



Metro North Hospital and Health Service *Putting people first*

Community, Indigenous and Subacute Services

Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

May 2018 – May 2020



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Accessibility

Public Availability

Where possible, readers are encouraged to download the report online at: www.health.qld.gov.au/metronorth

Where this is not possible, printed copies are available using one of the contact options below:

Address: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Unit
Chermside Community Health Centre
Building 26, 490 Hamilton Road
Chermside Qld 4032

General Phone: (07) 3139 3235

Office Hours: 9am–5pm

General e-mail: A_TSIHU_MNHHS@health.qld.gov.au



Interpreter Services Statement

Metro North Hospital and Health Service is committed to providing accessible services to the community from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

If you have difficulty in understanding the annual report, please contact us on 07 3646 8111 and we will arrange an interpreter to communicate the report to you effectively.



Chief Executive's message

I am pleased to present the Reconciliation Action Plan for Metro North Community, Indigenous, Subacute Services. This is the first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) for our hospital and health service and demonstrates our strong commitment to reconciliation.

As Australia's largest and most diverse public health service, Metro North has a responsibility to provide compassionate, high quality care that responds to the needs of our whole community.

It is vital that we work together with the community to set a clear direction on how we can provide better healthcare and experiences for the people that need us.

But our responsibility extends beyond healthcare delivery. Through the CISS RAP we have a framework for building stronger and more respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities to progress reconciliation in Australia, both within the workplace and into the community that we serve.

Metro North is a major employer in South East Queensland and a large training provider across the clinical, administrative and technical fields. As a large and complex organisation, we also have significant financial influence and through this RAP can use that influence to support Indigenous businesses either directly or through our supply chain.

The RAP enables us to go beyond goodwill to setting clear, measurable, and most importantly, achievable goals that build relationships, develop a culture of respect, and provide further opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Thank you to the CISS RAP working group for the significant work that has gone into not only developing the plan but creating a clear pathway for implementation. This RAP provides the framework for the development of other reconciliation action plans within Metro North as we progress our reconciliation journey.

Shaun Drummond

Chief Executive, Metro North Hospital and Health Service



RAP Working Group co-Chair's message

We are delighted and honoured to be the RAP Working Group Co-Chairs for the Community, Indigenous, and Subacute Service (CISS) RAP and to be working closely with our RAP working group to drive change across the directorate.

Our role will be to enter into discussions that lead to results while ensuring there is an equality of responsibility across CISS, so that everyone within the directorate can move forward together. CISS will continue to be seen as a leader in the provision of culturally appropriate, and culturally safe healthcare for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities, whilst also being viewed as an employer of choice for Indigenous Australians.

This RAP provides us with a blueprint that will guide us to enhance the lives Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and we are confident that, over the life of this plan, and those to follow afterwards, we can create a strong legacy by embedding the RAP into everything that we do within CISS.

Paul Drahm

Director, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Unit
Community, Indigenous and Subacute Services

Jo Walters

Director, Allied Health
Community, Indigenous and Subacute Services





▲ Members from the CISS Executive and RAP Committee pictured outside the Cherbourg Ration Shed with Uncle Marshall Saunders and Uncle Robert West.

Our vision for reconciliation

Our vision for reconciliation is for a health care system that embraces unity between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians by valuing the culture, experiences, and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, via the delivery of services in culturally appropriate and culturally safe ways, the representation of equality and equity, historical acceptance of our shared history, and promotion of positive race relations.

Our business

Community, Indigenous and Subacute Services (CISS) deliver a broad range of quality community-based health care and support services to help people improve and maintain their wellbeing and independence across the northside of Brisbane.

Employing 1300 staff, of which 70 identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders, we are part of the Metro North Hospital and Health Service (MNHHS), the largest health service in Queensland, caring for a population of more than one million people every year.

Working out of 12 facilities we provide services for 500 occupied beds each day, whilst also delivering a myriad of other vital community health services which aim to provide the safest possible care close to the patient's home as an alternative to hospital treatment and to help people from being re-admitted to hospital. Some of the services we provide are:

- Residential aged care services
- Care for people with complex high needs who require around the clock care
- Short term restorative care to enable people to return to their homes following hospital admission
- Specialized rehabilitation care for people who have suffered acquired brain injuries
- Interim care to support older people that have been discharged from hospital and are awaiting access to an aged care facility
- Assess the medical, physical, cultural, psychological and social care needs of elderly people and their carers to enable them access to the right support, care, and services based on their individual needs
- Support and actively manage people with chronic health problems (including cancer and diabetes) by providing them with access to the right care at the right time
- Provision of acute care in a patient's home to reduce and avoid admissions to hospitals
- Rehabilitation services to improve people's wellbeing, independence, general function, and quality of life
- Short term support and case management to assist older people complete their restorative care in their home following a hospital admission
- A seven day non-emergency post-acute hospital response service.

CISS is also responsible for ensuring that culturally appropriate health services are provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers at all Metro North facilities.

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Unit works across five public hospitals, various community health centres, residential care facilities and mobile and outreach teams with a goal of becoming a national health leader in the delivery of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Services that are culturally appropriate and culturally safe. We do this through:

- Culturally appropriate support, advocacy and advice to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the hospital via bedside visits to explain the hospital system, liaison with clinical staff, transportation, personal and family support, language translation services, general cultural support and coordination of care from hospital to home
- Provision of culturally appropriate support, education and prevention services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities on sexual health issues including access to treatment, education, and prevention
- Client advocacy, co-ordination of care, health promotion with a specific focus on chronic disease and risk factors, transportation, and referrals to GPs, Allied Health, and Specialist medical services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- A navigation and transition service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their families from pregnancy through to when their child turns two via regular phone contact, home visits, referrals, drop-in clinics, and health promotion
- Support, cultural advice, and training to raise awareness about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients, their families and communities accessing our services in order to build a culturally capable workforce

Our services are delivered by multidisciplinary teams of nursing, allied health, medical and support/operational staff with the skills and experience to treat a full range of health needs, both physical and mental.

Statement of Commitment to Reconciliation

The Community, Indigenous, and Subacute Services Directorate of the Metro North Hospital and Health Service is committed to improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and providing services which are culturally respectful and responsive to their needs.

We recognise the traditional custodians of the land and waters and pay our respects to Elders past and present and to those yet to come as we walk together towards a healthier future.

We remain committed to the Council of Australian Governments' targets to Close the Gap in life expectancy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by 2033 and to halve the gap in mortality of children under five years by 2018.

In the spirit of reconciliation we celebrate the uniqueness of the world's oldest living cultures. We respectfully acknowledge the diversity of cultural practices and spiritual beliefs.

We are mindful of the negative impacts of colonisation and past government policies, injustices and inequalities that continue to significantly contribute to marginalisation, disadvantage and poor health outcomes experienced by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people today.

We acknowledge and appreciate the financial contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders towards the expansion of Queensland's hospitals, health infrastructure and services. We recognise and regret that this was a part of past government policies of control over Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' wages and savings under the 'Protection Acts'.

The Community, Indigenous, and Subacute Service Directorate is committed to providing equity of access to high quality healthcare services and building relationships based on inclusion with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their communities. We strive to improve client and patient confidence in our services across Queensland.

We will not tolerate racism, prejudice or harassment. We reject racially prejudiced attitudes, actions and ideologies that impede culturally inclusive relationships.

The Community, Indigenous, and Subacute Service Directorate will continue to foster the principles of reconciliation within its every day practice through implementation of the *Queensland Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Framework 2010-2033*, which will be reflected in relevant Department and Hospital and Health Service strategies and plans.

We are dedicated to developing workforce recruitment and retention strategies which increase participation and representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

All staff have responsibilities towards closing the gap of disadvantage and working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities for a healthier future.



Chris Seiboth

Executive Director
Community, Indigenous, and Subacute Services
Metro North Hospital and Health Service

2 June 2017

Our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

During National Reconciliation Week in 2017 a CISS Statement of Commitment to Reconciliation was signed and represented a commitment by CISS to help to achieve Reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians.

The Statement of Commitment is a high-level statement which acknowledges that all employees share responsibility and have a role in addressing health inequities experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Our Innovate RAP will bring to life the statements made in the CISS Statement of Commitment to Reconciliation and will enable CISS to explore and implement innovative approaches that will not only help to advance reconciliation, but to transform the culture of our organisation through increasing our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce, working more closely towards mutually agreed outcomes with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, and to share the wonderfully rich cultural diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with all CISS staff.

We are entering into this RAP as an ongoing process to make changes both within and outside the workplace, by providing all CISS staff with the opportunity to make a difference and to take a personal responsibility to help achieve reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous Australians.

Our progress is being driven by our RAP Champion (CISS Executive Director) and the RAP Working Group Co-Chairs who are actively involved in promoting our actions against the deliverables within this RAP to not only all staff within CISS, but across the Metro North Hospital and Health Service more broadly.

The RAP Champion and RAP Working Group Co-Chairs are supported by an equally important cohort of internal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous employees who form the CISS RAP Working group. The RAP Working Group includes a cross section of staff from across CISS who work in both clinical and non-clinical roles.

The RAP Working Group

Tammy Dutschke

Business and Performance Analyst

Renee Simon

Principal Communications Advisor

Amanda Duncan

Nurse Educator/Clinical Nurse Consultant,
Chronic Disease

Lee Barby

CISS Corporate Educator

Therese Elliot

Acting Director of Speech Pathology

Liz Kidd

Centre Manager, North Lakes Health Precinct

Julie Sochacki

A/Centre Manager, Brighton

Debbie Leahy

Nursing Director, Rehabilitation and Transition Care

Rayna Cowburn

Indigenous Service Improvement Coordinator

Robyn Chilcott

Manager, Indigenous Acute and Primary Health Care Team

Jarrod Parter

Community Liaison Worker

Tracy Grant

Indigenous Safety and Quality Officer

Mark Budd

Hospital Liaison Officer

Elwyn Henaway

Cultural Capability Officer

Paul Drahm (Co-Chair)

Director, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Unit

Jo Walters (Co-Chair)

Director, Allied Health

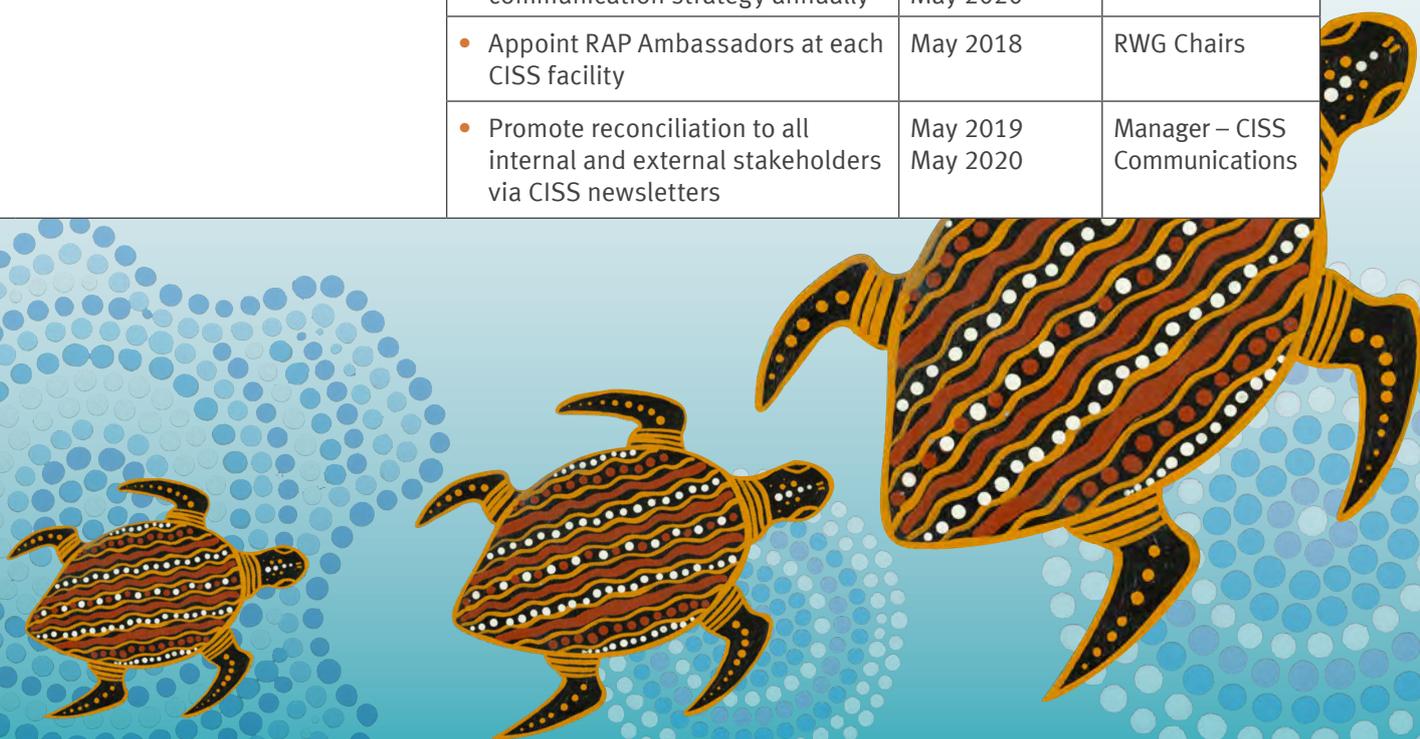


Relationships

Building strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is essential to our work and the way we do it. Strong relationships help us to deliver better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that are cultural appropriate and culturally safe.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1 CISS RAP Working Group (RWG) actively monitors RAP development and implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure RAP Working Group oversees the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP 	May 2018	RWG Chairs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are represented on the RWG, as well as other employees from various disciplines across CISS to ensure all areas of the directorate are represented 	May 2018	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet at least four times per year to monitor and report on RAP implementation 	June 2018 October 2018 December 2018 March 2019 June 2019 October 2019 December 2019 March 2020	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Terms of Reference for the CISS RAP Working Group 	May 2018	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an Implementation Plan for RAP actions 	May 2018	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update the Implementation Plan for RAP actions 	June 2019 June 2020	
2 Celebrate and participate in National Reconciliation Week (NRW) by providing opportunities to build and maintain relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold an all CISS-staff NRW event and register event via Reconciliation Australia's NRW event 	27 May–3 June 2018, 2019 2020	Director – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Unit
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold NRW events in each CISS facilities 		Director – Facility Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sponsor a local community event in NRW 		Manager – Community and Strategic Relations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure RAP Working Group members attend and encourage all staff to participate in external events to recognise and celebrate NRW 		RWG Chairs

3 Develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations to support positive outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement 	October 2018	Director – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Unit
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a stakeholder identification and engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community groups 	July 2018	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form relationships with Traditional Owners, prominent Elders, and community groups and seek opportunities to benefit one another through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » cultural awareness consultation » open dialogue about project opportunities » networking; and » cultural events 	October 2018	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commit to establishing at least two formal partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to improve our services to Indigenous Australians 	May 2019	
4 Raise internal and external awareness of our RAP to promote reconciliation across our business and sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a strategy to communicate our RAP to all internal and external stakeholders 	May 2018	Manager – CISS Communications
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update and maintain the RAP communication strategy annually 	May 2019 May 2020	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint RAP Ambassadors at each CISS facility 	May 2018	RWG Chairs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote reconciliation to all internal and external stakeholders via CISS newsletters 	May 2019 May 2020	Manager – CISS Communications





Respect

Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culture, land, and history is important to the work of CISS because it supports successful working relationships and helps leads to better policy development, program delivery, and patient experiences.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5 Engage employees in continuous cultural learning opportunities to increase understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update Cultural Capability Training policy so that it defines cultural learning needs of employees in all areas of our business and considers various ways cultural learning can be provided 	December 2018	Director – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Unit
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with local Traditional Owners and prominent community members to review the cultural practice program and incorporate local content 	December 2018	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Cultural Practice program to ensure it meets the needs of all CISS programs and services 	December 2018	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute cultural awareness and RAP fact sheets to all staff at induction 	January 2019	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all CISS staff have attended a face to face cultural practice program training session 	May 2020	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide yearly opportunities for CISS staff to participate in cultural immersion activities 	May 2019 May 2020	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunities for RWG members, RAP Champions, HR Managers and other key leadership staff to participate in cultural training 	May 2019 May 2020	
6 Engage employees in understanding the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols, such as Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country, to ensure there is a shared meaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country 	December 2018	Director – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Unit
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and maintain a list of key contacts for organising a Welcome to Country and maintaining respectful partnerships 	June 2018	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite a Traditional Owner to provide a Welcome to Country to at least two significant events, including our NAIDOC Week event 	June 2018	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of all important internal and external meetings 	December 2018	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage Acknowledgements of Country at meetings by distributing Acknowledgement of Country cards that can be attached to staff security passes for reference at meetings 	December 2018	
7 Provide opportunities for all CISS staff to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities by celebrating events significant to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAIDOC Week Close the Gap day National Apology Coming of the Light Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in events which celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture 	July 2018	CISS HR Business Partner
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunities for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to participate with their cultures and communities during dates of significance 	July 2018	Executive Director – CISS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold NAIDOC Week Events in each CISS facility 	July 2018 July 2019	Director – Facility Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host a family and community NAIDOC week event annually 	July 2018 July 2019	Director – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Unit
8 Provide greater recognition to the Traditional Owners upon whose land CISS operates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update policies to enable conference rooms in each CISS facility to be renamed so that they are reflective of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community 	April 2019	Director – Facility Services
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise and display an Acknowledgment of Country plaque in all CISS Facilities 	February 2019	
9 Recognise and acknowledge excellence in the delivery of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander program delivery and services within CISS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an 'Excellence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services' category in the CISS Staff Excellence Awards 	December 2018 December 2019	Manager – CISS Communications
10 Ensure our programs are culturally appropriate and culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural governance committee to review the cultural appropriateness of CISS policies and programs 	September 2018	Director – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Unit
11 Enable all CISS staff to demonstrate cultural sensitivity and promote improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes in the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art inspired CISS staff polo shirt that is available to purchase and wear in the workplace 	May 2018	



Opportunities

Providing employment and development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people strengthens our workplace and supports a culture where all staff are valued for their diverse backgrounds and experiences. Increasing engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses will not only create mutually beneficial commercial relationships, but will provide economic benefits and social outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
12 Increase our number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect information on our current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment opportunities 	July 2018	Director – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Unit
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing representation levels from five per cent, by one per cent per year until 2020 through the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific entry-level employment programs, increased use of identified positions, and formal partnerships with Universities, TAFEs, Schools, Training Providers, and Indigenous employment agencies 	May 2020	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment and Retention strategy 	June 2019	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Organisational Workforce Manager to implement Indigenous recruitment and retention initiatives 	December 2018	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on employment strategies, including professional development 	February 2019 February 2020	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review recruitment processes and policies to ensure culturally appropriate aspects including Indigenous representation, support and guidance is available throughout the interview and onboarding processes 	July 2018	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertise CISS vacancies in relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media 	July 2018	

13 Ensure our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees are provided with career development and networking opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	December 2018 December 2019	CISS HR Business Partner
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer scholarships to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to access further training and qualifications, and attendance at external conferences 	September 2018 September 2019	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide access to leadership development programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees 	December 2018	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate secondment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to undertake work placements within other areas of CISS, the Metro North Hospital and Health Service, and community controlled health services 	June 2019	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff network 	September 2018	
14 Investigate opportunities to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity within our organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	December 2018	CISS Business Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and communicate to staff a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses that can be used to procure goods and services 	December 2018	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop commercial relationships so that 3% of addressable spend within CISS is with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander owned business 	May 2020	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the use of the Queensland Government's Black Business Finder 	December 2018	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate Supply Nation Membership 	December 2019	



Governance, tracking progress and reporting

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
15 Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings to Reconciliation Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete and submit the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia annually	September 2018, 2019, 2020	RWG Chairs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Investigate participating in the RAP Barometer	May 2018	
16 Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings internally and externally	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Publically report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings	May 2018, 2019, 2020	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Internally track progress of RAP implementation via quarterly reports to the CISS Executive		
17 Review, refresh and update RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements	November 2019	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Send draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal review, feedback, and endorsement		

Contact details

Name: Phil Ahmat
Position: CISS RAP Coordinator
Phone: 07 3139 4117
Email: phillip.ahmat@health.qld.gov.au





SALT WATER © (PAINTING)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have relied on the sea to provide food for thousands of years. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people only took what was needed, and were selective about the sex and maturity of animals taken in order to allow resources to replenish, and to prevent wastage the food was shared out amongst the community.

Food from the sea is still an important part of life for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people still continue to practice the many complex ways of collecting and preparing foods.

Fish, turtle and stingray

Traditional source of seafood

Blue colours, dots and circles represent

Tidal, current and depth changes in the sea

Red with white dots (circles)

Represents coral growth and spawning

About the artist

Artist: Ronald Abala

WULUKANTHA – “little spirit man”

I identify and acknowledge my Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage/cultures.

I am a EWAIJA man from West Arnhem Land Northern Territory (Father’s side).

And MUDIAMO man from Daily River region, South of Darwin (Mother’s side).

I also have links to the Torres Strait, Badu Island (Father’s side).

I am the second eldest of five siblings, with one sister and three younger brothers, we all lived grew up and have strong connections with the people, community and the country around the Darwin area, Northern Territory. I moved away from Darwin in the early 90s to tropical North and far Northern Queensland (Cairns and Bamaga) for a period of four years. I worked, lived and travelled around Queensland for the four years until finally settling in Brisbane 15 years ago. I make it my business to return home to Darwin on frequent occasions to reconnect with my country, community and with my families and friends.

I’m a self-taught Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artist and through my paintings I interpret my cultures, my people, the animals, the landscapes around Darwin Northern Territory and through the stories that have been passed down to me as a child. Other mediums I have worked on consist of tile mosaics and stained glass work.

