



RECONCILIATION  
ACTION PLAN

REFLECT

# Heathcote Health **REFLECT** Reconciliation Action Plan

**May 2026 to December 2027**

**Heathcote Health,  
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It is a great privilege to present Heathcote Health's first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). Heathcote Health cares for diverse and rural community that spans the Heathcote area.

The plan provides a clear roadmap for Heathcote Health to develop, nurture and maintain a supportive, inclusive and equitable environment to provide services to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our community. The work represents a critical commitment by Heathcote Health and highlights there is much to do in enabling our vision for reconciliation. Working with community on developing the Reconciliation Action Plan, I have learnt through my participation, that it is as much about the journey of learning as it is about the plan and its implementation. It is our hope that you will join us in making Heathcote Health a place that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our community feel safe to access the incredible services we offer as we strive for better health outcomes for this community.

Our RAP process was activated in consultation with the local communities, individuals and organisations such as Taungurung Land and Waters Council (TLaWC) and Bendigo & District Aboriginal Co-operative (BDAC). We are building relationships to develop our knowledge and experience with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and learn from their rich histories and knowledge. Heathcote Health's RAP Working Group has been formed to ensure our journey towards deeper engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is a priority.

It is essential that our staff have awareness of how to interact in a culturally appropriate way, that we all understand what needs to be done to improve health care and that we all focus on developing our relationships to help us have the right strategies to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Heathcote Health is committed to providing opportunities to work and partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, groups and businesses.

Please take your time to read the activities in our RAP and consider how you can contribute to and participate in Reconciliation through your own education and engagement with training, celebrations and opportunities in your role.

Jackie Kelly  
Chief Executive Officer  
Heathcote Health



**Above:** Aunty Jo & Jade Runnalls (Acting Director of Clinical Care)  
**Left:** Jackie Kelly (Chief Executive Officer)

### Artist recognition

Aunty Joanne (Jo) Honeysett - Taungurung Elder of the Taungurung People, First People of the rivers and mountains – created this stunning oil on canvas artwork and gifted Heathcote Health with the original that is used across our organisation and in this Reconciliation Action Plan at a visit to Taungurung Land and Waters Council.

### Artwork name

“Coming together”

### Story behind the artwork

People travelling from various locations, meeting and yarning, a happy place, a place of healing.

## Statement from CEO of Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia welcomes Heathcote Health to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

Heathcote Health joins a network of more than 3,000 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. The program's potential for impact is greater than ever, with over 5.5 million people now working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. This Reflect RAP will lay the foundations, priming the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives, for the most effective outcomes.

These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.

It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

This Reflect RAP enables Heathcote Health to deepen its understanding of its sphere of influence and the unique contribution it can make to lead progress across the five dimensions. Getting these first steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Heathcote Health, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.

**Karen Mundine**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Reconciliation Australia

## **Our business**

*Heathcote Health is located in Heathcote. As a rural health service Heathcote Health is an important part of the fabric of the community. Our Services span across the continuum ranging from acute, health promotion, health education, social support, developing health literacy to delivering direct preventative, curative and supportive services. Our focus is on promoting and maintaining strength, wellbeing, independence, individuality and dignity through offering services tailored to each person and their families.*

*Our Vision is to be able to partner with the Department of Health, our networks, partners, consumers and community to grow and develop into an innovative service that meets the needs of not only the individual, but the community we serve. Our workforce adds to the diversity of services we provide to our community. We are well supported by our residents, families, volunteers and our community volunteers' services to create a positive, enriched caring environment.*

*We have developed a comprehensive Consumer, Carer and Community Engagement Strategy, based on the foundational belief that engagement of consumers, carers and the community in the planning, design delivery and evaluation of services delivers better outcomes. These outcomes occur across a range of measures including; quality, efficiency, effectiveness and the safety of services, as well as generating a sense of ownership, empowerment and responsibility of individual Healthcare.*

*Heathcote Health employees 220 staff who are all based at our Health Service in Heathcote. We currently do not have any voluntary self – identification processes in place for First Nations employees at Heathcote Health*

*While the exact number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff is currently unknown, we will work within this RAP to determine culturally appropriate way to understand this.*

*Our Services Consist of:*

### **Acute Hospital Care**

*Acute 8 beds*

*Urgent Care Centre*

### **Aged Care**

*We provide 42 Aged Care Beds which provides permanent and respite care for our residents.*



## Community Health Services

Heathcote Health Community Health provides Allied Health, Community Nursing and support services in the following areas;

- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Visiting audiology
- Diabetes Education
- Visiting Drug and Alcohol services
- Social work
- Pathology
- Visiting Podiatry
- Radiology
- Visiting Speech pathology
- District and Community Nursing
- Palliative Care
- Support at Home



## Our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

- Heathcote Health is developing a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to align the organisational strategic goals to advance reconciliation within Australia, for the benefit of all Australians. Compared with other Australians, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experience more chronic disease and are generally disadvantaged on various indicators relevant to the social determinants of health. As a health service it is important that our services are culturally competent and accessible to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Heathcote Health will implement the RAP through identified actions and collaboration with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Heathcote Health will develop a Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group (RWG) to oversee and coordinate the implementation of the RAP's actions. Membership of the RWG include: Chief Executive Officer, Director of Clinical Services, Director Finance and Corporate Services, Aboriginal Patient and Family Support Officer, Manager of Quality and Risk, Manager of Community Care. Heathcote Health's RAP Champion is the CEO. The RAP champion will be responsible for driving internal engagement and awareness of the RAP.
- Heathcote Health currently has positive relationships with; Taungurung Land and Waters Council (TLaWC) and Bendigo & District Aboriginal Cooperative (BDAC), based on Dja Dja Wurrung Country.

All images contained in our RAP are licenced to Heathcote Health or used with the permission of the image holders.

## Our Current Relationships and Activities

- Heathcote Health are proud sponsors of the Bendigo NAIDOC Week Committee. As part of the Bendigo NAIDOC Week Committee, we are invited to attend the Bendigo & District Aboriginal Cooperative (BDAC) Flag Raising Ceremony and be included in the Sponsorship promotional material.
- Heathcote Health, in partnership with the Heathcote Reconciliation Group and the Bendigo NAIDOC Week Committee, holds an annual Heathcote NAIDOC Week Event. In 2026 the event is a Morning Tea with all people of Heathcote & Districts invited to attend.
- We are at present developing relationship with other members of the Heathcote Reconciliation Group (HRG), led by Fiona Machin, Inclusive Communities Officer – Reconciliation, at City of Great Bendigo (CoGB). At times Heathcote Health may consult with the HRG around consumer engagement opportunities and other initiatives.

The HRG comprises representatives from:

- City of Greater Bendigo
- Visitor Information Centre
- Heathcote Health
- Advance Heathcote Inc
- Goldfields Libraries (Heathcote Library)
- Emergency Service organisations
- Interested Community members

The HRG participates in initiatives such as;

- screening a film as part of this year's Central Vic Indigenous Film Festival during Reconciliation Week
- input into the location for the Taungurung Traditional Owner artwork
- Bibi Bibi Community Hub (Heathcote based CoGB offices and community space) consultations
- NAIDOC Week celebrations



The Central Victorian Indigenous Film Festival celebrates National Reconciliation Week. Experience a range of films, videos, activities and discussions in local venues and online. Each year the festival showcases an exciting range of First Nations films, documentaries and videos starring and telling stories about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People from Central Victoria and across Australia.

Board Directors, Executive & Senior Leaders have undertaken the Wawa Biik Cultural Experience, on Taungurung Country at Nagambie (wawa tabilk tabilk). [www.wawabiik.com.au](http://www.wawabiik.com.au)





Relationships			
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.</li> </ul>	June 2026	Chief Executive Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.</li> </ul>	December 2026	Learning & Development Manager
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Circulate Reconciliation Australia's <a href="#">NRW resources</a> and reconciliation materials to our staff. Noting the 2026 NRW Theme: All In for Reconciliation</li> </ul>	May 2026	Executive Assistant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.</li> </ul>	27 May- 3 June, 2026	Executive Assistant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.</li> </ul>	27 May- 3 June, 2026	Chief Executive Officer
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.</li> </ul>	July 2026	Chief Executive Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.</li> </ul>	August 2026	Executive Assistant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify organisations with a RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.</li> </ul>	September 2026	Executive Assistant

<p>4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.</li> </ul>	<p>February 2027</p>	<p>Learning &amp; Development Manager</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.</li> </ul>	<p>August 2026</p>	<p>People and Culture Manager</p>



<b>Respect</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
5. 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"> <li>Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.</li> </ul>	March 2027	Learning & Development Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.</li> </ul>	<i>March 2027</i>	Learning & Development Manager
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.</li> </ul>	April 2027	Executive Assistant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.</li> </ul>	June 2027	Local Aboriginal Training Organisation
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.</li> </ul>	<i>May 2026</i>	Chief Executive Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.</li> </ul>	June 2026	Executive Assistant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RAP Working Group to participate in Bendigo &amp; District Aboriginal Co-operative (BDAC) Flag Raising Event for NAIDOC Week – continue partnership with Bendigo NAIDOC Committee (via BDAC)</li> </ul>	First week in July, 2026	Executive Assistant



<b>Opportunities</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.</li> </ul>	<i>August 2027</i>	People and Culture Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.</li> </ul>	<i>August 2027</i>	People and Culture Manager
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.</li> </ul>	September 2027	Director of Corporate Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate Supply Nation membership.</li> </ul>	September 2027	Director of Corporate Services



<b>Governance</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation.</li> </ul>	June 2026	Chief Executive Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG.</li> </ul>	July 2026	Chief Executive Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.</li> </ul>	August 2026	Chief Executive Officer
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define resource needs for RAP implementation.</li> </ul>	September 2026	Director of Corporate Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.</li> </ul>	November 2026	Chief Executive Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain a senior leader to champion our RAP internally.</li> </ul>	June 2026	Chief Executive Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.</li> </ul>	June 2026	Executive Assistant
12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul>	June annually	Executive Assistant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.</li> </ul>	30 September, annually	Chief Executive Officer

internally and externally May 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate our RAP progress to internal and external stakeholders</li> </ul>	Quarterly; September, December 2026, March, June, September, December 2027, March, May 2028.	Health Promotions Officer
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Register via Reconciliation Australia's <a href="#">website</a> to begin developing our next RAP.</li> </ul>	<i>January 2028</i>	Chief Executive Officer

**For public enquiries about our RAP please contact**  
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