



ac.care

opportunities for life ... for country people
SINCE 1960

INNOVATE RECONCILIATION *Action Plan*

APRIL 2018 TO APRIL 2020



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

INNOVATE



a. Penny Bonney (Limestone Coast)

"This painting of the Limestone Coast represents the towns that connect people from all communities and Nations every day, to bring about understanding, tolerance and patience. Each place has its own unique essence and story to offer, from modern day to the oldest living culture. The sea and the waters represent the giving of life to all living things." Artist Penny Bonney

b. Bluey Roberts (Riverland)

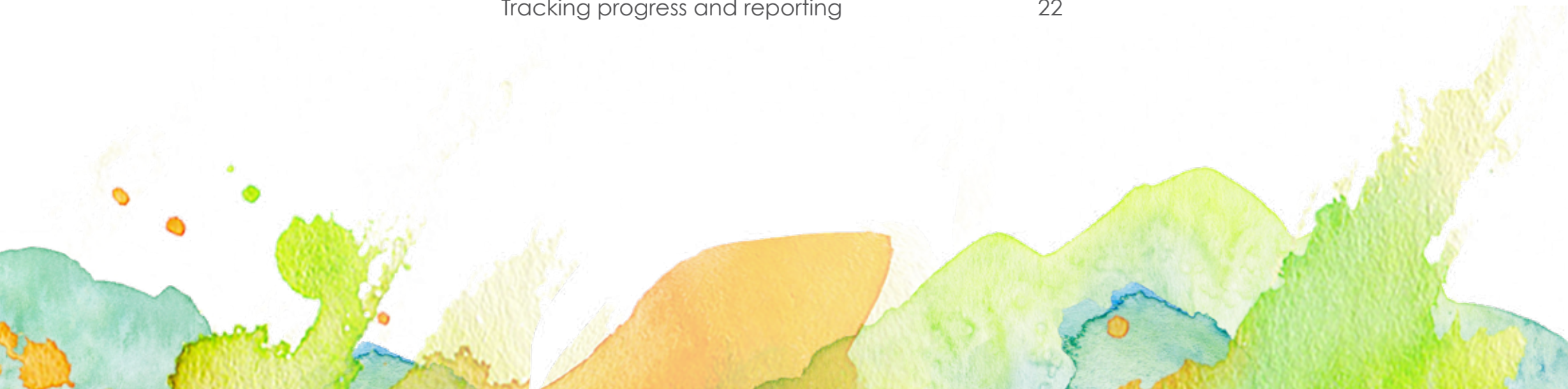
"This work illustrates some Elders and younger people out hunting and gathering. The painting illustrates the billabongs and rivers bountiful and full of water. Everyone is joining in together along billabongs that have busted their banks and prospering from the resources such as kangaroos, emus and the tracks of other animals in the area through the different creeks." Artist Bluey Roberts

c. Nellie Rankine (Murraylands)

"This painting represents to me the story of Ngurunderi and the dreaming for Ngarrindjeri people. Ngurunderi chased Pondi and made the river. The spear represents Long Island and the 18 dots are the 18 Lakalinyerar (language groups) that make up the Ngarrindjeri Nation. Ngurunderi is our creator and this dreaming is the most significant of Ngarrindjeri Nation." Artist Nellie Rankine

Table of Contents

Endorsement from Reconciliation Australia	4
Our vision for reconciliation	6
A message from our CEO	8
A message from our Champion	9
Our work	10
Our Reconciliation Action Plan	14
Relationships	16
Respect	18
Opportunities	20
Tracking progress and reporting	22



Endorsement from Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia is delighted to welcome ac.care to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program by formally endorsing its inaugural Innovate RAP.

As a member of the RAP community, ac.care joins over 1,000 dedicated corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have formally committed to reconciliation through the RAP program since its inception in 2006. RAP organisations across Australia are turning good intentions into positive actions, helping to build higher trust, lower prejudice and increase pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Reconciliation is no one single issue or agenda. Based on international research and benchmarking, Reconciliation Australia defines and measures reconciliation through five critical dimensions: race relations; equality and equity, institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance. All sections of the community—governments, civil society, the private sector, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities—have a role to play to progress these dimensions.

The RAP program provides a framework for organisations to advance reconciliation within their spheres of influence. This Innovate RAP provides ac.care with the key steps to establish its own unique approach to reconciliation. Through implementing an Innovate RAP, ac.care will develop its approach to driving reconciliation through its business activities, services and

programs, and develop mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.

We wish ac.care well as it explores and establishes its own unique approach to reconciliation. We encourage ac.care to embrace this journey with open hearts and minds, to grow from the challenges, and to build on its successes.

As the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation reminded the nation in its final report:

“Reconciliation is hard work—it’s a long, winding and corrugated road, not a broad, paved highway. Determination and effort at all levels of government and in all sections of the community will be essential to make reconciliation a reality.”

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend ac.care on its first RAP and look forward to following its ongoing reconciliation journey.



Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia





Our vision for reconciliation

Working and walking together with the world's oldest continuous cultures.

ac.care is extremely honoured to provide services on the lands of the of the Bindjali, Boandik, Meru, Ngarkat, Ngarrindjeri, Peramangk and Potaruwatj Traditional Owners and acknowledges their deep connection to the land. We pay respect to the Elders, past, present and future, for they hold the memories, traditions, culture and hopes of Aboriginal Australia.

The key foundation to building relationships is understanding the fundamental importance of culture to the identity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and, recognising the diversity of communities within our regions.


This sentiment will form the basis for ac.care's vision for reconciliation to work in a meaningful and respectful way with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; through relationships built on respect, compassion and trust. We acknowledge however, that reconciliation is a process and a journey, whereby people are at different places. It is also something not to be rushed for the sake of 'ticking something off'. Instead, reconciliation needs to include meaningful actions that will translate into lasting benefit.

We recognise the social inequities perpetuated through colonisation and dispossession and commit to providing respectful and equitable services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We understand the unequal life experiences for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and that history continues to affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people today.

ac.care will build new and strengthen existing partnerships with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities throughout the regions where we operate. These partnerships will provide culturally safe services to create opportunities and support to both the community and individuals to help fulfil their goals. We will develop and implement strong, culturally safe policies which support and encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and volunteers to be effective employees in their roles with ac.care.

To implement a successful Reconciliation Action Plan, it is paramount to respect the resilience and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families, communities and culture that have survived in the face of over two centuries of colonisation and dispossession.





*“We must always remember that under the
concrete and asphalt this land is; was and always will
be traditional Aboriginal Land”*

A message from our CEO

Shane Maddocks

Shane commenced as CEO of ac.care in July 2017 following the many years of dedicated leadership of Rob Foggo. Shane has worked with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities for 30 years, most recently leading community development approaches by Red Cross in South Australia and across the country. He has previously worked within state government departments in the areas of child protection, juvenile justice, early childhood education, health and care. He has a deep personal commitment to working with Aboriginal peoples and communities and continues to learn from many Aboriginal community members, colleagues and mentors.

"I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional owners of this land and pay respect to Elders past, present and future. The spiritual connection that they hold as custodians of this land and their cultural heritage and beliefs are as important today as they were in the past.

"For many years ac.care has worked in partnership with Aboriginal communities in helping to build resilience and opportunities for members of those communities. In doing so, ac.care acknowledges the importance of self-determination and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Our work with those communities has been by invitation, and we see it as an opportunity to work together to make a positive and sustainable difference to the lives of people who still experience trauma today as a result of past injustices and practices. ac.care's work is built on respectful and trusting relationships. Such relationships are earned, they don't just happen. This, our first Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan, provides the opportunity to further strengthen those relationships and to be held accountable for commitments made, which aim at building respect and opportunities for reconciliation between Aboriginal people and the broader community. We thank all of those ac.care staff – Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal – who have contributed to the development of our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan. For us it has been a long journey, but we are very pleased that we now have a document that articulates our commitment to strengthen our relationships with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander friends, peers and communities. It has provided the opportunity for all of our staff to come together, strengthen and commit to a common goal which ultimately is to achieve justice and equity for all Australians."



A message from our Champion

Kirsty Barnett

Kirsty is ac.care's General Manager of Community Services and for many years has managed and led the Aboriginal Services branch within ac.care. Kirsty has a passion for social justice and a real understanding and compassion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their histories.

I recognise Aboriginal people as the first peoples and traditional owners of this land. I acknowledge that we come to live our lives on this land together, as a result of a painful history which still echoes today. It is because of this history and the present inequities that I believe we have an obligation

to act for reconciliation. As an organisation that values compassion, I believe we must turn rhetoric into action. That is why I am proud to present ac.care's first Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan. Our RAP Working Group has worked long and thoughtfully in helping us produce this plan. It aims to be a realistic but meaningful document to keep us focussed and accountable. I know ac.care has much to gain by valuing the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including clients, community members, staff and partners. I trust, therefore, that the actions of this plan will create even more opportunities to work together for a positive future.



Our Work

For over 30 years ac.care has been a provider of social services in the Limestone Coast, Murraylands and Riverland communities of South Australia (known as the Southern Country region of South Australia). Our head office is located in Mount Gambier with other offices in Berri, Millicent, Murray Bridge, Adelaide Hills and Waikerie. ac.care employs over 230 staff, of which 10% of current staff identify themselves as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.

ac.care works to have strong and effective working relationships with the community, government and business sectors. Together we work to provide opportunities for people in country communities to make positive social change, and in so doing enhance their wellbeing and build resilience. We work together with all people who can contribute to a solution. ac.care believes that local people are best placed to identify local issues, and given the resources, identify and implement solutions. We work with people to build their capacity to address their issues and develop life skills. In working with clients and community, ac.care endeavours to provide excellent services which are accessible, non-judgemental and respectful of the experience and life skills of those with whom we work. We pride ourselves on having both local employees and also a local board of directors, who live in the communities in which ac.care's services are delivered.

ac.care delivers a number of services primarily funded by state, local and federal governments, with a small yet significant amount of funding coming via local donations. Constitutionally, ac.care's objectives are:





Alleviating Homelessness

Building Communities

Promoting Learning

Reducing Poverty

Sharing Cultures

Strengthening Families

Supporting Children

Working Towards Sustainability



Penny Bonney



Bluey Roberts

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

In the past 10 years, ac.care has delivered many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific services. We have developed relationships with the communities in which we work, and have relationships with key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. ac.care has made attempts in the past to ensure that we are inclusive and all staff are educated and aware of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their histories. We have done this via specific training delivered internally by our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, Acknowledgements to Country at meetings and hosting NAIDOC Week events. Yet, until now we have done very little to formalise this into a plan and a strategy. This RAP provides ac.care with a purpose and an intent to ensure that we are working towards a better outcome for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and communities. ac.care recognises the need to develop a structured, measurable approach to ensure there is accountability and to measure the unwritten notions ac.care has in the past accepted.

ac.care has previously worked informally with many of the local Aboriginal organisations and community leaders in each region in a concerted effort to develop strategies that meet the needs of each unique Aboriginal community. To date, we have sought to include the perspective of upwards of seven various Aboriginal community groups throughout this process. It

is unfortunate that we can be constrained by the realities of time and resources to be able to include all relevant stakeholders. The value of these responses from stakeholders, however, underscores the ongoing importance to maintain diligence in regards to inclusive practice and to develop new relationships with community groups and leaders in the future. Additionally, we also encouraged staff to participate and be involved in planning locally for Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC events, however, we felt we needed to embed this in our culture, policies and procedures. Three years ago, ac.care commenced a journey in developing a RAP that would serve to achieve our best outcomes in our work with and for Aboriginal communities. During this period, we have had numerous people supporting the development of the RAP, and in the past 12 months have demonstrated deliberate intention to give our RAP priority, leadership and resources to have completed the RAP in 2018.

ac.care's strategic plan identified the need for a RAP, and our RAP has been driven by our passionate team of staff who have engaged in this process to deliver better outcomes for their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues, clients and communities. Our RAP Working Group has consisted of three Aboriginal staff members from each of our three regions and another staff member from each region, who have been supported by ac.care's senior leadership team.



The Reconciliation Working Group

Anthony Wilson: Youth Worker

Janis Koolmatrie: HIPPY Tutor

Jo-anne Cain: Case Worker

Katisha Jackson: HIPPY Coordinator

Kelly Gribben: Senior Manager Program Development

Kirsty Barnett: General Manager - Community Services (RAP Champion)

Melissa Downie: Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner

Pia Grantham: HIPPY Coordinator/RAP project Worker


Robin Wright: Opening Doors Team Leader

Rosie Schellen: Senior Program Manager of Aboriginal Services

Shane Maddocks: Chief Executive Officer

We would also like to acknowledge that this RAP has taken considerable time to develop. Throughout this time there have been many contributors to the process and to the ideas. These contributors have included (but are not limited to) Rob Foggo (former CEO), Steve Mole, Eric Milera, Sam Mitchell, Cheryle Saunders and Tyme Childs.

ac.care has a strong commitment to walking on this journey together to make our sphere of the world different through compassion, accountability, respect and excellence.





Relationships

We will develop respectful, meaningful and sustainable relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to walk alongside them in our work together.

ac.care's journey over the past 30 years has provided opportunities to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, both by invitation and through engagement. During our engagement we have learnt many things and have developed strong connections to communities; partnerships with communities and service providers and leaders; and learnt about communication and culture.

Connections and how we honour those connections are essential to the delivery of our services. ac.care believes strongly in self-determination. This philosophy has created a shared journey of how we create partnerships in each unique community we provide services.





Action	Target	Timeline	Who
RAP Working Group (RWG) actively monitors RAP development and implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting. Create opportunities for staff to 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.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. RWG oversees the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP.2. Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are represented on the RWG.3. Meet at least four times per year to monitor and report on RAP implementation.4. Establish Terms of Reference for the RWG.5. A communication plan developed6. Organise at least one internal event, in each region, for NRW each year.7. Register our NRW event via Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.8. Support an external NRW event, determined by RAP Working Group9. Ensure our RWG participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	<p>National Reconciliation Week (NRW) 26th May – 3rd June, 2018, 2019 Reviewed each meeting</p> <p>June 2018 Review May 2018 July 2018</p> <p>26th May – 3rd June 2018, 2019 May -2018, 2019 NRW 26th May – 3rd June, 2018, 2019</p>	<p>RWG Chair</p> <p>RWG Chair</p> <p>RWG Chair RWG Chair Marketing Man.</p> <p>RWG Chair</p> <p>RWG Chair RWG Chair RWG Chair</p>
Develop partnerships and mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations to support positive outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.2. Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respect for Aboriginal self-determination and ac.care's commitment to support local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled organisations to provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific services that respond to the needs of their communities.	<p>June 2018</p> <p>June 2018</p>	<p>RWG Chair</p> <p>RWG Chair</p>
Raise internal and external awareness of our RAP to promote reconciliation across our business and community sector.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Implement and review a strategy to communicate our RAP to all internal and external stakeholders.2. Promote reconciliation through ongoing active engagement with all stakeholders.3. Staff Induction plans to include RAP and promote the expectation and responsibility of staff to behave respectfully to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	<p>June 2018</p> <p>June 2018</p> <p>July 2018</p>	<p>Marketing Man.</p> <p>RWG Chair</p> <p>Manager HR</p>



Respect

ac.care acknowledges that the oldest continuous culture has different nations within our regions. This requires different responses and, therefore, seeks to increase awareness and understanding of cultural differences through education and engagement.

ac.care has worked to build respectful relationships with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and has built strong connections. We value these connections, as they provide us with opportunities to gather the histories and understand our local community's connections to the lands and waters. We respect, understand and appreciate their culture and histories.

Action	Target	Timeline	Who
Engage employees in cultural learning opportunities to increase understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements.	• Develop and implement a cultural awareness training strategy for all staff which defines cultural learning needs of employees in all areas of our business and is relevant to local culture.	May 2018	Manager HR
	• Investigate opportunities to work with local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultants to develop cultural awareness training.	May 2018	Manager HR
	• Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, RAP Champion, People and Culture staff and other key leadership staff to participate in cultural training.	May 2018	Manager HR



Action	Target	Timeline	Who
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	1. Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	May 2018	RWG Chair
	2. Develop a list of key contacts for organising a Welcome to Country and maintaining respectful partnerships.	June 2018	RWG Chair
	3. Invite a Traditional Owner to provide a Welcome to Country for at least one significant event.	RCW 2018	RWG Chair
	4. Include an Acknowledgment of Country at the commencement of all staff, important internal and external meetings	Ongoing June 2018	RWG Chair
	5. Invite Traditional Owners into our office to explain the significance of Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	RCW 2018	RWG Chair
	6. Display an Acknowledgment of Country plaque in our office/s or on our office building.	May 2018	
Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to engage with their culture and communities by celebrating NAIDOC Week	1. Review HR policies, procedures and processes to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	May 2018	Manager HR
	2. Provide opportunities for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to participate with their cultures and communities during NAIDOC Week.	July 2018-2019	RWG Chair
Create safe, respectful, engaging and inviting spaces for the Aboriginal community, staff and clients	1. Develop a plan for all office receptions to ensure they feel welcoming to the Aboriginal community	May 2018	RWG Chair
	2. Introduce the presence of local Aboriginal art and displays visible from outside the office.	June 2018	RWG Chair
	3. Develop a statement/policy that articulates ac.care's commitment to standards of behaviour expected by the organisation and individuals in promoting a culturally safe environment.	June 2018	RWG Chair



Opportunities

ac.care creates opportunities for employment and training of Aboriginal people and seeks to create peer support and learning environments between staff. We believe that increasing employment opportunities for Aboriginal people is the foundation to bridge the divide in *Closing the Gap* and reducing Aboriginal disadvantage, as well as providing improved access and outcomes for clients. Empowering and supporting leaders

in the employment and business sector provides opportunity for role models and gives the community a sense of pride and accessibility. ac.care's services are based in regional and rural communities where there may be minimal employment opportunities. ac.care believes that supporting our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business sector will help provide a basis for economic participation. Having a job or a career brings a sense of self-worth, hope, independence and a freedom that allows Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to explore their own dreams, hopes and aspirations.

Action	Target	Timeline	Who
Investigate opportunities to improve and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes within our workplace	1. Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment and retention strategy, seeking to have <ul style="list-style-type: none">70% of staff in Aboriginal specific programs to be Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and10% of staff in other services to be Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.5% of senior staff to be Aboriginal.	May 2018	Manager HR
	2. Engage with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on employment strategies, including professional development	June 2018	RWG Champion/ Manager HR
	3. Investigate opportunities to provide a paid scholarship in management training for an Aboriginal emerging leader within ac.care	June 2018	Manager HR
	4. Advertise all vacancies in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media.	May 2018	Manager HR
	5. Review HR and recruitment procedures, policies and processes to ensure there are no barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and future applicants participating in our workplace.	May 2018	
	6. Develop a list of Aboriginal specific competencies determined to assist in shaping interview questions for every interview of potential staff.	June 2018	Manager HR
	7. Collect information on our current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment opportunities	June 2018	RWG Chair



Action	Target	Timeline	Who
Investigate opportunities to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity within ac.care to ensure they are top of mind when contracting a provider	1. Review and update procurement policies and procedures to identify and mitigate barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to supply our organisation with goods and services.	August 2018	CFO
	2. Develop and communicate to staff a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses that can be used to procure goods and services.	June 2018	CFO
	3. Develop one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander owned business.	May 2018	CFO
	4. Investigate Supply Nation membership.	Sept 2018	CFO
Consider recommendations made as result of community consultation with The Australian Centre for Social Innovation Report and implement as appropriate/approved	• RWG to consider, report and prioritise recommendations.	May 2018	CEO
	• Follow the decision making flowchart and Delegations & Authorisations Policy and Procedures when implementing recommendations.	May 2018	RWG Chair/ CEO
ac.care's Aboriginal clients support in the continuous improvement of service delivery	• Develop a plan to engage with Aboriginal people to obtain feedback regarding their services received by ac.care and how we could improve.	June 2018	GM CS
	• Use data to inform services where we need to seek further engagement in the Aboriginal community.	Reviewed every Jan and July 2018-2019	GM CS
	• Develop an action plan to better deliver services to the Aboriginal Community.	May 2018	GM CS



Tracking progress and reporting

Action	Target	Timeline	Who
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.• Investigate participating in the RAP Barometer.	30 Sept, 2018, 2019 May 2019	RWG Chair RAP Champion
Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings internally and externally	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Publically report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings.	NRW 26th May – 3rd June, 2019, 2020	Marketing Manger
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.• Send draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for review and feedback.• Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement.	January 2020 June 2019	CEO RWG Chair



Contact Details

Name: Kirsty Barnett

Position: RAP Champion, General
Manager Community Services

Phone: 08 8582 2344

Email: care@accare.org.au

Glossary

CEO: Chief Executive Officer

GM: General Manager

SM: Senior Manager

RWG: Reconciliation Working Group

CFO: Chief Financial Officer

CS: Community Services

HR: Human Resources

PD: Program Development



ac.care

opportunities for life ... for country people
est. 1986

For more information please contact accare

www.accare.org.au

08 7725 3000

70-72 White Avenue

Mount Gambier, South Australia

A special thank you to contributing artists
Nellie Rankine, Bluey Roberts and Penny Bonney

Anglican Community Care Inc

ABN 53 440 436 445 | Charity Lic. CCP2565

© 2018 All images are owned by Anglican Community Care Inc.