

REFLECT RAP IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

2023



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INTRODUCTION

Karinya House acknowledges the intergenerational trauma experienced since colonisation by some of the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women and children we walk alongside and the impacts this has, and has had on their connection to culture, well-being and health.

Karinya House is proud to have made significant progress towards the actions and deliverables included in our first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). We have increased the representation of Aboriginal staff, increased cultural awareness and competency of staff, and deepened our knowledge of and engagement with a range of external services supporting women and children who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Together, this work will continue to contribute to improvements in the services and support that we provide for women that we walk alongside. As we build upon these achievements, we will continue to strengthen our individual and collective contributions towards reconciliation.

Importantly, the implementation of the Karinya House RAP occurred within the context of the lead up to the national referendum to constitutionally enshrine a Voice to Parliament. Significant internal resources were invested in ensuring that all staff and women accessing our services had the information required to make an informed contribution in the referendum and that all Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander people were given the respect and support required during the campaign and after the outcome was known.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



01. Incorporation of Aboriginal art and cultural practices in our environment

Karinya House commissioned the creation of an artwork by local Aboriginal artist and proud Kamilaroi woman, Kathryn Williams for use in our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan. The original artwork is displayed in the foyer of the administration building and copies have been used in our RAP documentation and postcards, which are issued to supporters of Karinya House as needed. In lieu of a staff uniform*, the artwork design has also been used as a print for scarves, which are gifted to staff, volunteers and supporters of Karinya House on an ongoing basis. These gifts are an important gesture reminding recipients of the organisation's commitment to reconciliation.

Consultations for the incorporation of Aboriginal language names across our facility have occurred and we have reached internal agreement about our preference for a language theme. The Karinya House RAP Working Group will continue to liaise with local Aboriginal language groups to use the chosen words that can be incorporated into our signage.

A smoking cleansing ceremony was conducted at Karinya House in early October 2023 by local Ngunnawal elder Selina Walker and Aunty Annette O'Shea. The ceremony was well attended by staff, volunteers and women and children currently in residence, with many expressing gratitude for the opportunity to participate in this important cultural event. The ceremony had been suggested by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women in our service as a way of cleansing the facility, to help ward off bad spirits and make a pathway for a brighter future.

*Uniforms are not appropriate in our work context as it is important that staff are not identifiable when in public. The use of scarfs as an alternative ensures that staff cannot be instantly identified as working with Karinya House, which protects the privacy and dignity of staff and women when out in the community.



02. Developing staff cultural understanding and awareness

All Karinya House staff have undertaken cultural awareness training provided by the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and this training has been embedded into the staff performance and development framework.

Moving forward, we will collectively continue to build upon the knowledge and awareness, providing additional opportunities for staff, volunteers, and Committee members to participate in meaningful learning opportunities so we are best placed to provide culturally appropriate, culturally aware and safe environments to support women and their children. In future years this may involve participation in workshops on-country and access to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander mentors and trainers as fits with the skills, experiences and interests of the evolving staff cohort.

Staff have also benefited from the mentorship and guidance of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women on staff, who have regularly made themselves available to support staff knowledge and competency. These staff are now an integral part of our Care Team.



03. Strengthening relationships with services providing support for Aboriginal women and children

Karinya House has invested significant time strengthening and building relationships with key personnel within a range of services providing support for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women and children across the Canberra region.

The initial employment of an Aboriginal Senior Caseworker enabled the organisation to map services available for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women and their children and to initiate contact with a range of service providers. Significant work has also been undertaken by management staff and members of the RAP Working Group to strengthen our relationships and referral pathways with external stakeholders, across the government and community sectors.

Karinya House remains a regular and active member of the ACTCOSS Reconciliation Working Group, offering a regular opportunity to engage with other organisations working towards similar reconciliation efforts.

MEASURING PROGRESS

This report documents the achievements of the actions and tasks included in the Karinya House Reflect RAP using the 'traffic light' colour coding outlined below.

-  The task has been completed. In cases where the task was to 'investigate, the required research and exploration has been undertaken
-  The task has commenced but not completed. We have undertaken work towards the achievement of this task with the work ongoing.
-  The task has not commenced

ACTION 1: ESTABLISH AND STRENGTHEN MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL **RELATIONSHIPS** WITH ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STAKEHOLDERS AND ORGANISATIONS.

1.1 Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence	
I. Identify and engage Ngunnawal Elders and community to bring awareness of Karinya House's services to the Ngunnawal community.	
II. Engage the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body (ATSIEB) to seek opportunities to collaborate.	
III. Investigate developing a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations that assist women and children.	
IV. Identify the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous groups/organisations that assist single parents, families, women and children.	
V. Identify local networks that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples access for information assisting families, women and children.	
VI. Investigate into partnerships with Koori Playgroups and Strong Women's groups at the Child & Family Centres in Canberra.	
VII. Identify and engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth and school groups.	
VIII. Investigate opportunities to collaborate with local Ngunnawal, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups/organisations to deliver needed services Karinya House provides.	

1.2 Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	
I. Identify local and national standards/targets for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children.	
II. Identify opportunities to contribute towards the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement.	

ACTION 2: BUILD RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH CELEBRATING NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK	
2.1 Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	
I. Develop communicate for internal staff, clients spreading awareness of NRW's activities and events.	
2.2 KH staff and committee representatives participate in an external NRW event.	
I. Executive Staff Leadership Team to facilitate staff attendance at an NRW event.	
II. Collaborate with other local organisations participating in NRW events.	
III. RAP working group members to attend a minimum of one external NRW event.	
2.3 Host a NRW event for women to recognise and celebrate NRW.	
I. KH Group Coordinator to liaise with relevant local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to arrange an appropriate workshop as part of the Group Program.	

ACTION 3: PROMOTE RECONCILIATION THROUGH OUR SPHERE OF INFLUENCE	
3.1 Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.	
I. RAP working group (ESLT) to oversee the development, endorsement and launch of the "Karinya House for Mothers and Babies RAP".	
II. Update Intranet with link to RAP and RAP Implementation Report.	
III. Incorporate Karinya House RAP information into staff induction package.	
3.2 Explore ways to demonstrate our commitment to reconciliation through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artwork	
I. Explore incorporating Ngunnawal, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artwork into the workplace.	
II. Explore into Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander artwork into uniforms.	
III. Incorporate RAP artwork into the workplace where feasible.	
3.3 Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	
I. Explore opportunities to have members of the Ngunnawal, and the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community to participate in RAP actions/journey.	
II. Identify Government funded services and bodies that assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, women and children.	
3.4 Identify other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	
I. Engage with local organisations that possess a RAP.	
II. Explore into collaboration on actions within each organisation's RAP.	

ACTION 4: PROMOTE POSITIVE RACE RELATIONS THROUGH ANTI-DISCRIMINATION STRATEGIES	
4.1 Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	
I. Investigate required training to build organisation capacity of understanding best practice and policy of race relations and anti-discrimination.	
4.2 Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	
I. Assess current HR policies and practice against equity and diversity best practice.	
4.3 Conduct a review of Casework policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions and future needs.	
I. Assess current casework policies and practice against equity and diversity best practice.	
II. Strengthen our organisation's programs and materials to be inclusive and considerate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures.	

ACTION 5: INCREASE UNDERSTANDING, VALUE AND RECOGNITION OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURES, HISTORIES, KNOWLEDGE AND RIGHTS THROUGH CULTURAL LEARNING	
5.1 Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	
I. Explore opportunities to attend local Ngunnawal cultural tours.	
II. Explore options for learning local Ngunnawal language.	
III. Embed staff attendance at "Cultural Awareness Training" as part of the Karinya House Performance and Development Framework.	
5.2 Conduct review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	
I. Conduct surveys for staff identifying gaps of cultural competency within organisation, as part of broader workforce planning.	
II. Engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations or businesses to review organisation and identify cultural learning needs.	

5.3 Develop cultural awareness and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's and children's business.	
I. Learn and understand Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's and mothers' cultural protocols.	
II. Investigate into learning cultural birthing.	
III. Investigate accessing sites other than Karinya House for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients to visit with family members while ensuring safety for all women and children.	
IV. Investigate into showcasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artefacts that reflect women and children in the workforce.	
V. Develop programs for cultural empowerment in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in the ACT.	

ACTION 6: DEMONSTRATE RESPECT TO ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES BY **OBSERVING CULTURAL PROTOCOL AND LANGUAGE**

6.1 Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.	
I. Explore collaborating with Ngunnawal community and/or groups to raise awareness of ACT's Traditional Owners/Custodians lands and waters.	
II. Develop a resource of stories of Ngunnawal culture and land through internal communication channels.	
III. Explore incorporating Aboriginal language into the workplace.	
IV. Install Aboriginal map of Australia in front entrance of Karinya House.	
6.2 Increase staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	
I. Distribute and promote the ATSIEB's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Protocols that include guidelines relating to Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	
II. Incorporate "Acknowledgement of Country" into internal corporate documents.	
III. Incorporate "Acknowledgement of Country" into all meetings as standing agenda item.	
IV. Develop "Acknowledgement of Country" plaques to place in all rooms and houses at Karinya House.	
V. Invite local Ngunnawal Elders to deliver "Welcome to Country" at events that Karinya House hosts.	
VI. Investigate into learning Karinya House's Acknowledgement of Country in Ngunnawal language.	
VII. Display Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags within Karinya House buildings across the facility.	

6.3 In consultation with First Nations Elders, investigate naming buildings and offices within Karinya House's office site that reflect Ngunnawal, Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander cultures and communities.	
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<p align="center">ACTION 7: BUILD RESPECT FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURES AND HISTORIES BY CELEBRATING NAIDOC WEEK</p>
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7.1 Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	
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I. Executive and/or Board to communicate in staff messages to learn and participate in NAIDOC Week events.	
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II. Ensure NAIDOC Week is incorporated into "Cultural Awareness Training".	
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III. Develop communicate for internal staff, clients spreading awareness of NAIDOC Week information and events.	
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IV. Incorporate meaning of NAIDOC Week and events into staff induction package.	
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V. Share NAIDOC Week information through organisations intranet and networks.	
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7.2 Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	
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I. Identify local NAIDOC Week events that staff and clients can participate in.	
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II. Develop communicate for internal staff, clients spreading awareness of NAIDOC Week information and events.	
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III. Engage the ACT NAIDOC Week Committee and seek how Karinya House staff can participate in local NAIDOC events.	
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7.3 RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	
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ACTION 8: STRENGTHEN OUR ORGANISATION'S PROGRAMS, POLICIES AND MATERIALS TO BE INCLUSIVE AND CONSIDERATE OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES AND CULTURES

8.1 Develop information and practice resources to be inclusive and considerate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures.

8.2 Develop an intranet outlining available services to specifically support and acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures.

8.3 Create and/or review policies to reflect, acknowledge and incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, communities and First Australians business that affect staff and/or clients that identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

ACTION 9: IMPROVE EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES BY INCREASING ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

9.1 Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.

I. Review recruitment procedures and policies to ensure there are no barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and future applicants participating in our workplace.

II. Explore into creating more "Identified" positions within Karinya House.

III. Include in all job advertisements, 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are encouraged to apply.'

IV. Encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to participate in higher learning for professional development.

V. Develop career progression opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

VI. Explore work experience opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

**ACTION 10: INCREASE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER SUPPLIER DIVERSITY
TO SUPPORT IMPROVED ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL OUTCOMES**

10.1 Encourage procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	
I. Engage and procure a local Aboriginal owned business to develop RAP in collaboration with Karinya House.	
II. Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business networks.	
III. Identify opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business collaboration.	
IV. Explore procuring Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses in delivering collaborative approaches to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or clients. (Budget Planning Processes).	
V. Develop a Procurement Policy for Karinya House that align with the national Indigenous Procurement Policy (IPP).	
VI. Engage and procure local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander artist to create artwork for Karinya House RAP.	
VII. Investigate, and if feasible, utilise Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander catering.	
10.2 Investigate Supply Nation membership and utilisation.	
I. Explore obtaining Supply Nation membership.	
II. Utilise Supply Nation website to identify potential Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to procure future services.	

**ACTION 11: ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN AN EFFECTIVE RAP WORKING GROUP TO DRIVE
GOVERNANCE OF THE RAP**

11.1 Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation.	
11.2 Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	
11.3 Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	

ACTION 12: PROVIDE APPROPRIATE SUPPORT FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF RAP COMMITMENTS

<i>12.1 Define resource needs for RAP implementation.</i>	
<i>12.2 Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.</i>	
<i>12.3 Appoint a senior leader to champion our RAP internally.</i>	
<i>12.4 Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.</i>	
I. Ensure the progress of RAP implementation is a standard agenda item on the regular all-staff meeting agenda.	
II. Ensure the progress of RAP Implementation is a standard agenda item on the Committee Meeting agenda.	

ACTION 13: BUILD ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY THROUGH REPORTING RAP ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES AND LEARNINGS BOTH INTERNALLY AND EXTERNALLY

<i>13.1 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.</i>	
<i>13.2 Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.</i>	
<i>13.3 Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.</i>	

ACTION 14: CONTINUE OUR RECONCILIATION JOURNEY BY DEVELOPING OUR NEXT RAP

<i>14.1 Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.</i>	
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NEXT STEPS

Building upon the progress outlined in this report, Karinya House looks forward to continuing our reconciliation journey into 2024 and beyond. Karinya House has registered with Reconciliation Australia to develop our next Innovate RAP and members of the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group will commence the development of this next RAP in the first quarter of 2024.

Thanks to the ongoing contributions of all of the members of the Karinya House Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group:

- Shavaun Wells, Support Worker
- Perri Chapman, Support Worker
- Lavinia Tyrrel, CEO
- Cath O'Halloran, Services Director
- Belinda Munn, Services Director
- Jo Saccasan, Finance and Business Manager
- Ellen Field, Executive Officer
- Sarah Kirkpatrick, Finance and Administration Officer
- Alexandra Ball, Health Professional