

We have taken the next promising steps towards reconciliation and we are optimistic and enthusiastic about what the future holds.

Kieran Keyes

Health Service Chief Executive,
Townsville Hospital and Health Service



*Back left: Stephen Eaton, Chief Operating Officer, Kieran Keyes, Health Service Chief Executive, Louise Hayes, Executive Director Digital Health and Knowledge Management.
Middle left: Danielle Hornsby, Executive Director Allied Health, Dr Jason Yates, Acting Chief Medical Officer, Anthony Mathas, Chief Finance Officer, Sharon Kelly, Executive Director People, Strategy and Governance.
Front left: Amanda Cooms, Interim Executive Director Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, Judy Morton, Executive Director Nursing and Midwifery Services, Stuart Garantziotis, Executive Director Infrastructure Program Delivery, Marina Daly, Executive Director Clinical Governance.*

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*At its heart, reconciliation
is about strengthening
relationships between
Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander peoples and non-
Indigenous peoples for the
benefit of all Australians.*

• • • • •

Albert Gorringe, BEMS Maintenance Officer



Our Business

Townsville Hospital and Health Service acknowledge and values all Aboriginal and Torres Strait employees located across 21 facilities: 19 hospitals and health centres and two residential aged care homes across a geographical area of 150,000 km².

The health service provides a comprehensive range of services, from primary care in remote locations, to highly specialised care at Townsville University Hospital. The Townsville HHS acknowledge that our Aboriginal and Torres Strait employees' experiences include racism, discrimination and powerlessness in the workplace. Our health service provides comprehensive health care services for the community including those requiring tertiary level health care services across North Queensland.

Thirty percent of the patients engaged in our health care service identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, however only 3.9% of the workforce identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. The Townsville HHS acknowledges that there is a need to not only be leaders in health care in our community, but also leaders in ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff feel listened too, respected and safe everyday they come to work. The Townsville HHS is working at improving the gap in the lack of opportunities to develop career progression for our staff and the development of a positive discrimination culture.



About the artwork

My name is Luke Duffy, a Kalkadoon artist residing in Townsville for the last 16 years and owns a business called Deadly1Designs. My artwork displays many colours, that is my signature. It also reflects the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and the vast landscape, coastline and big icons such as the great barrier reef. The core centre piece is the RAP. The many paths connecting to the RAP are the strong links with the community and surrounding areas. The centre circle also represents the foundation of the Elders, the backbone of our community. Without our Elders we are blind and not guided. Our Elders past and present have paved the way to ensure a brighter and healthier future for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Because of the strong connections there are great initiatives such as the RAP to better understand, support and ensure cultural safety within our service group and district.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

What is reconciliation?

At its heart, reconciliation is about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples for the benefit of all Australians.

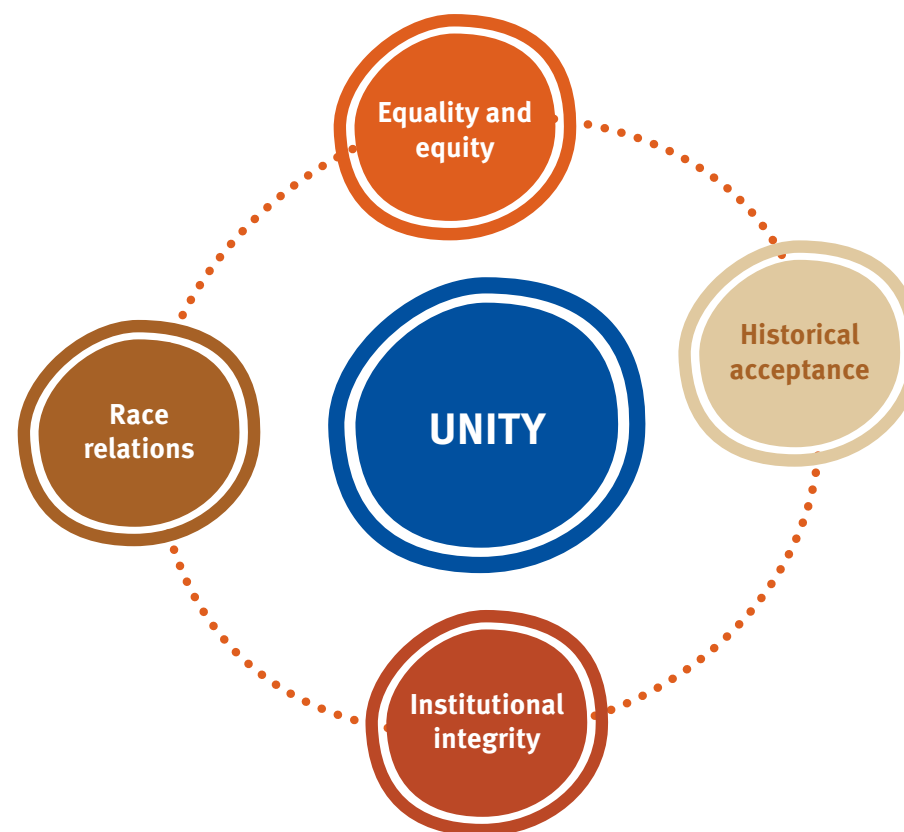
For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Australia's colonial history is characterised by devastating land dispossession, violence and racism. Over the last half-century, however, many significant steps towards reconciliation have been taken.

Reconciliation is an ongoing journey that reminds us that while generations of Australians have fought hard for meaningful change, future gains are likely to take just as much, if not more, effort.

In a just, equitable and reconciled Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children will have the same life chances and choices as non-Indigenous children and the length and quality of a person's life will not be determined by their racial background.

Our vision of reconciliation is based and measured on five dimensions: historical acceptance; race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity and unity.

These five dimensions do not exist in isolation but are interrelated. Reconciliation cannot be seen as a single issue or agenda; the contemporary definition of reconciliation must weave all these threads together. For example, greater historical acceptance of the wrongs done to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can lead to improved race relations, which in turn leads to greater equality and equity.



**Fig 1 Townsville HHS has adopted the Vision of Reconciliation
(from Reconciliation Australia)**



RACE RELATIONS

All Australians understand and value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous cultures, rights and experiences, which results in stronger relationships based on trust and respect, and that are free of racism.

Goal: Positive, two-way relationships built on trust and respect exist between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Australians throughout society.

Action: Overcome racism.

EQUALITY AND EQUITY

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples participate equally in a range of life opportunities and the unique rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are recognised and upheld.

Goal: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians participate equally and equitably in all areas of life – i.e., we have closed the gaps in life outcomes – and the distinctive individual and collective rights and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are universally recognised and respected. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are self-determining.

Action: Renew focus on Closing the Gap.

INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY

The active support of reconciliation by the nation's political, business and community structures.

Goal: Our political, business and community institutions actively support all dimensions of reconciliation.

Action: Capitalise on the RAP Program to create a wider range of opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

UNITY

An Australian society that values and recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritage as a proud part of a shared national identity.

Goal: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and rights are a valued and recognised part of a shared national identity and, as a result, there is national unity.

Action: Achieve a process to recognise Australia's First Peoples in our Constitution.

HISTORICAL ACCEPTANCE

All Australians understand and accept the wrongs of the past and their impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Australia makes amends for past policies and practices, and ensures these wrongs are never repeated.

Goal: There is widespread acceptance of our nation's history and agreement that the wrongs of the past will never be repeated – there is truth, justice, healing and historical acceptance.

Action: Acknowledge our past through education and understanding.

Source: www.reconciliation.org.au/reconciliation/what-is-reconciliation/

Our inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan

The inaugural Townsville HHS Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) delivered:

- Development of culturally appropriate models of care to incorporate Indigenous Health needs (Renal Health Workers, Allied Health and COVID-19 response and outbreak planning)
- Implementation of workforce incentives and pathways, including the Nursing Academic Award
- Sharing more positive stories through social media, the blah and other communication pathways
- Annual NAIDOC events
- Courageous Conversations participation
- Cultural Practice Program becoming mandatory for all staff.



The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander administration traineeship program provides candidates with an opportunity to undertake a 12-month traineeship in the health service.



An innovative mobile phone application designed at the Townsville Health and Hospital Service is helping close the healthcare gap and providing culturally appropriate and evidence-based advice to pregnant women living on Palm Island.



Townsville Hospital and Health Service staff who are making positive changes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes were celebrated at the NAIDOC Week Awards yesterday.



Townsville Hospital and Health Service staff came together today to add their hands of commitment to a 'sea of hands' at their facilities during Reconciliation Week.



Communication with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders with chronic pain was in focus last month at a clinical yarning workshop with North Queensland Persistent Pain Management Service (NQPPMS) clinicians.



The face-to-face Cultural Practice Program (CPP) training has been made mandatory to help maintain a culturally safe and respectful healthcare environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients.

Our future Reconciliation Action Plan

Our new Innovate RAP 2023-2025 builds upon the achievements of our original RAP aiming to strengthen existing initiatives and establish new actions and deliverables tailored to our core business and the Townsville HHS sphere of influence. Townsville HHS acknowledges that we are all accountable to lead and embed reconciliation across the organisation.

The RAP focusses on our accountability as individuals, as members of a team (workplaces), as team leaders (line manager) and as an organisation (Townsville HHS). As an individual employee we are encouraged to lead by example in how we accept and embed the RAP principles. Individually every employee has accountability to ensure that the workplace is culturally safe and that we engage in truth-telling, healing and education. That we celebrate our cultural differences and inclusiveness whilst ensuring workplace and workforce equity. Townsville HHS encourages all staff to learn more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures to develop respectful and collaborative relationships between staff, and between staff and external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to assist with the Townsville HHS' ability to deliver culturally appropriate services, policies, and programs.



The RAP working group

- Amanda Cooms Interim Executive Director Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health
- Salli-Ann Buttigieg Indigenous Health Coordinator, Indigenous Health Service Division
- Susan Tench Director Program Management Office, People, Strategy and Governance
- Nick Steele Principal Organisational Development, People, Strategy and Governance
- Teresa Stratton Company Secretary, People, Strategy and Governance
- Lesley Brown Nursing Director Clinical Project Manager, People, Strategy and Governance
- Dr Matthew Bryant Medical Director, Rural Hospital Services Group
- Ann Marie Mallet Service Director Mental Health Service Group.

Townsville HHS has two distinct Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisory groups who have been consulted with as part of the consultation for the RAP development:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Advisory Council (ATSICAC) this advisory council has Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers (external to Townsville HHS)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Leadership Advisory Council (ATSIHLAC) this leadership council (internal to Townsville HHS).

The RAP is a strategy that encourages all staff to be accountable for maturing individual goals aimed at improving personal relationships, understanding and respect with peers, consumers and community. The RAP will support the implementation of the Townsville HHS First Nations Health Equity Strategy 2022-2025 and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2022-2031.

Individual: Accountable for our own actions to adopt the RAP and role model our actions.

Team: To embed the RAP into our everyday work as a team and foster equity in the workplace to ensure all employees have a safe work environment.

Senior leader/Manager: To promote opportunities that foster and celebrate reconciliation.

Organisation: Townsville HHS is a leader for reconciliation across Queensland Health and North Queensland Communities. Townsville acknowledges that our workforce is diverse, however Truth-telling and healing for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait employees is a priority.

Townsville HHS will offer opportunities and encouragement to all staff to learn more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. Increased cultural proficiency supports genuine, respectful and collaborative

relationships and understanding between our staff, and between staff and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Cultural proficiency is defined as “the policies and practices in an organisation or the values and behaviour that enables the person or individuals to engage effectively with people and groups who are different from them” (Nuri – Robbins et al 2012). This will result in Townsville HHS being culturally proficient and have the capacity to:

1. Value diversity
2. Conduct self-assessments
3. Manage the dynamics of difference
4. Acquire and institutionalise cultural knowledge
5. Adapt to diversity and the cultural context of the communities the service.

It will ensure all staff can continue their learning journey and improve Health’s ability to deliver culturally appropriate services, policies and programs.

Townsville HHS will continue to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait representation at all levels of the organisation.

Townsville HHS will communicate actions that all staff can be engaged in with success stories and progress communicated regularly.

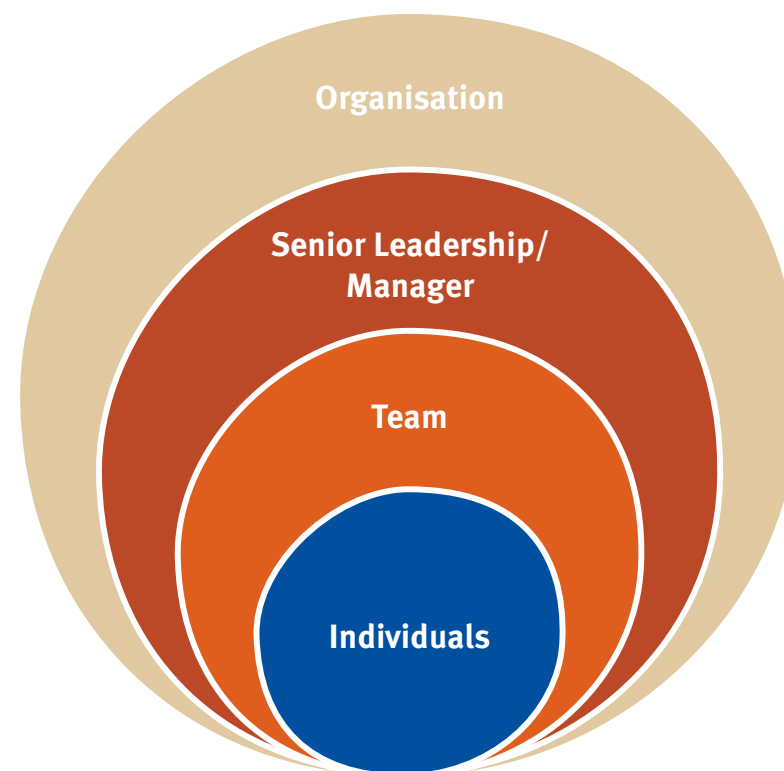


Fig 2 Sphere of Influence (adapted from the RAP drafting resources)

Statement of Reconciliation

The Townsville HHS is committed to improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The Townsville HHS is committed to working together to Close the Gap in health status and life expectancy between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples.

Reconciliation is about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples. In the spirit of reconciliation, we celebrate the uniqueness of the world's oldest living cultures. We respectfully acknowledge the diversity of cultural practices and spiritual beliefs.

Reconciliation is a journey that all our staff at the Townsville HHS will undertake together and to become culturally proficient, by this we commit to the following:

We promise to:

1. Provide a culturally appropriate and safe service delivery.
2. Provide a culturally respectful and welcoming environment.
3. Work together to build models of care that will empower patients and families to feel included in their journey.
4. Promote a positive patient journey.
5. Create opportunities to promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.
6. Promote and attend events within our Townsville HHS communities.

Our Commitment will be demonstrated by:

1. Building a workforce that is respectful of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural beliefs and values.
2. Increasing our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.
3. Supporting all the Close the Gap initiatives.
4. Working collaboratively with our Traditional Owners, their representatives and the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
5. Ensuring that reconciliation is understood by all our staff.



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*In the spirit of reconciliation, we
celebrate the uniqueness of the
world's oldest living cultures.
We respectfully acknowledge
the diversity of cultural
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• • • • •

Latifah Khalu, Senior Healthworker



RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations are essential to respect the right of self-determination and ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' input is included in all aspects of the healthcare service.

Focus area: Work collaboratively, embrace innovation and continuously improve values of openness and accountability, collaboration, innovation, striving for excellence, integrity, cultural safety and cultural competence to reinforce our statements on relationships.



*Jeffery Clubb, Operational Officer and
Alfred Ryan, Operational Officer*

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	LINKS TO HEALTH EQUITY/ WORKFORCE	TIMELINE	EXECUTIVE SPONSOR	ACTION OFFICER
Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit and gap analysis of existing relationships, stakeholder consultation and engagement activity currently underway across Townsville HHS. Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement. 	1.3	January 2024 November 2023	Executive Director Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (EDATSIH)	Service Director (SD) Indigenous Health Services Division (IHSD)
Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials, and actively encourage all staff to engage in NRW celebrations in their teams, across Townsville HHS and within community. 	1.6	May 2024	EDATSIH	SD IHSD and Indigenous Health Coordinator (IHC)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share and report on NRW participation within and across teams via established meetings and internal communication channels. 	1.6	Annually May - June	Townsville HHS Executive	Senior Leaders
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host an annual Townsville HHS NRW event. 	1.6	Annually May - June	EDATSIH	IHC and Media, Communications and Engagement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register Townsville HHS NRW events with Reconciliation Australia's NRW website. 	1.6	Annually May	EDATSIH	IHC
Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, execute and implement strategies to engage our staff in reconciliation. 		March 2024	EDATSIH	SD IHSD
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate Townsville HHS' commitment to reconciliation publicly. 		Biannually January July	Executive Director People, Strategy and Governance	Media, Communications and Engagement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the Line Manager Reference Guide to include a specific section on reconciliation, positive race relations and adherence to cultural protocols. 		September 2024	Executive Director People, Strategy and Governance	Organisational Development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify key external stakeholders and partners to understand how Townsville HHS can positively influence them to partner and drive reconciliation in our communities. 	1.6	December 2023	EDATSIH	SD IHSD
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with Reconciliation Australia and other like-minded organisations to support and work towards reconciliation Identify organisations with a current RAP that Townsville HHS can develop partnerships with to share learnings and collaborate on events. 		March 2024	EDATSIH	SD IHSD

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	LINKS TO HEALTH EQUITY/ WORKFORCE	TIMELINE	EXECUTIVE SPONSOR	ACTION OFFICER
Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify opportunities to promote positive race relations to removed any barriers. Review and update current education models to be inclusive of positive race relations. 	1.4	July 2024	Executive Director People, Strategy and Governance	Human Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create and promote a culturally safe escalation pathway and internal healing mechanism for Aboriginal and Torres Island Islander employees. Establish and promote the workplace bullying reporting process for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander employees. 	1.4	October 2024 January 2025	Executive Director People, Strategy and Governance	Director Psychology Human Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate all senior leaders about positive race relations and support them to be a role model to their teams. Educate all staff on positive race relations and the effects of racism. 	1.1, 1.2, 1.6	October 2024	Executive Director People, Strategy and Governance	Organisational Development
Undertake meaningful and valued engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers, communities and organisations that enable collaboration towards improving the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold quarterly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Yarning Circles for all staff and invite local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members to attend and share their stories. Develop, promote, and implement an authentic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement plan that supports the maturity of the RAP that is informed through the gap analysis and consultation. 	1.6	Quarterly January, April, July, October March 2024	EDATSIH	IHSD
Continue to support and advocate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander input and leadership into significant organisational planning initiatives to co-design services that are culturally competent and respectful.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees when reviewing service delivery and planning frameworks across Townsville HHS. Design, implement and evaluate a model of care tool that supports the delivery of culturally respectful care in partnership with ATSIHLAC. 		July 2024 March 2025	EDATSIH	All Staff IHSD



RESPECT

Our journey to reconciliation needs to be grounded in a deep-seated respect and value for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' culture and history. We accept the impact that community, cultures, land and the history of colonisation has on the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We will continue to build our knowledge and understanding to ensure we maintain an organisational culture that respects and values the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. Respect is a pre-requisite for meaningful engagement and the health service regards it as essential to achieving its commitment to promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and ensure culturally safe practice to improve health outcomes.

Focus area: Provide high-quality, person-centred care that acknowledges the significance of culture for our health service. We continue to observe and respect cultural protocols and celebrate First Nations cultures and histories.



*Phoebe Paul, Assistant in Nursing,
Renal Unit*

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	LINKS TO HEALTH EQUITY/ WORKFORCE	TIMELINE	EXECUTIVE SPONSOR	ACTION OFFICER
Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights through cultural learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify opportunities to promote positive race relations. Review and update current education models to be inclusive of positive race relations. Create and promote a culturally safe escalation pathway and internal healing mechanism for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. 	1.4, 1.5	July 2024 October 2024 January 2025	EDATSIH	IHSD
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop education on the importance of Treaty and Truth-telling to support the healing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Continue to implement and drive the Cultural Practice Program (CPP) across the organisation to increase knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements. Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to localise CPP against the minimum requirements. 	W 4.1.4 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4	December 2024 Quarterly – January, April, July, October June 2024	EDATSIH	IHSD
Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols such as Acknowledgment of Country and Welcome to Country. 	1.4	January 2025	EDATSIH	IHSD
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a culture where staff can respectfully call out bias and culturally inappropriate or disrespectful behaviours. 	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	April 2025	ALL Townsville HHS Executive	All staff
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocols at significant events to bring Community into the organisation. 	1.4	September 2023	EDATSIH	IHSD
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include an Acknowledgment of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings. Develop a flag policy and protocol in relation to the acknowledgment of significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates and of the passing of important Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people. 	1.4	December 2023	EDATSIH	IHC

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	LINKS TO HEALTH EQUITY/ WORKFORCE	TIMELINE	EXECUTIVE SPONSOR	ACTION OFFICER
Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure visible leadership in the support of and participation in internal and external NAIDOC Week events. 	2.5	Annual 1st week July	EDATSIH	IHC/Media, Communications and Engagement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and encourage participation in internal and external NAIDOC events to all staff, with early coordination of events and attendance to ensure continued service delivery. 	2.5 W4.1.3	Annual 1st week July	EDATSIH	SD IHSD and IHC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review HR policies and procedures to ensure that there are no barriers for staff participating in NAIDOC week activities. 		April 2024	Executive Director People, Strategy and Governance	Human Resources
Celebrate significant events and provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to engage with culture and community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team leaders promote significant external events, arrange supporting events within their teams and encourage participation by all team members. 	2.1 2.5	Quarterly - January, April, July, October	ALL Townsville HHS Executive	Service Directors



OPPORTUNITIES

The Townsville Hospital and Health Service is committed to improving our work in the attraction, development and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members. We will also generate opportunities to develop and grow partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities by embedding procurement practices that support this.

These opportunities will enrich the social, cultural and economic life of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to gain employment, develop professionally and generate an income, whilst retaining their connection to country.

Focus area: Maintain an exceptional workforce and be a great place to work.



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	LINKS TO HEALTH EQUITY/ WORKFORCE	TIMELINE	EXECUTIVE SPONSOR	ACTION OFFICER
Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the promotion of the Townsville HHS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2022-2031. Develop Townsville HHS's reputation as a culturally safe and responsive employer to attract Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. Further develop the Townsville HHS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff forums to be held. Review the existing the Townsville HHS website to ensure that the platform is relatable and supportive of the current and future Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander workforce. 	Workforce 2.1	September 2023 June 2025 January 2024 October 2024	EDATSIH	Indigenous Workforce Programs Coordinator (IWPC)
Promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the objectives for environmental and social governance procurement to all employees involved in procurement. Measure procurement performance against environmental and social governance objectives. 	1.4	January 2025 June 2025	Chief Finance Officer (CFO)	Senior Manager Procurement and Contracts



GOVERNANCE

The Townsville HHS will continue its reconciliation journey as an organisation and support its staff on their own journeys to reconciliation. Townsville HHS support the continued evolution of the RAP ensuring it remains current and relevant, and that the achievements, challenges and learnings are understood, reported and acted on.

Focus area: Ensure efficient and sustainable stewardship of resources.



*Alisha Kyle , A/Workforce Program
Coordinator*

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	LINKS TO HEALTH EQUITY/ WORKFORCE	TIMELINE	EXECUTIVE SPONSOR	ACTION OFFICER
RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a regular RAP reporting schedule for the Townsville HHS Executive and Board that provides assurance of progress. 		Quarterly January, April, July, October	EDATSIH	SD IHSD
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh the RAP working group membership every two years. 		July 2024	EDATSIH	SD IHSD
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the RAP business rules annually including meeting a minimum of 4 times per year and monitoring RAP implementation. 		February, May, August, November	EDATSIH	SD IHSD
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally. 		Quarterly January, April, July, October	Townsville HHS Executive	Service Directors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia. 		Annually September	EDATSIH	SD IHSD
Service Groups to ensure the RAP is a living document that is embedded into routine business (BAU).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define resource needs for RAP implementation. 		Annually June	EDATSIH	IHSD and RAP working group
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments. 		December 2023	EDATSIH	SD IHSD
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include the RAP as an agenda item for all Service Group, Division and professional meetings, and committees. 		December 2023	Townsville HHS Executive	SGD and Professional leads
Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings both internally and externally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer. 		July 2024		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP. 		June 2025	EDATSIH	SD IHSD
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire. 		January 2025		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia. 		Annually September	EDATSIH	SD IHSD
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly. 		Quarterly January, April, July, October	EDATSIH	SD IHSD and Media, Communications and Engagement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings annually. 		January and July		
Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register the RAP via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP. 		January 2025	EDATSIH	IHC



Reconciliation Action Plan
Working Group



Amanda Cooms interim Executive
Director Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Health and Ann Marie Mallet
Service Director Mental Health Service
Group

Message on behalf of the RAP Working Group

I'm proud to lend my strong support to this Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

In its purest form, reconciliation is about relationships. This document commits each and every one of us to building on our relationships with one another, having the courage to speak up, and committing jointly to a strong, unified, respectful workplace where our patients and consumers expect, and receive, our very best.

I'd like to thank HSCE Kieran Keyes and the executive for championing not only our RAP, but our journey to an inclusive and supportive workplace that is committed to deep listening and learning as an organisation, enabling our staff to grow their understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being and doing.

Thank you sincerely also to the RAP Working Group. They are members of staff who volunteered their time, energy and expertise to bringing this plan to fruition and I am honoured and inspired by their commitment to improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We have two years to put the RAP into action; I ask that we join together to do just that with passion and joy.

Amanda Cooms

Interim Executive Director
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

For all enquiries regarding this plan please contact the Townsville HHS Indigenous Health Coordinator:

Phone: (07) 4433 2216

Email: tsv-ihsd-executive@health.qld.gov.au

**Townsville
Hospital
and Health
Service**

My name is _____

I am committed to working together to achieve Health Equity through reconciliation - *together way* - as we journey toward becoming a culturally proficient organisation.

(Thank you for printing and displaying your pledge in your work area as appropriate)





Queensland
Government

Townsville Hospital and Health Service

Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2023-2025