

# Connect Health & Community

Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan  
May 2019 - May 2020



RECONCILIATION  
ACTION PLAN

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REFLECT





## **Statement of Acknowledgement**

We acknowledge that we are meeting on the traditional land of the Boon Wurrung People and offer our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging.

We recognise and respect the cultural heritage of this land.

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## Our Business

Connect Health & Community (Connect Health) provides a variety of health and social services in the south east of Melbourne. Health services include counselling, speech pathology, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, diet and nutrition, Gamblers Help and dental. Social support programs include planned activity groups and youth groups, to name a few. Connect Health operates under a social model of health, recognising the social, economic, cultural and political factors and conditions that impact on the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities.

Connect Health is an independent not for profit company limited by guarantee, with an independent Board of Directors, that receives funding from federal, state and local governments. Connect Health works in collaboration with a range of partners such as Local Government, Southern Melbourne Primary Care Partnerships, hospital networks and other Community Health Services.

Connect Health has an understanding that equity is an important outcome of health service intervention particularly in relation to local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have priority of access to services at Connect Health, free of charge. Connect Health is committed to improving and strengthening our services to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members in our work towards closing the gap in health disparity and life expectancy.

The workforce is made up of approximately 150 staff and 200 active volunteers, who work primarily from two principle sites. A smaller proportion of staff are co-located in other agencies, increasing service reach across Bayside, South/East and Frankston/Mornington Peninsula catchments. Currently no employees have identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, however it is hoped that through the implementation of the RAP including improvement to the organisations Cultural Safety that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will be encouraged to seek employment with our organisation.



## Our RAP

In 2016, Connect Health embarked on their Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) journey by establishing a working group. The organisation had been implementing actions to improve the cultural safety of the service such as offering Cultural Awareness Training for staff and installing cultural symbols such as art work, garden with indigenous grasses and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags, but wanted to formalise the organisation's commitment to reconciliation and ensure a whole of service buy in.

Due to many changes within Connect Health the progress towards establishing the RAP stalled in 2017, however the commitment to the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community did not waiver during that time. With the settling of organisational change and the introduction of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Access Project Officer, Connect Health has seized the opportunity to reinvigorate its commitment to establish a RAP.

The first meeting of the working group took place on November 29, 2017 to discuss membership and the way forward. The local Aboriginal community voices are recognised as an essential element for the RAP and the working group. The working group is strengthened by the participation of local Aboriginal community members to guide the establishment of the Connect Health RAP.



## Our RAP Team

Connect Health & Community RAP is championed by committed individuals at every level of the organisation particularly those who participate in the RAP working group. Champions include:

- Director on Connect Health and Community Board – Micaela Driberg
- CEO – Amanda Murphy
- General Manager Primary Health – Chris Hill (Participates on RWG)
- Manager Gambler’s Help – Vacant (Participates on RWG)
- Community Educator Gambler’s Help – Tracey Collins (Participates on RWG)
- Occupational Therapist – Chris Hall (Participates on RWG)
- General Manager Corporate Karen Minne (Participates on RWG)
- Southern Melbourne Primary Care Partnership Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Access Project Officer – Chris Edmonds (Participates on RWG)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members participating on the RWG:

- Naomi Prior – Aboriginal Health Coordinator, Star Health
- Irene Morris – Local Aboriginal Community Member
- Kathryn Morris – Local Aboriginal Community Member

Connect Health has also consulted with Boon Wurrung Foundation, Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation and Caroline Martin – Boon Wurrung Custodian.

## Our Partnerships and Current Activities

Connect Health & Community participates in the Urban South Korin Korin Balit – Djak Working Group. This working group comprises representatives of organisations who receive funding through the State Government's Aboriginal Health Program to foster collaboration to ensure work is not duplicated.

In conjunction with Central Bayside Community Health Service (CBCHS), Connect Health and Community supported Southern Melbourne Primary Care Partnership (SMPCP) to established 'Koorie Mums and Bubs Playgroup'. SMPCP have funded a project to engage with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and improve the cultural safety and access to community health services.

In addition, we have provided support and resources to Star Health and Access Health to deliver Integrated Team Care (ITC) program to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community members in Connect Health and Community catchment. ITC is a Commonwealth funded care coordination program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a diagnosed chronic illness. Access Health is the funded organisation to deliver this program in the south of Melbourne.



# Relationships

## Action 1: Establish a RAP Working Group

### DELIVERABLE

- Form a RAP Working Group that is operational to support the development of our RAP, comprising of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and decision-making staff from across our organisation.
- Explore including a representative from Connect Health volunteers.
- RWG oversees the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP.
- Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are represented on the RWG.
- Meet at least twice per year to monitor and report on RAP implementation.
- Establish Terms of Reference for the RWG.

### TIMELINE

May 2019

May 2019

May 2019

May 2019

September  
2019 – March  
2020

May 2019

### RESPONSIBILITY

General Manager  
Primary Health  
(GM PH)

GM PH

GM PH

GM PH

GM PH

GM PH

## Action 2: Build internal and external relationships

### DELIVERABLE

- Develop a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey.
- Develop a list of RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey.
- Explore potential Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement activities.
- Identify Key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community contacts in our catchment.

### TIMELINE

June 2019

June 2019

November  
2019

July 2019

### RESPONSIBILITY

GM PH

GM PH

Project Officer (PO)

PO



### Action 3: Participate in and celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW)

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage our staff to attend a NRW event.</li> </ul>	27 May-03 June 2019	Marketing & Communications Manager (M&CM)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.</li> </ul>	May 2019	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure our Working Group participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.</li> </ul>	27 May-03 June 2019	M&CM GM PH/CEO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore opportunity for staff who have attended cultural events to share their experience at staff workshops.</li> </ul>	June 2019	

### Action 4: Raise internal awareness of our RAP

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness amongst all staff across the organisation about our RAP commitments.</li> </ul>	June 2019	PO /GM PH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a plan to engage and inform key internal stakeholders of their responsibilities within our RAP.</li> </ul>	June 2019	GM PH / CEO

### Action 5: Ensure Connect Health meet needs of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to identify local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community's health and social service needs.</li> </ul>	July 2019	PO



# Respect

## Action 6: Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural learning and development

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a business case for increasing awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements within our organisation.</li> </ul>	Jan 2020	GM PH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capture data and measure our staff's current level of knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievement.</li> </ul>	Jan 2020	HR Advisor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a review of cultural awareness training needs within our organisation.</li> </ul>	Jan 2020	HR Advisor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer "face to face" Cultural Awareness Training for Connect Health staff.</li> </ul>	July 2020	HR Advisor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide staff information session about local Aboriginal history delivered by local Traditional Owners.</li> </ul>	July 2020	HR Advisor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore opportunities to develop an e-learning module in consultation with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and stakeholders.</li> </ul>	Jan 2020	HR Advisor/ M&CM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct Cultural audit to identify opportunities to develop a culturally safe environment at Connect Health.</li> </ul>	Jan 2020	GM PH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult with local Aboriginal community to name meeting rooms in language or after Aboriginal community members.</li> </ul>	Jan 2020	CEO

## Action 7: Participate in and celebrate NAIDOC Week

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff of the meaning of NAIDOC Week and include information about the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.</li> </ul>	July 2019	M&CM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting community events in our local area.</li> </ul>	July 2019	M&CM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure our Working Group participates in an external NAIDOC Week event.</li> </ul>	July 2019	GM PH

## Action 8: Participate in and celebrate NAIDOC Week

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore who the Traditional Owners are of the lands and waters in our local area.</li> </ul>	Jan 2020	GM PH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scope and develop a list of local Traditional Owners of the lands and waters within our organisations sphere of influence.</li> </ul>	Jan 2020	GM PH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness and understanding of the meaning and significance behind Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols (including any local cultural protocols).</li> </ul>	July 2019	CEO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore how Connect Health can adopt the philosophy of Wominjeka (Wominjeka is used in Welcomes to Country and is often used to say to come with purpose) in our practice eg. To come with and to know your purpose at all meetings and ensure we treat others with respect</li> </ul>	Dec 2019	CEO

## Action 9: Increase staff awareness of the purpose and importance of asking all Connect Health clients about their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status.

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate how many staff have undertaken 'Ask the Question' training.</li> </ul>	Jan 2020	HR Advisor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer 'Ask the Question' training to intake and reception staff.</li> </ul>	Jan 2020	HR Advisor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work towards including 'Ask the Question' training as part of orientation training for new staff members.</li> </ul>	Jan 2020	HR Advisor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review intake/initial contact procedures to ensure they are culturally aware and welcoming.</li> </ul>	July 2019	Intake Team Leader
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore opportunities to build relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients from first point of contact.</li> </ul>	July 2019	Intake Team Leader





# Opportunities

## Action 10: Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
• Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	August 2019	HR Advisor
• Identify current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment and development opportunities.	July 2019	HR Advisor
• Investigate support needs for any existing Connect Health Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff.	Sept 2019	HR Advisor

## Action 11: Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
• Develop an understanding of the mutual benefits of procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	Jan 2020	GM Corporate
• Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	Jan 2020	GM Corporate
• Source directories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander products and services.	Nov 2019	GM Corporate
• Engage workforce for procurement opportunities.	Dec 2019	CEO
• Explore opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander start-ups.	Dec 2019	CEO

## Action 12: Support equal, equitable educational opportunities and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
• Ensure ongoing funding to continue to provide Deakin Scholarship for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Science tertiary student.	Dec 2019	HR Advisor
• Explore opportunities to provide work experience and course placements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.	Dec 2019	GM PH
• Explore opportunities to develop relationships with students at local secondary colleges.	Dec 2019	GM PH



# Tracking and Progress

## Action 13: Build support for the RAP

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define resource needs for RAP development and implementation.</li> </ul>	June 2019	GM PH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on RAP activities.</li> </ul>	May 2019	GM PH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia.</li> </ul>	30 Sept 2019	GM PH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RWG to collect data for the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.</li> </ul>	July 2019	GM PH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RWG to seek internal approval to submit the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.</li> </ul>	July 2019	GM PH

## Action 14: Review and Refresh RAP

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and refresh RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements.</li> </ul>	Dec 2019	RAP Working Group Chair
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal review and endorsement.</li> </ul>	Feb 2020	RAP Working Group Chair

## Action 15: Include RAP within Connect Health Strategic Plan and integrate into Health Promotion Plan

DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure RAP objectives are included when developing next Strategic and Health Promotion plans.</li> </ul>	June 2019	CEO

## About the Artist – Adam Edwards Magennis

Adam Edwards Magennis, a Boonwurrung man, is a qualified archaeologist and is the Aboriginal cultural heritage for the Mornington Peninsula Shire.

He will advise government and developers, devise cultural heritage management plans, and join 22 other Aboriginal archaeologists and the new Aboriginal Archaeologists Association.

He is believed to be the first Aboriginal archaeologist in Victoria and the first working in local government.

Adam grew up in Bayswater North and attended Ringwood Secondary College from years 7-10 and Box Hill Tech for year 11, where he studied graphic communications in 1991, the first year of VCE in Victoria.

He became a qualified stonemason and bricklayer in 1995, and worked at various sites around the eastern suburbs. He was only the third Aboriginal man in Victoria to become a qualified bricklayer.

Adam lives in Mornington with his wife Kylie, and their daughter and son.











Further information about  
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