Artwork Design

The design used throughout this document is a photograph of Krystal Hurst painting, *Gathay nyiirun - Lets walk together*.

*Gathay nyiirun* “go-will we all” - Lets walk together represents the journey of working and walking together to create positive changes. By creating genuine relationships through mutual respect, listening to one another, sitting with one another, and learning from each other, enables us to create a community that values and respects the aspirations of Indigenous peoples.

Warning

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are warned that this document may contain images of deceased people.

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Enquiries regarding any other use of this publication should be addressed to the Branch Manager, Communication Branch, Department of Health, GPO Box 9848, Canberra ACT 2601, or via e-mail to corporatecomms@health.gov.au
The Department of Health acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia. We recognise the strength and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and their continuing connections to land, sea and community. We pay the utmost respect to Elders past, present and future.

Today, Australia is one country; however this was not always the case. Australia is made up of hundreds of different Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander countries, each with their own culture, language and belief system. Their relationship with country remains of utmost importance as it is the foundation for culture, family and kinships, songlines and languages. This is why it is important to acknowledge country and Traditional Custodians.

To achieve diversity within your workplace, it is important to note that there is a substantial difference between representation and inclusion. Your organisation may have invested in developing effective employment programs and strategies, but unless you have created an inclusive work environment, an environment that celebrates and builds on differences and that is productive, rewarding, enjoyable and healthy for everyone concerned, you may find that your efforts to retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees seem lost.

Professor Mick Dodson

Please note, the information in this Reconciliation Action Plan is current as at the date of its launch in July 2017.
SECRETARY’S FOREWARD

As we turn to the next chapter in the Department of Health’s Reconciliation Action Plan, it is timely to reflect on how we have progressed – and how far we have to go – on this most important journey.

Reconciliation is a responsibility to which we must commit if we are to become an organisation that respects every individual, ensures equality in opportunities, and improves access to safe and quality health services for all Australians.

Health has made strong progress in recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and developing a culturally capable workplace. To build on this progress and continue our reconciliation journey, Health – in partnership with Reconciliation Australia – has developed this Innovative Reconciliation Action Plan.

As a department we must continue to deepen our awareness, understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural issues across the organisation and acknowledge the contributions in our daily business. I encourage everyone to learn more about the culture and values of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

We can set all the targets we like. But they come to nothing unless we – each of us – start to think, act and live the principles embodied in the Reconciliation Action Plan. This Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2017–2019 will build on past successes and learnings. It is about working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders to test and trial new ways of building relationships, showing respect and improving opportunities.

As we become a more inclusive and culturally aware organisation, we will enhance our ability to draw on the different strengths and attributes of our workforce to achieve our goals and enhance our capability by providing career opportunities, and supporting the Australian community.

Reconciliation is a shared journey that opens our eyes, our hearts, our minds. This plan was developed in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, and stakeholders. It builds on the success and lessons learned and will continue to evolve as the department progresses along its reconciliation journey.

Our organisation’s vision – Better health and wellbeing for all Australians, now and for future generations – reflects a common purpose: equality. The Reconciliation Action Plan reinforces that purpose. It’s up to us to fulfill it.

Martin Bowles PSM
Secretary
July 2017
CONTENTS

Acknowledgement to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples 1
Secretary’s Foreward 2
Relationships 4
Your Role in Health’s Reconciliation Journey 6
Our Reconciliation Journey 7
Executive Statement of Commitment to Reconciliation 8
Reconciliation in all our Work 10
Reconciliation Action Plan Ambassadors 12
Relationships 14
  Action 1. Strengthening our NATSISN 14
  Action 2. Supporting our RAPWG 15
  Action 3. Celebrating Reconciliation 16
  Action 4. Embedding Reconciliation 17
  Action 5. Building Connections 18
Respect 19
  Action 6. Respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protocols 19
  Action 7. Understanding and Educating About Cultures 20
  Action 8. Celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures 21
  Action 9. Closing the Gap 22
Opportunities 22
  Action 10. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment 23
  Action 11. Procuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Business 24
Tracking progress 25
  Action 12. RAP Reporting 25
  Action 13. Continuing Our Journey 26
Our Vision for Reconciliation

Reconciliation is a lifelong journey and a significant part of Australia’s story. Our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) will continue to help us contribute towards a reconciled Australia, in which all Australians understand and value the cultures, experiences and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Greater cultural understanding within Health will ensure we are appropriately delivering effective health policies and programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

To achieve our vision, we will:

• increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees across all divisions at all levels in our organisation
• commit to nurturing talent to advance and retain our employees
• build our cultural capability and foster relationships that support reconciliation with employees and external stakeholders
• continue to increase engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.

Our Work

Australia’s health system is world class, supporting universal and affordable access to high quality medical, pharmaceutical and hospital services, while helping people to stay healthy through health promotion and disease prevention activities.

Health has a diverse set of responsibilities, but throughout there is a common purpose which is reflected in our Vision statement: Better health and wellbeing for all Australians, now and for future generations.

We aim to achieve our vision through strengthening evidence-based policy advice, improving program management, research, regulation and partnerships with other government agencies, consumers and stakeholders.

Since the Closing the Gap framework launch in 2008, the aim has been to close the gap in life expectancy between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians and halve the rate in child mortality for children under five. There has been a significant improvement in the health outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, however there remains a gap of around 10 years in life expectancy. Health is continuing to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to develop culturally appropriate solutions to address the causes of the gap and reach our shared goal of health equality by 2031.
At Health, we remain committed to working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities to achieve health equality, and to develop and implement cohesive and coordinated strategies across the health system to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The Implementation Plan for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013–2023 (health.gov.au/NATSIHPImplementation) sets out the actions we will take, together with the Aboriginal community controlled health sector and other stakeholders to achieve our goals. These actions are supported by a range of mainstream activities and expenditure aimed at improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes, including through the Medicare Benefits Scheme, Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, the Primary Health Networks and other health policies and programs.

Our efforts will only see us gain ground if we genuinely exercise a commitment to the principles of reconciliation, in our work and organisation.

We are also committed to providing a culturally safe workplace which ensures we can recruit and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, making Health an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to access ongoing development opportunities and make a valued contribution to the workforce.

In December 2016 we achieved our 2018 target of 2.5 per cent representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, with 131 out of 5,186 Health employees self-identifying as Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Health is committed to growing and investing in the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees even further across all our offices.
YOUR ROLE IN HEALTH’S RECONCILIATION JOURNEY

- **Make your contribution to Reconciliation** by making the RAP yours
- **Complete** Health’s Cultural Appreciation Program (CAP)
- **Participate in** Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week celebrations
- **Make your pledge** as part of Health’s Reconciliation Pledge Program
- **Complete** CORE, the APS wide cultural e-learning package
- **Utilise** Supply Nation when purchasing goods and services
- **Become an** Indigenous Entry Level Program mentor or buddy
- **Perform an** Acknowledgement to Country at meetings or events
- **Join** NATSISN either as a member or a Friend of the Network
- **Attend a** NATSISN event
Since the establishment of Health’s previous RAP 2013–2017 (health.gov.au/rap), Health has implemented the Behaviours in Action model. This model outlines what respect and positive workplace cultures look like. The model is recognised by all employees as shifting the workplace culture within Health, and empowering employees to ‘call out’ inappropriate behaviour, including discrimination and racism.

We acknowledge there are key areas for improvement, and understand setting targets alone will not achieve the results we strive for. We recognise the need for continuous improvement, and evaluating our progress.

Our Innovate RAP will build on past successes to strengthen our cultural understanding and ensure our policies and programs across Health are meeting the specific needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The framework of the RAP and the accountability process will ensure we:

- consider the impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in everything we do promoting to all employees that **Indigenous health is everyone’s business**
- demonstrate respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and culture within and outside our organisation
- provide opportunities for Health employees to increase cultural understanding, respect and skill sharing through an authentic learning process
- build and further develop the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, including valuing the knowledge, skills and experiences of our employees in advising on the design and delivery of programs
- demonstrate leadership and respect as an employer, as policy makers and service delivery agents for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- model authentic and respectful co-engagement and co-design of strategies, policies and programs
- demonstrate how we achieve the above through developing strong partnerships, mutually respectful relationships, measurable outcomes and evidence based approaches.

**OUR RECONCILIATION JOURNEY**
EXECUTIVE STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO RECONCILIATION

Reconciliation is a journey. Health is committed to building and growing our organisation to ensure we provide a culturally respectful and inclusive workplace for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. By providing a culturally respectful and inclusive workplace we will truly be able to deliver Better health and wellbeing for all Australians, now and for future generations.

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Implementation Plan 2013–2023 sets out the actions we will take, together with the community controlled health sector and our stakeholders, to achieve our shared goal of health equality by 2031. We recognise all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have an equal expectation to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. This Statement of Commitment outlines what we will do at Health to achieve these goals.

At Health we commit to working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to address health inequality and improve health outcomes through cohesive and coordinated strategies across the health system.

We will build and model respect, understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples histories, cultures, and knowledge through the strength of our partnerships inside and outside the department.

We understand the strength of unity required to heal the past and to build a strong and equitable future for all Australians. Our journey of reconciliation, together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, will be one of mutual respect and learning.
Health commits to:

• acknowledge, recognise and respect the cultures and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and engage with our colleagues and stakeholders in ways that empower pathways to self-determination

• acknowledge our past through truth, justice and healing and encourage all colleagues to take action to increase their knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and celebrations

• continue to build and maintain our capability to deliver culturally appropriate service delivery, policy development and program management of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

• build on strengths of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues, including valuing their knowledge, skills and experiences and actively seeking their input into the development of policies and programs affecting health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

• work together to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to achieve greater health and wellbeing now and into the future

• foster a workplace culture that embraces the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues through demonstrating our Behaviours in Action.

Our efforts will only gain traction if we exercise a genuine commitment to the principles of reconciliation, in our work and in our organisation. Reconciliation is a shared journey and we are committed to walk alongside each other, embracing our diversity and together achieving a more inclusive Australia.

This is a Statement of Commitment to reconciliation and to building a workplace environment based on true equality and mutual responsibility that acknowledges our past and embraces our future together.
RECONCILIATION IN ALL OUR WORK

As a nation, Australia has embarked on the reconciliation journey together and we will reflect the same passion and commitment within Health. Our RAP articulates the commitments we will make as a department, but it is our hope that all of us will make our own individual journeys of reconciliation.

We encourage all employees to familiarise themselves with the five dimensions of reconciliation.

1. **Race relations** invites all Australians to build stronger relationships of trust and respect, creating a nation that values, understands and is truly proud of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous cultures, rights and experiences.

2. **Equality and equity** ensures all Australians are provided with equal services and opportunities and together, as a nation, we uphold the rights and appropriately recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

3. **Unity** encourages all Australians to value, recognise and be proud of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritage as a proud part of our nation’s identity.

4. **Institutional integrity** guarantees support for reconciliation is shared across Australia’s government, business and community sectors.

5. **Historical acceptance** hopes for an Australia that understands and accepts the wrongs of our past and the impacts they continue to have on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians ensuring we amend these wrongs so they are never repeated.

Through building relationships, respect and creating opportunities between all employees, we can continue to educate our colleagues about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, identities and successes.

Our journey of reconciliation at Health is ongoing. One of the ways Health supports the journey is with the promotion and annual renewal of our **Reconciliation Pledge Program**, in which we encourage all of our employees to make individual contributions to reconciliation. Health’s Reconciliation Pledge Program is a central point for thoughts and discussions focusing on reconciliation.
Pledges have been made by existing and previous Health employees from all levels, across all areas in Health.

I pledge to actively **find out more** about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures especially through **joining in activities** in NAIDOC Week and talking to my Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander colleagues. I will also work to **encourage other** Branch Heads and FASs to acknowledge the traditional owners on the land where they meet at all formal meetings.

__________

**Ann Smith**
(Assistant Secretary)

I pledge to take every opportunity to **learn more about** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and to **support my team** to do the same, in order to ensure we are developing policies that are culturally competent and fit for purpose. I also pledge to share this knowledge with the people around me outside the **work environment**.

__________

**Bec Carpenter**
(Director working in Indigenous Health)

I promise to continue to **be aware** and **understand the past**, present and future of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander brothers and sisters, and **promote Reconciliation**, particularly in conversation with uninformed others.

__________

**Maria de Vries**
(Departmental Officer working in Aged Care)
RAP Ambassadors will oversee, promote and maintain momentum for implementing and achieving the commitments in this plan.

RAP Working Group

The RAP Working Group (RAPWG) consists of members of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Network, Health Champions, an SES representative from People, Capability and Communication Division, and representatives from across Health. The RAPWG was established to develop Health’s revised RAP. Working Group members are responsible for the development of the revised RAP including leading, promoting and encouraging participation in the consultation processes, liaising with line areas in Health to contribute actions to the RAP, and promoting the importance of the RAP within Health.

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Network

The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Network (NATSISN) is responsible for:

- providing guidance and support to Network members
- advocating the views and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees
- providing advice and strategic direction to Health on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce business
- raising awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in Health
- building mutually respectful relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and non-Indigenous employees.
Health’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Champions and Diversity Champion

As at June 2017, Health has four Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Champions, Ms Alison Larkins, Ms Natasha Cole, Dr Harry Rothenfluh, and Ms Kate Thomann as well as a Diversity Champion, Dr Tony Hobbs. The Champions role is to provide support, advocate for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and initiatives, and contribute to celebrating and recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in Health. The Champions also play a role in ensuring engagement and participation from all Health employees in diversity initiatives and events. Health also recognises Dr Wendy Southern PSM, Health’s former Deputy Secretary of National Program Delivery and an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Champion who played a major role in the development and delivery of this plan.

Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC)

Health’s IAC provides strategic direction and advice to business areas on considering the impact of our work for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. The IAC also provides connections to key community members to assist business areas when considering approaches that demonstrate cultural capability.
We believe exploring opportunities to work collaboratively with all areas in Health and across the Australian Government will ensure our policies, programs and practices deliver effective and appropriate health care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Health will be better informed and more culturally capable in undertaking its work by building strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander national and local organisations, particularly those external bodies that provide strategic policy advice, direction and leadership.

### RELATIONSHIPS

**ACTION 1. Strengthening our NATSISN**

Support and strengthen NATSISN and effectively engage the NATSISN in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce strategies, programs and events.

**Target**
- NATSISN to participate and contribute to all relevant working groups and committees
- Strengthen the relationship between NATSISN and the Friends of the Network through joint social and corporate events
- NATSISN to present at all Entry Level Program inductions
- NATSISN Committee members to reflect their committee role as part of their Personal Development Scheme
- Provide opportunities for NATSISN members to build relationships with Health’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Champions.

**Timeline**
Review biannually in February and August

**Responsibility**
- **LEAD RESPONSIBILITY**
  First Assistant Secretary, People Capability and Communication Division
- **SHARING THE RESPONSIBILITY**
  NATSISN
  Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Champions
  NATSISN Friends of the Network
### ACTION 2. Supporting our RAPWG

Actively engage the RAPWG to monitor RAP development, implementation, monitoring, reporting and revision of the RAP.

**Target**
- The RAPWG will hold four meetings per year to track progress
- The RAPWG will consist of at least 50 per cent representation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees
- At least two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations will be invited to attend and contribute to RAPWG meetings and actions
- Maintain the Terms of Reference for the RAPWG.

**Timeline**
Review as part of each quarterly meeting agenda
Working Group meetings will be held quarterly in January, April, July and October

**Responsibility**

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<tr>
<td>RAPWG Chair</td>
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<td>First Assistant Secretary, People Capability and Communication Division</td>
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ACTION 3. Celebrating Reconciliation

Promote and celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW) across all Health offices.

**Target**

- In collaboration with NATSISN, host two NRW events in Central Office and a minimum of one event in each regional office
- Encourage and support employees to attend external NRW events
- Acknowledge, promote and celebrate National Sorry Day on 26 May and Mabo Day on 3 June
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Champions, Senior Executive and supervisors to encourage employees to attend NRW events
- Register all NRW events via Reconciliation Australia’s NRW website
- Ensure the RAPWG participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW
- Where possible, support co-hosting an inter-agency NRW event
- Invite Reconciliation Australia to attend internal NRW events.

**Timeline**

Annually on 26 May and from 27 May to 3 June

**Responsibility**

**LEAD RESPONSIBILITY**
First Assistant Secretary, People Capability and Communication Division

**SHARING THE RESPONSIBILITY**
NATSISN
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Champions
## ACTION 4. Embedding Reconciliation

Working together to support and properly resource the development and implementation of the RAP.

### Target
- Develop a RAP implementation plan
- Develop and implement a communication strategy for engaging with all internal and external stakeholders
- Continue and report on Health’s Reconciliation Pledge Program
- All Health divisions to include a commitment to reconciliation statement in their annual business plans
- Hold at least two reconciliation information sessions per year to promote reconciliation and our journey in Health
- Hold an annual SES roundtable on Reconciliation and Respect in Health, and invite Reconciliation Australia to attend.

### Timeline
- **Complete** implementation plan and communication strategy by September 2017
- **Report** on implementation plan, communications strategy, Reconciliation Pledge Program and divisional business plan commitments per RAP reporting
- **Complete** SES Roundtable by September annually and information sessions outside of NRW/NAIDOC Week by October annually

### Responsibility

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**ACTION 5. Building Connections**

Continue to build connections across the APS, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and community organisations.

**Target**

- In consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations develop and implement an engagement strategy to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders
- Where possible, invite local APS staff to attend Health’s events celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures
- Participate in APS RAP Forums biannually
- Participate and contribute to the APSC Indigenous Capability Forums quarterly and present at one or more of these to share Health’s achievements
- Executive to encourage and support employees to participate in local or regional secondment programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.

**Timeline**

- **Complete** effective engagement plan by December 2017
- **Attend** APSC Forums quarterly
- **Complete** a secondment December annually

**Responsibility**

**LEAD RESPONSIBILITY**
First Assistant Secretary, People Capability and Communication Division

**SHARING THE RESPONSIBILITY**
NATSISN
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Champions
RESPECT

We commit to promoting and encouraging a culturally safe workplace which respects, acknowledges and celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples history and culture. Health acknowledges that to deliver high quality and culturally appropriate services in local communities, we must demonstrate our understanding and respect of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures and histories.

ACTION 6. Respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protocols

Implement innovative activities which focus on increasing an understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols.

Target

- Develop a local list of Traditional Custodians to approach for each office when inviting an Elder to deliver a Welcome to Country
- Ensure a Traditional Custodian is invited to perform a Welcome to Country at all significant corporate events
- Ensure an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander traditional performance at all significant corporate events
- Invite Indigenous Entry Level Program (IELP) employees to participate in cultural educational workshops, enabling them to share knowledge about their own community and journeys
- Organise and display Acknowledgment to Country plaques for each Health office
- Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocols guide explaining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols, definitions and sensitivities
- Endorse an all employee signature block acknowledging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their timeless connection to Australia
- Update our Acknowledgement to Country cards to reflect the Traditional Custodians where each Health office is located
- Ensure all SES employees perform an Acknowledgement to Country before commencing corporate meetings.

Timeline

Complete and launch Traditional Custodians list, acknowledgement plaques, protocols guide, signature block and acknowledgment cards in NRW 2018.
Complete IELP workshops annually in March

Responsibility

LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
First Assistant Secretary, People, Capability and Communication Division

SHARING THE RESPONSIBILITY
Health’s Executive Team
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Champions
### ACTION 7. Understanding and Educating About Cultures

Building the cultural capabilities of all Health’s employees.

**Target**
- Develop and implement a Cultural Capability Strategy
- Develop an art registry of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artwork in Health
- Increase the display and awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artworks in all offices
- Provide a Cultural Advice Service, for employees to seek advice on protocols and traditional practises and how to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in the workplace
- Ensure all employees, including SES, complete Health’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Appreciation Program (CAP) and APS wide CORE Online Cultural Awareness Program
- Hold at least two Reconciliation and Respect interactive information sessions for SES staff per annum
- Ensure all new starters and their supervisors complete CAP by the end of their probation
- Ensure all employees who work in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business areas complete CAP training.

**Timeline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete Cultural Capability Strategy, art registry and hanging of all artwork by NRW</td>
<td>2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>50% of Health employees complete CAP and CORE</td>
<td>December 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>All Health employees working in Indigenous business complete CAP</td>
<td>December 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report CAP engagement quarterly as per RAPWG meeting agendas to ensure targets are achieved</td>
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<td>Complete SES sessions biannually in February and August</td>
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**Responsibility**

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<td>Health’s Executive Team</td>
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<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Champions</td>
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<td>All Health employees</td>
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<td>Managers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees</td>
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ACTION 8. Celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures

Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to engage with their culture and communities by celebrating NAIDOC Week and other days of significance.

Target

- Hold at least one corporate event in Central Office to celebrate NAIDOC Week
- In collaboration with NATSISN, host two NAIDOC Week events in Central Office and a minimum of one event in each regional office
- Continue recognising the achievements and contributions of our employees through the Secretary’s NAIDOC Awards
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Champions, Senior Executive and supervisors encourage all employees to participate in Health’s NAIDOC Week events
- Review HR policies and procedures to ensure employees feel supported to participate in local NAIDOC Week events
- Where possible, support co-hosting an inter-agency NAIDOC Week event
- Promote Health’s leave arrangements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to attend ceremonial and cultural activities ensuring employees are accessing the appropriate leave when attending community NAIDOC Week activities
- Promote and educate employees through internal communications and support NATSISN hosting events for the following days of celebration:
  - Anniversary of the Government’s Apology to the Stolen Generations on 13 February
  - National Close the Gap Day on 16 March
  - Coming of the Light on 1 July
  - International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples on 9 August
  - Indigenous Literacy Day on 6 September
  - World AIDS Day on 1 December (co-hosted with departmental Pride network).

Timeline

Complete annually on days of significance and in particular during July for NAIDOC Week events

Responsibility

LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
First Assistant Secretary, People, Capability and Communication Division

SHARING THE RESPONSIBILITY
NATSISN
Health’s Executive Team
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Champions
Managers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees
ACTION 9.  Closing the Gap

Continue to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and communities to ensure better health and wellbeing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians now and for future generations.

**Target**
- Continue and monitor the work we do in all divisions that are responsible for delivering or developing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policies or programs within communities.

**Timeline**
- **Report** on business and reconciliation commitments as per divisional business plans
- **Report** as per Health’s Annual Report, September annually

**Responsibility**
- **LEAD RESPONSIBILITY**
  - Health’s Executive Team
- **SHARING THE RESPONSIBILITY**
  - Division First Assistant Secretaries

OPPORTUNITIES

We recognise and value the diverse and extensive knowledge, skills and experiences Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees bring to Health and commit to increasing opportunities for professional and personal development. We commit to increasing Health’s engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and continue to create mutually beneficial commercial relationships.
ACTION 10. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment

Maintain and increase our current level of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees’ representation in Health and ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees are provided career development opportunities.

Target

- Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment and Retention Strategy
- Engage with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to consult on employment strategies, including professional development
- Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment activities and selection panels
- Advertise all Health’s job vacancies in relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media
- Supervisors of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to support and contribute to career development opportunities such a participation in external programs and secondments
- Provide an annual one-day workshop for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees for development, including career planning, resume writing and interviews, and skills building workshops
- Ensure HR and recruitment procedures and policies have no barriers for future and existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees
- Continue Health’s participation in APS Indigenous Entry Level Programs
- Provide all IELP employees with an appropriate mentor and buddy to help with understanding the APS and build their professional and personal development
- Actively participate in leading recruitment and retention initiatives through the Secretaries Equality and Diversity Council, the Indigenous Champions Network, the Indigenous SES Network and cross-agency working groups.

Timeline

Complete Employment and Retention Strategy by December 2017
Complete assigning IELP mentors and buddies by the end of IELP probation
Complete all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander development workshops annually in November
Report annually per RAP reporting
Report on cross-agency networking and secondments per RAP reporting

Responsibility

LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
First Assistant Secretary, People, Capability and Communication Division

SHARING THE RESPONSIBILITY
NATSISN
Health’s Executive Team
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Champions
Managers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees
ACTION 11.  Procuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Business

Make a significant and sustained contribution to stimulating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entrepreneurship and business development.

**Target**
- Promote Health’s Indigenous Procurement Policy (IPP) Strategy
- Monitor, raise awareness of, and report on the achievements of Health’s IPP Strategy
- Maintain the IPP Working Group (IPPWG) to monitor the ongoing application of the IPP Strategy and achievement of IPP targets
- Develop at least one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned business in each regional office annually
- Continue Health’s membership with Supply Nation and ensure all employees are familiar with, and are sourcing their goods and services through Supply Nation’s Indigenous Business Direct
- Invite Supply Nation and a local business owner to present at seminars
- Develop a national and local supplier list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses that Health employees can access on a regular basis, and promote opportunities to participate in Supply Nation trade shows
- Review and update procurement policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers for procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.

**Timeline**
- Complete supplier list by February 2018
- Review IPP Strategy annually in February
- Report on the IPP and the IPP Strategy annually in February

**Responsibility**

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<td>First Assistant Secretary, Portfolio Investment Division</td>
<td>Health’s Executive Team IPPWG</td>
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<td>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Champions</td>
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Ensuring we are making a sustainable contribution to reconciliation, we have developed a RAP that is realistic and engaging with visible and achievable outcomes. We recognise reconciliation is an ongoing journey that is built on appreciation and understanding, mutual respect and learning from our successes and challenges.

### TRACKING PROGRESS

**ACTION 12. RAP Reporting**

Promote and report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings.

**Target**
- Provide Annual Reports to the RAPWG, the People, Values and Capability Committee (PVCC) and Health’s IAC
- Complete Reconciliation Australia’s biennial Workplace Reconciliation Barometer
- Participate in RA’s RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire
- Publically report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings.

**Timeline**
- **Report annually** to the RAPWG, PVCC and the IAC in August
- **Complete** the RAP Workplace Barometer in May 2018 and report annually on the RAP Impact Measurement Report.
- **Report annually** to RA in September

**Responsibility**
- **LEAD RESPONSIBILITY**
  - First Assistant Secretary, People, Capability and Communication Division
ACTION 13. Continuing Our Journey

Review, refresh and update the RAP.

Target

- Consult across Health, our external networks and liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements
- Send draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal review, feedback and endorsement.

Timeline

Complete by October 2019

Responsibility

LEAD RESPONSIBILITY
Health’s Executive Team

SHARING THE RESPONSIBILITY
First Assistant Secretary, People, Capability and Communication Division
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Champions
NATSISN
All Health employees
Artist Bio – Krystal Hurst

Gillawarra Arts, gillawarra.arts@gmail.com

Krystal Hurst is a Worimi woman from Taree and Forster of the Mid North Coast of New South Wales. She was born and raised on the border of Biripi and Worimi Country and has cultural connections to a place called ‘Saltwater’, a traditional seasonal camp located in Saltwater National Park near Wallabi Point.

Krystal is the artist behind Gillawarra Arts, a family enterprise centred on arts and culture. She has inherited Gillawarra Arts from her parents who formed Gillawarra as a community driven enterprise in the 1980s in Taree.

Krystal has painted for many government and non-government organisations, aimed at incorporating concepts of Koori culture and knowledge systems into the branding of diverse projects and initiatives.

She has been painting and drawing since she was a Wonai (child) spanning over 25 years of her life. Krystal has learnt many other crafts such as jewellery making using Porcupine/Echidna quills, sea shells, native seeds, natural fibres and emu feathers. Krystal has also begun to experiment with water colours, print and textile making.

Being a coastal woman, Krystal aspires to share aspects of her culture, knowledge and stories through arts and crafts.

In the Kattang/Gathang, the language of the Worimi people, Gillawarra means ‘resting place’. This is the place where our ancestors set up camp and rested after travelling long distances for ceremony before continuing on their journey.