

INNOVATE RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

April 2021 – April 2023

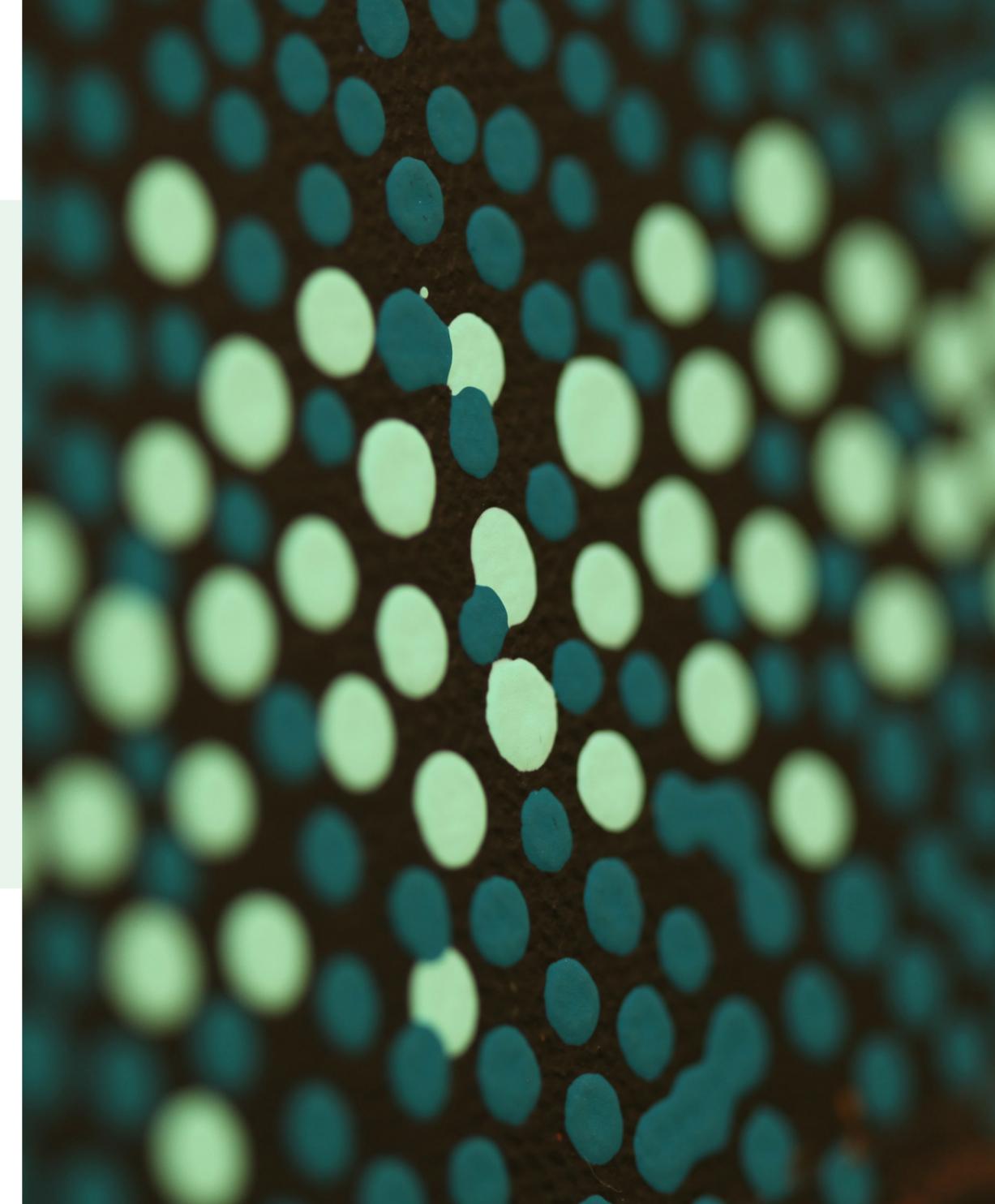




THE ARTIST

The artwork featured in the Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan was commissioned in July 2020 from emerging Indigenous artist Sam Gollan of Meiwi Aboriginal Art, who is a descendent of the Ngarrindjeri and Kaurna clans.

The theme of the artwork is 'Connecting the Community' symbolising how ECH acts as a hub in our integrated community care model which leads to better health and wellbeing outcomes for all.



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A WORD FROM THE CHAIR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Following the successful roll out of our first ECH Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), we are delighted to be continuing this important journey with the launch of our new Innovate RAP.

From the many Aboriginal communities we actively work with, including the Kurna people of the Adelaide Plains region, the Peramangk people of the Adelaide Hills region, to the Ngarrindjeri people of the Fleurieu Peninsula region and the Wurundjeri people who are the traditional custodians of Melbourne and the surrounding lands, we are committed to respecting and celebrating every individual's human rights. It is our vision that everyone practices dignity, equality and respect for all cultures and religions within our community.

ECH understands and acknowledges the importance of developing employment and training pathways. In support of this, we are currently exploring the most effective training opportunities, such as work experience, student placements or traineeships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



Our RAP is also a great way for us to share knowledge with all of our staff. At ECH, we aim to ensure staff increasingly understand, value and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through extensive cultural learning.

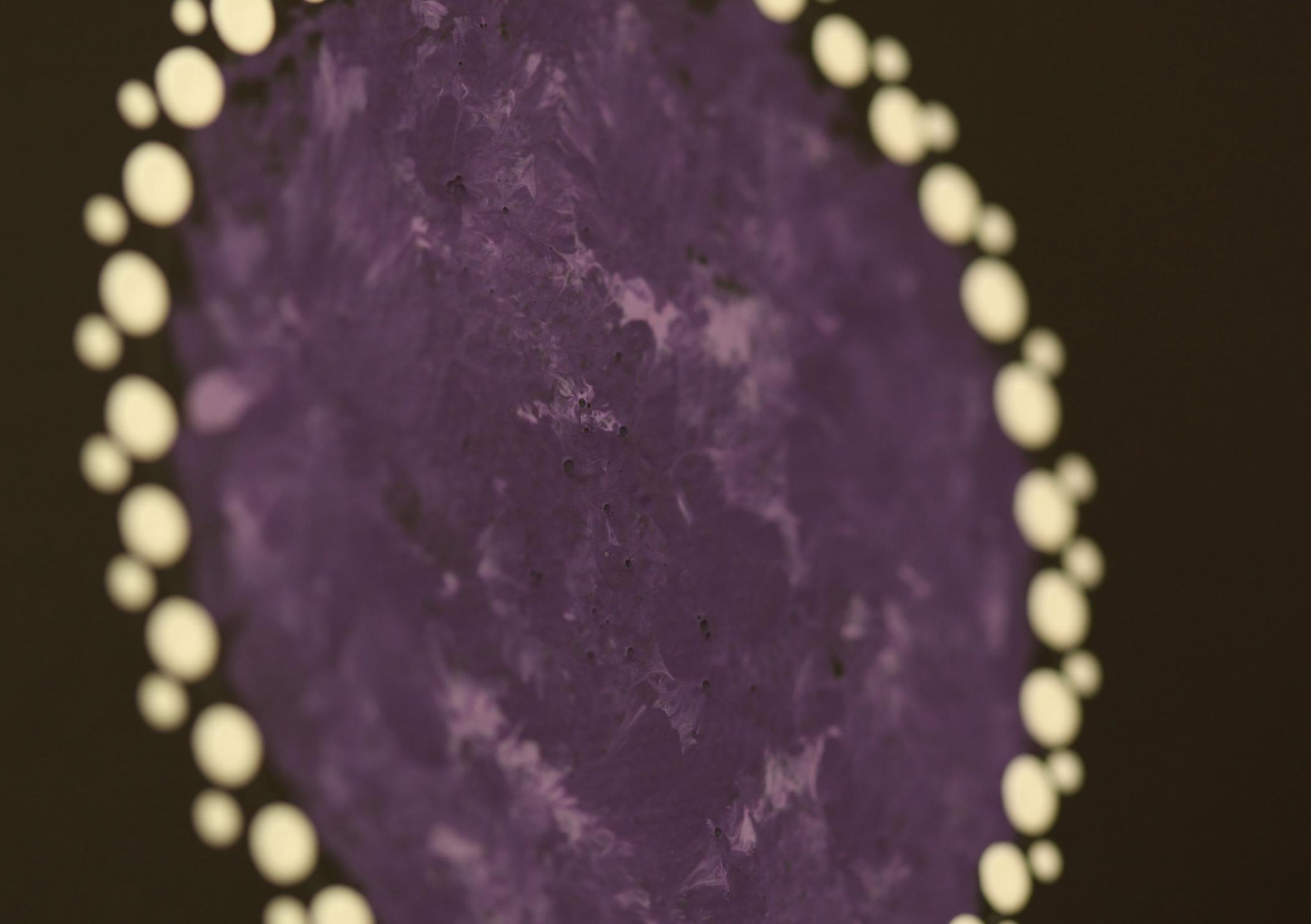
This RAP details a clear action plan that aligns with the ECH vision of enabling clients to stay who they are, where they are, through the acknowledgment and respect of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Culture, building relationships and providing opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Warm regards,
Rosina Hislop, Chair of the ECH Board
Dr David Panter, ECH Chief Executive

OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

ECH has a vision of a community where everyone including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous walk, talk, work and live together in warmth, peace and unity, equal in opportunities and outcomes.

In the context of ECH services and work environment, this vision represents equal health outcomes and employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It means ECH is culturally safe and welcoming, underpinned by the understanding that cross-cultural knowledge and respect is central to older people living their best lives possible as they age.



OUR BUSINESS

ECH was established in 1964 and since then has developed a reputation for being a highly respected and trusted provider of aged care services in South Australia.

Today, we are one of the largest not-for-profit providers of integrated retirement living accommodation and ageing care services enabling people to continue to live independently at home as they age.

As a not-for-profit organisation, we provide services to the community and do not make profit from our members. This means that any surplus funds are reinvested into services. We are also a registered charity, which means ECH operates for public benefit. There are no shareholders, with any profits reinvested to increase and improve services provided.

We are highly committed to being inclusive of clients and staff with differing backgrounds. We are constantly tailoring our services to reach diverse social groups, such as culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD), lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

In 2020, we achieved the Rainbow Tick accreditation for another three years. Although Rainbow Tick accreditation is focused on inclusive practice for LGBTI communities, the actions required to meet accreditation mean that we deliver culturally safe services for all members of the community.

Along with achieving the Rainbow Tick accreditation, late last year we were delighted to win the national Outstanding Organisation Award at the 2020 HESTA Excellence Awards. We were recognised for our innovative and inclusive model of care and service delivery, affordable housing options and investment in technology as well as support for the LGBTI community.

We currently employ 650 people through four service types; Independent Retirement Living, Home Services, Social Programs and Wellness services. We currently have two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, with our workforce strategy strongly aimed at attracting and retaining a more diverse workforce, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



Along with national recognition from HESTA, we received \$7,500 in prize money, which will be invested back into the ECH community. The prize money will enable us to develop new social activities and initiatives that will continue to provide support to older people, benefiting more than 500 clients and independent living residents.

Designed with health and wellbeing at its core, ECH College Grove opened in June 2020 and offers older South Australians a range of health and wellbeing services. The next phase of development will be the ECH Care Hotel™, offering two models of care - Short Stay and Dementia Respite. Short Stay suites will be available to older people who are transitioning from hospital and may require more frequent care than they can receive at home. Dementia Respite suites will also be available for families requiring respite in a warm and homely environment.

Our commitment to improving our care management model has seen us recruit more clinical nurses who work closely with our ECH GPs, Allied Health Practitioners, Care Coordinators and other care workers. This has enabled us to support over 200 older South Australians in the past year to have good and respectful deaths at home surrounded by loved ones.

Recognising the growing importance of technology, we have been investing in smart technologies to support older people to remain in their own homes for longer. This has resulted in the acquisition of technology company Billy, the use of telehealth services and the roll out of social media app Mint Social to ECH Home Care Package clients. We are also looking into new technology to help improve the overall customer experience.

Our aim is to continue to be at the forefront of the aged care industry, consistently providing high levels of quality service to meet the changing needs of people now and into the future.

OUR RAP

ECH is a not-for-profit organisation that promotes self-determination and enables people to have the best life possible as they age. We recognise that a central element to the notion of 'best life possible' is the acknowledgement and respect of each person's diversity, individual worldview and life story. Additionally, we work to ensure that services are delivered in a culturally appropriate, responsive and sensitive manner.

We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have higher vulnerabilities as they age, including lower life expectancy and higher rates of social, physical, and mental health conditions, including poverty, chronic health conditions, depression, anxiety and suicide. These vulnerabilities are a result of generations of dispossession, colonisation, systemic racism, intergenerational trauma as well as non-recognition and prohibition of cultural rites, language, connection to Country, laws, and traditions. We also recognise the resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures, the most enduring and continuous civilisation in human history. We are working with

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to develop current and new services that are tailored to the needs of these communities, while focusing on the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by using co-design principles.

An internal RAP Working Group has been established to formulate and progress our Reconciliation Action Plan, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff forming part of this working group, with oversight from the ECH Board and Executives.

Key personnel from across the organisation are involved in the RAP Working Group, including: **Matt Mulvihill** General Manager People and Culture, **Michelle Vincent** Manager Procurement and Contract Management, **Narelle Milne** Human Resources Manager, **Melanie Atkinson** Internal Communications Manager, **Vicky Brett** Marketing Manager, **Lauren Simpson** Learning and Capability Manager, **Brenda Head** Quality and Compliance Manager, **Jenny Hall** Independent Living Manager, **Michelene Johnson** Care Coordinator, **Priscilla Hull** Home Services Team Member and RAP Champion, **Robyn Lierston** Community Engagement and Diversity Manager.

STAFF KNOWLEDGE

All staff receive ongoing Aboriginal Cultural Awareness training, as well as information and education about their role in the successful implementation of the RAP. Education is designed to increase staff and volunteers knowledge, empathy and skills in working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and Elders. We established an Aboriginal Advisory Group at the end of 2018, comprising of Aboriginal community Elders and ECH Aboriginal staff members. It is intended that members of the Aboriginal Advisory Group will work with the RAP Working Group in the implementation of the RAP, together with input and guidance from key Aboriginal networks and community groups in South Australia.

We established an internal Diversity Reference Group (DRG) in 2016. Members of the Diversity Reference Group receive training and education about diverse community groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Members of the DRG cascade the knowledge they receive to their own teams, ensuring that the entire ECH workforce benefits from ongoing education, resourcing and training received by DRG members.

An internal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander co-design working group was developed in 2018. This group attended three workshops from Aboriginal consultant, Dana Shen, aimed at providing knowledge in the basic principles of working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including cultural norms and protocols.

These workshops provided the basis of a co-design framework which guides a current ECH project focused on developing one or more tailored services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders. This project is particularly focused on the housing needs of older members of Aboriginal communities.

OUR RAP JOURNEY

In 2020, we commenced our reconciliation journey by undertaking the Reflect RAP. For the first time, we celebrated key dates of significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week. COVID-19 presented challenges to celebrating these important anniversaries, however the importance of reconciliation was highlighted through staff involvement with RunRona and visiting local sites of importance such as Colebrook Reconciliation Park.

We also developed relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander providers such as Tauondi Aboriginal College and engaged with Aboriginal advisors in South Australia who provided advice about Aboriginal culturally sensitive service provision.



RELATIONSHIPS

We understand that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are strongly based on relationships. In turn, we seek to develop relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, built on shared knowledge, self-determination, and trust, by delivering on the ECH Partner Promises. Our aim is for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to drive the decisions that affect their health, wellbeing, and lifestyle to enable them to remain living at home within their communities and families as they age.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
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 2022	Diversity Manager
	• Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	December 2022	Diversity Manager
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	• Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to ECH staff.	May 2021 & May 2022	Diversity Manager Internal Communications Business Partner
	• RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	May - June 2021 & 2022	Diversity Manager
	• Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	May - June 2021 & 2022	Diversity Manager
	• Organise at least one NRW event each year.	May - June 2021 & 2022	Diversity Manager
	• Register all ECH NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	April 2021 & April 2022	Diversity Manager

3. Promote reconciliation through ECH's sphere of influence.	• Implement strategies to engage ECH staff in reconciliation.	December 2021	Diversity Manager Internal Communications Business Partner
	• Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	July 2021	Marketing Manager Internal Communications Business Partner
	• Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	May 2021	Diversity Manager
	• Collaborate with RAP and other like-minded organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation.	March 2022	Diversity Manager
4. 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.	December 2021	HR Manager
	• Develop, implement and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for ECH.	June 2022	HR Manager
	• Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on ECH anti-discrimination policy.	December 2021	Diversity Manager HR Manager
	• Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.	October 2021	Learning and Capability Manager Diversity Manager
5. Provide culturally responsive support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and older people.	• Develop a business plan that outlines the community and organisational benefits of an Aboriginal Cultural Liaison Officer employed at ECH.	June 2021	Diversity Manager HR Manager
	• Partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander aged care organisations to provide culturally appropriate care to Elders.	Feb 2023	Diversity Manager
	• Ensure there are appropriate feedback mechanisms in place to report on service delivery and cultural safety.	June 2021	Quality and Compliance Manager





We respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures, recognising that Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the world's oldest known civilisation. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture encompasses over 75,000 years of mutual respect to their land, waters, communities, and people. Our commitment to reconciliation has resulted in a better understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures, and histories. We will continue to learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in a respectful way, celebrating cultural events along with our RAP Champions and Diversity and Inclusion working groups.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. 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.	August 2021	Learning and Capability Manager
	• Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors on the development and implementation of a cultural learning strategy.	September 2021	Diversity Manager
	• Develop, implement and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our staff.	December 2022	Internal Communications Business Partner
	• Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.	April 2023	Diversity Manager Learning and Capability Manager
	• Provide opportunities for cultural learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders to the Diversity Reference Group (DRG) and other ECH staff members.	March 2023	Diversity Manager
	• Distribute the information learned from local Aboriginal Elders by the DRG to the wider ECH staff through staff meetings, the ECH Diversity Knowledge Base and staff newsletters.	March 2023	Diversity Manager

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
2. 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.	June 2021	Diversity Manager
	• Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	July 2022	Diversity Manager Internal Communications Business Partner
	• Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	December 2021 & 2022	Diversity Manager
	• Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	April 2021	Diversity Manager Internal Communications Business Partner
3. 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 2021 & 2022	Diversity Manager
	• Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	June 2021	HR Manager
	• Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff.	First week in July 2021 & 2022	Diversity Manager Internal Communications Business Partner



OPPORTUNITIES

We are committed to creating genuine opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across all areas of our work including employment, procurement, and the provision of Aboriginal cultural awareness training to staff members as part of our commitment to reconciliation. We understand the importance of meaningful partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services and businesses so we can learn from each other to build a respectful, welcoming and inclusive work environment that provides opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to thrive.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. 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 2022	HR Manager
	• Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention, and professional development strategy.	December 2022	HR Manager Diversity Manager
	• Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development strategy.	September 2022	HR Manager
	• Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	October 2022	HR Manager
	• Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	December 2022	HR Manager
	• Increase the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed in our workforce.	April 2023	HR Manager

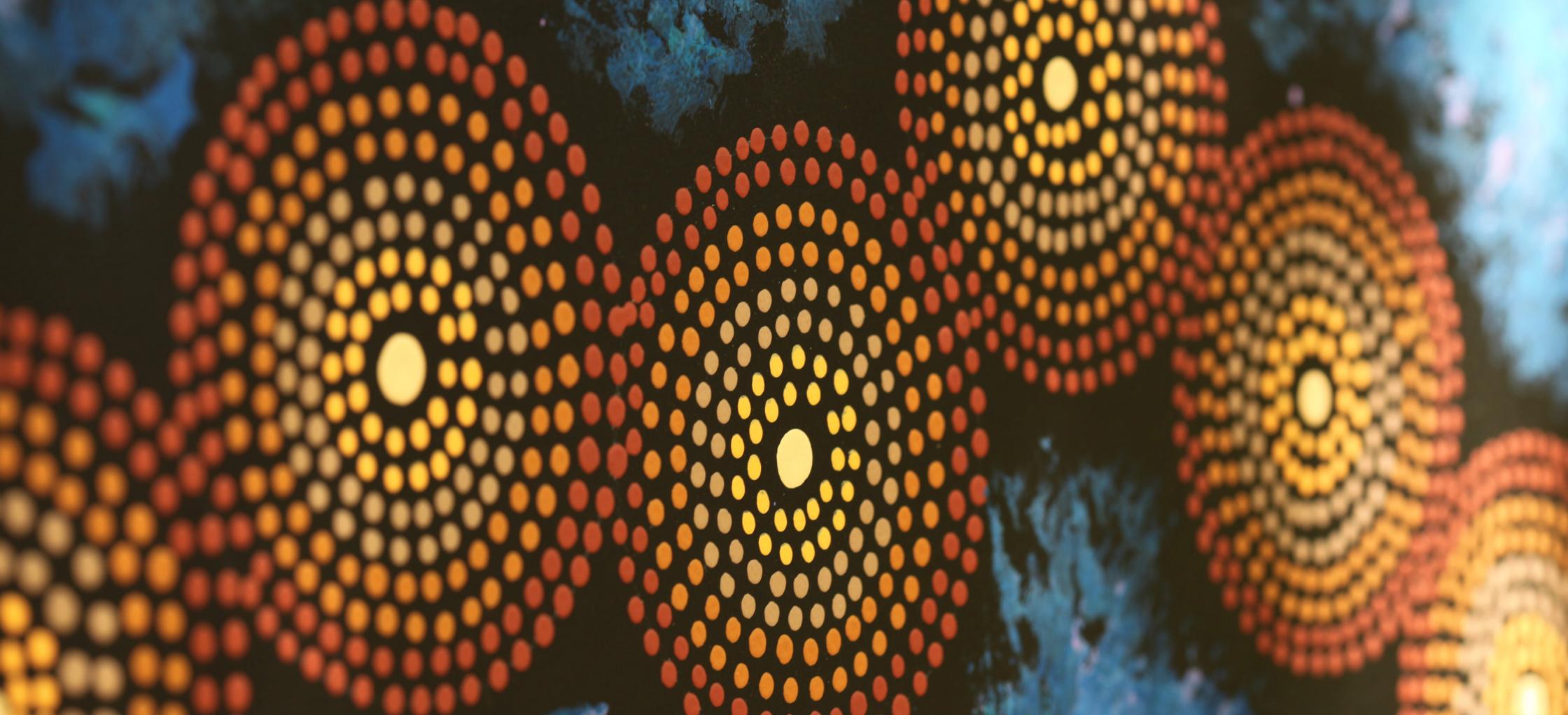
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
2. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	• Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	December 2022	Deputy Chief Finance Officer
	• Investigate Supply Nation membership.	April 2021	Deputy Chief Finance Officer
	• Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	December 2022	Deputy Chief Finance Officer, Manager of Procurement and Contract Management Internal Communications Business Partner
	• Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	December 2022	Manager of Procurement and Contract Management
	• Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	March 2023	Deputy Chief Finance Officer
3. Investigate pathways to employment in aged care with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander registered training organisations.	• Develop relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander registered training organisations such as Tauondi College.	December 2022	HR Manager Diversity Manager
	• Investigate most effective training opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in aged care, such as work experience, student placements or traineeships.	June 2022	HR Manager Learning and Capability Manager
	• Develop HR and training pathways for employment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples into aged care.	June 2022	HR Manager Learning and Capability Manager



GOVERNANCE

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. 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.	December 2021	Diversity Manager
	• Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	April 2021	Diversity Manager
	• Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	February, May, August, November 2021 & 2022	Diversity Manager
2. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	• Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	June 2021	Diversity Manager
	• Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	April 2021	Diversity Manager
	• Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	June 2022	Diversity Manager
	• Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	April 2021	Diversity Manager

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings both internally and externally.	• Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September 2021 & 2022	Diversity Manager
	• Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly.	February, May, August, November 2021, 2022 & 2023	Diversity Manager Internal Communications Business Partner
	• Publically report our RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings, annually.	November 2021 & 2022	Diversity Manager
	• Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	March 2022	Diversity Manager
4. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing the next RAP.	• Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing the next RAP.	September 2022	Diversity Manager



For more information, please contact **Robyn Lierton**,
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