

ac.care Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan

May 2022 to May 2025



ac.care

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



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

STRETCH

Endorsement from Reconciliation Australia

Cover images: My Country by Bonnie-May Saunders (P53), Connection by Daniel Giles (P36), Nori by Ray Love (P23)

Page banner artwork and Walking Together logo: Jordan Lovegrove, Karko Creations

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I congratulate ac.care on its continued commitment to reconciliation, as it implements its first Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Formed around the pillars of relationships, respect, and opportunities, the RAP program provides a framework for organisations to contribute to the reconciliation movement. With the creation of this Stretch RAP, ac.care continues to be a member of the ever-growing community of RAP organisations that have taken goodwill and transformed it into action.

ac.care forms a crucial part of social services provided in rural South Australia. Created by country people, for country people, ac.care strives to create better lives for the communities it serves – including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Its previous Innovate RAP focused on building a

safe, inclusive and respectful internal culture for its First Nations staff members, to very impressive results. ac.care was able to grow the number of its Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identified employees from 3 per cent in 2017, to 11 per cent in 2021. It supports these staff members with a range of initiatives, including its Aboriginal Employee Network. This success speaks volumes about ac.care's dedication to and enthusiasm for building reconciliation every day.

With this important groundwork established, ac.care is ready to embed and expand its reconciliation commitments for further impact. A key learning from its last RAP is that building crucial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations takes time, investment and the right people. With this in mind, this Stretch RAP sees ac.care developing its external partnerships, including leveraging its sphere of influence through

collaboration with other Anglicare agencies. ac.care also plans to make the services it provides more culturally safe and effective for First Nations clients, by working alongside Aboriginal community-controlled organisations in their delivery. These initiatives, among others, show ac.care thinking critically about how best it can create substantive benefits for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through its work.

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



Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

A message from our CEO

The ac.care Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan extends and deepens our commitment to working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples towards reconciliation. We work and live on the lands of Aboriginal peoples in south and east country South Australia. This land, the waterways and skies always were and always will be Aboriginal land.

Although we have supported reconciliation for many years, our first Innovate RAP in 2018 set us on a journey to not just talk about reconciliation, but take action. We have stopped and listened to Aboriginal people as we have worked to change everything we do to ensure that barriers to reconciliation are identified and removed. We have much

more to do however we have moved ahead in the journey towards acknowledgement of dispossession, violence and racism and accepting our responsibility to change the future for the benefit of all.

We now have a "walking together" logo which proudly sits alongside our corporate logo, we have Aboriginal designed artwork in all of our documents and increasingly in and on all of our buildings. These symbols and use of language are very important as our public demonstration of who we are and what we stand for.

However, it is the actions we have taken and internal organisational change that has been most significant. This has led to an

increasing number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people applying for and winning positions within our team. We now have First Nations staff in ongoing executive and senior management roles in both service delivery and corporate services. Over 11% of our staff are from First Nations – and this continues to grow each year. This is something to celebrate and is our commitment to ensuring that First Nations people are able to lead decision-making in our organisation and our communities. We don't take this for granted and we work hard every day to maintain the trust of our First Nations staff to ensure their ongoing safety as we open our ears and eyes to continue to learn from them about how

to best care for the country we live and work in and how best to walk alongside First Nations people in these communities. We don't always get it right and our commitment through this Stretch RAP is to never lose sight of the goal of true reconciliation to improve outcomes for First Nations peoples and to make conscious decisions in everything we do to acknowledge the pain of the past, that discrimination, racism and prejudice continue to this day and that we have a responsibility to listen to First Nations peoples and support them in their hopes and aspirations for the future.

This plan cannot sit on a shelf. It must be alive and set the base for what must be achieved – not just be the ceiling of what we are

aspiring to. We can achieve this when everyone works together.

Thank you to those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and organisations who have contributed to this document and to our First Nations and non-Indigenous staff who have committed to working together to make a difference. Our organisation values of Care Adaptability Relationships and Excellence truly come alive when we look to the example of First Nations people and communities through thousands of generations. We have much to learn and much to contribute.

Shane Maddocks
Chief Executive Officer
ac.care



Support from our senior Aboriginal advisor

I AM a Ngarrindjeri and Boandik woman. I am lucky to work on my cultural country and witness the steps that ac.care is taking in building and maintaining respectful relationships with the Aboriginal communities in which we work.

Reconciliation for me is strengthening these relationships through trusting and supportive behaviours, along with listening to the truth-telling about Australia's history and developing an understanding of how we can move forward to provide a common vision for our future.

I would like to thank our fellow non-Aboriginal colleagues at ac.care

who chose to be a part of the process, who created safe places for us to have an open and honest discussion on the Reconciliation Action Plan and issues facing First Nations people.

I encourage all staff, volunteers and board members to engage with these initiatives and actions to support the positive progression of reconciliation in our workplace and community.

As an Aboriginal employee walking and working in the two worlds, I look forward to "walking together" on this journey.

Kathy Rigney
ac.care Senior Aboriginal Advisor



Acknowledgement of Country

The ac.care community of staff, volunteers, board members and other contributors recognise we live and work on land that always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

We are honoured to provide services on the lands of the Boandik, Meintangk and Bindjali in the South East, Ngarrindjeri, Kurna and Ramindjeri in the Murraylands and Fleurieu Peninsula, Peramangk in the Adelaide Hills and First Peoples of the River Murray and Mallee Region, including the Meru language group, the Ngaiawang, Ngawait, Nganguruku, Erawirung, Ngintait, Ngaralte and Ngarkat people, along with the many other clans and family groups across these regions.

We respect the Traditional Custodians of these lands and their ancestors and acknowledge their deep and ongoing connection to the land and continuation of cultural practices.

We pay respect to Elders past, present and future, for they hold the memories, traditions, cultures and hopes of the First Nations people of Australia.

Our respect extends to First Nations people from these lands and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from different nations that reside here today.

We recognise the tragic impact of past injustices and generational trauma that has led to systemic disadvantage faced by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today and commit to contributing to reconciliation and building a better future for all alongside First Nations people and communities.

Table of contents

| | | | |
|----|---|----|---|
| 2 | Endorsement from Reconciliation Australia CEO Karen Mundine | 20 | Innovative RAP sets foundations to stretch impact - ac.care's Inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan champion |
| 4 | A message from our CEO | 22 | Our Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan |
| 6 | Support from our senior Aboriginal advisor | 26 | Meet our regional Stretch RAP leaders |
| 7 | Acknowledgment of Country | 30 | Our goals - relationships |
| 9 | Our Stretch RAP Working Group | 36 | Daniel Giles - Connection |
| 10 | Together we can make a difference - ac.care Stretch RAP champion | 38 | Our goals - respect |
| 12 | Working and walking together - ac.care Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group co-chairs | 44 | Ray Love - Nori |
| 14 | Our vision for reconciliation | 46 | Our goals - opportunities |
| 16 | Our business | 51 | Bonnie-May Saunders - My Country |
| 18 | Our Reconciliation Action Plan | 54 | Board prioritises reconciliation - ac.care Board Champion |
| | | 56 | Our goals - governance |

Our Stretch RAP Working Group

Our Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group includes:

Jason Wallace
Stretch RAP champion
• Marketing and communications manager

Robin Wright
Co-chair • HR coordinator

Emma Poole
Co-chair • Family services manager

Kathy Rigney
Senior Aboriginal advisor

Kirsty Barnett
Inaugural (Innovate) RAP champion
• Community services general manager

Rick Fisher
Board RAP champion • Board convenor

Dan Mitchell
Member • Out of home care executive manager

Andrew Brackman
Member • Planning, finance and IT executive manager

Katisha Jackson
• Inaugural Riverland Reconciliation In Action (RIA) chair • RAPWG member
• HIPPIY Riverland manager

Shane Maddocks
Chief Executive Officer

Lynette Heiming
• Inaugural Limestone Coast RIA chair
• RAPWG member • Mount Gambier Family Relationship Centre community referral worker

Dimitri Pinney
Inaugural Limestone Coast RIA chair
• RAPWG member • Family preservation and reunification worker

I WAS raised on Gunditjmara land in western Victoria, but it was not until later in life I gained a deeper understanding of my European culture's shared history with Aboriginal people and the devastating impacts of colonisation.

Learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of various nations about the history of their communities and families, I developed a deep commitment to contributing to a fairer future for all.

It is an honour to turn this personal focus to championing implementation of ac.care's Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan.

Capturing our commitment in diverse areas focused on relationships, respect, opportunities and our agency's governance has been a comprehensive process, but it now provides ac.care with measurable outcomes to ensure our deep commitment to reconciliation is backed with meaningful action and ambitious outcomes.

These goals are supported by everyone in the agency, with regional teams focused on ensuring they are achieved across the communities in which we work.

The aims set out in this document

indicate how we intend to stretch ourselves to go beyond past achievements to have growing influence in our regions and a broader impact on hearing from and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations to guide our work.

It is a privilege to work alongside many inspiring Aboriginal people, walking together to ensure country people have safe homes, enough money to live on and strong, positive relationships.

This involves constant learning from within our team and externally with regular engagement in cultural

education opportunities and recognising we are part of a broader society where there are still many gaps between outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians.

Committing to our Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan provides a framework for action not only within our agency and communities, but connects our effort with the national movement to drive change essential in Australia on the path to reconciliation and a fairer future.

We encourage other organisations, along with

schools, government bodies, businesses, churches and other groups to look to what they can do to progress reconciliation and commit to working with Reconciliation Australia to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan.

Together we can make a difference and create a society we can all take pride in where everyone belongs and has equal opportunities to participate freely and with equity in all areas of Australian life.



Robin Wright and Emma Poole

ac.care Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group co-chairs

Working and walking together



IT IS hard to put into words the personal importance ac.care actively engaging in a Reconciliation Action Plan has to both of us as co-chairs of the ac.care Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group.

Emma: "I am a kringkari/kringkri (white) woman residing on the land of The First Nations People of The River Murray and was appointed to the working group as co-chair to work alongside Rob."

Rob: "I have been co-chair for five years and consider myself a by-product of reconciliation with my English father and Aboriginal (Ngarindjeri) mother and have experienced great pride in being part of ac.care's Reconciliation journey for

over half a decade now."

We acknowledge that we live, work and walk together on traditional Aboriginal land and acknowledge deep respect for our Elders past, present and emerging as they are the knowledge keepers and story tellers who ensure our nation's whole history is shared, heard, educated and accepted.

These Elders ensure the practices of the oldest living culture in the world remain.

For us, it is imperative that the RAP is a living, breathing document that underpins our actions in their entirety, guiding our commitment to reconciliation through our actions

when working with our colleagues, communities in which we live and our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mates.

We are supremely confident that reconciliation is more than words to ac.care.

We are very proud of the work we have done so far. But we are not finished yet and there is much more work to be done.

Together as co-chairs we pledge an ongoing commitment to the continual development of our RAP, via reflection, conversation, walking alongside and "living" our commitment in both our personal and professional lives.



Our vision for reconciliation

Our vision for reconciliation is one where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living across South Australia have safe, secure homes, positive relationships, including connections to culture, and enough money to fulfil their goals and life ambitions.

ac.care's Stretch RAP takes strides to achieving this vision by:

- strengthening respectful relationships with First Nations communities founded on compassion, trust, cooperation and a commitment to truth telling and acknowledging past wrongs, while working together for a better and fairer future for all

- promoting and honouring First Nations cultures, histories and peoples within our wider community and respecting their ongoing connection to Country and role as continuing Custodians of the land we live and work on
- working with Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and listening to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to ensure our services are delivered collaboratively, sensitively and effectively
- ensuring ac.care's services and sites are culturally appropriate to ensure Aboriginal and Torres

Strait Islander peoples feel welcomed and supported

- increasing recruitment, retention and advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff
- supporting foster carers and child and youth residential care workers to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in care are supported appropriately to be safe, respected and have opportunities to remain connected to culture
- supporting capacity-building projects to enable self-determination for

Aboriginal communities in our communities

- building on ac.care's public commitment to reconciliation as a leader in our communities, including promotion of respect and change in country regions in which we operate and across our areas of influence, including the national Anglicare Australia network, government, other agencies and our project partners and supporters.

UNITED: Murraylands staff Sally Smith and Kathy Rigney participate in the smoking ceremony at the 2020 Murray Bridge Embracing Difference staff development day.



ac.care is committed to ensuring all country people have safe homes, enough money to live on and strong, positive relationships. Our organisation is a welcoming and inclusive agency, especially towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, with whom we are committed to building opportunities to secure a fairer future.

ac.care is one of the few organisations created and run by country people for country people. Formed in Mount Gambier in 1986 when the need was identified by the Mount Gambier Anglican Parish for a teenage foster care service, our focus and service delivery has expanded over the decades. Incorporated as Anglican Community Care and operating as ac.care, we have grown to provide services in the Limestone Coast, Murraylands, Murray Mallee, Riverland, Fleurieu Peninsula and Adelaide Hills regions of South Australia.

Our core services include foster care recruitment and support, residential care for youth and young people, homelessness and associated services, programs

developed specifically for Aboriginal peoples, the Minya Porlar Creche, emergency relief, financial and general counselling, along with family and youth services and support.

ac.care is one of the core social services providers in country South Australia, with contracts with various non-government agencies and government departments and strives to be an influential voice in regional mainstream and social media as a regular commentator on social issues affecting vulnerable people. Although an independent organisation focused on specific geographical areas of regional South Australia, we are supported through being part of the broader South Australian Anglicare agencies and Anglicare Australia networks, as well as represented on various sector bodies, such as the South Australian Council of Social Services and Child and Family Focus SA.

We operate offices and community centres in Murray Bridge, Berri, Mount Gambier and Millicent, along with residential care homes for young people in state care in

Mount Gambier, Murray Bridge and the Riverland.

Our Aboriginal programs are guided by the communities with whom we work, while First Nations people also make up a large percentage of clients in our other diverse services.

The organisation has grown to employ more than 250 people across eastern regional South Australia. Proudly, as of September 2021, more than 11% of our staff, representing 27 employees, identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, but we are committed to growing this figure further and ensuring First Nations people represent a growing portion of our staff and leadership team.

This commitment has been advanced through formation of our Aboriginal Employee Network, which provides a supportive group for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and an important voice contributing to formulation and consultation on the agency's policies, practices and direction.



LEARNING: Former HIPPY tutor Hayley Abbondandolo shares a story with Sophie in Murray Bridge.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

As a leader in the social welfare sector, we recognise ac.care has an important role to play in demonstrating leadership on reconciliation, promotion of cultural awareness and respect, along with the advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, such as through capacity-building projects, employment, personal development opportunities and encouraging connection to culture, especially for young people in state care.

Our work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is broad, from assisting individuals who need our support through to developing programs in partnership with communities and providing mutually-beneficial employment and career opportunities within our diverse organisation.

ac.care is committed to the five dimensions of reconciliation:

- Race relations – as an innovative country agency

working with local Aboriginal communities, we can take a lead in calling out racism, contributing to reconciliation and showing leadership in demonstrating respect.

- Equality and equity – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous people proudly work together as a united team within our agency. We are proactive in ensuring our Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff have an equal voice in discussions, whether in relation to internal decision-making or externally with clients or program partners when discussing how we can work together to provide opportunities.

- Institutional integrity – ac.care is committed to maintaining the goals of our Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan as a high priority to ensure appropriate recognition of our First Nations people and communities and maintain a collaborative approach to working together respectfully, which is at the heart of our work.

Our Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan also provides a structure to encourage partners in our work and the communities in which we operate to adopt approaches focused on reconciliation.

- Unity – ac.care recognises the long histories of Australia's First Nations cultures and the ongoing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to land and culture as part of our shared national identity. We strive to advocate for greater recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and unity among all Australians, breaking down stigma and contributing to a more unified and supportive society where opportunities are provided to all.

- Historical acceptance – our commitment to cultural awareness training, along with Acknowledgement of Country statements to open all formal meetings and events are among steps we continue to take to acknowledge past injustices, encourage respect

for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and contribute to a fairer and more inclusive society.

Our agency is committed to developing and delivering on the goals of a Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan because we acknowledge reconciliation is a journey which cannot be rushed for the sake of "ticking a box", requiring a concerted effort across all aspects of the agency's work.

ac.care's Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan was endorsed in 2018. The organisation has since achieved a great deal towards our goals to embed reconciliation at the heart of our work through strong and committed support by leaders throughout the organisation, including our board, chief executive officer, executive managers and managers.

IT SEEMS so long ago that I was writing my message of acknowledgment and hope for our Innovate Reconciliation Plan in 2018.

Reflecting upon ac.care's journey since then, I have a sense of pride that our plan was not just a bunch of hollow promises which sat idle on a shelf. Instead, I can confidently say that our Innovate RAP served as a practical and meaningful tool to guide us, as well as keep us accountable to our intentions.

ac.care has taken action on all activities outlined in the Innovate RAP.

Some of these have been embraced and wholeheartedly followed through, while others remain a work in progress.

Whilst there are many examples of the actions we have taken, some of the most notable have been consistent use of Acknowledgement of Country

statements for meetings and events, display of work by local Aboriginal artists in ac.care sites as symbols of inclusion, broad participation and leadership in key events, such as those marking National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week, and strengthening of relationships and partnerships with community members, Elders and community-controlled organisations.

But I believe the two greatest achievements ac.care has made against the 2018 RAP relate to the creation of opportunities for employment and retention of Aboriginal people and engaging staff in learning opportunities to increase their understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements.

Today, I look around to see an increased number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues, including people in key, influential, senior positions.

I can also identify a plethora of formal and informal learning opportunities which have been provided so that I have grown my understanding and strengthened my appreciation of Aboriginal cultures and people, alongside many fellow staff.

The future of reconciliation is bright within ac.care. It is practiced, promoted and prioritised by leaders across the organisation.

Furthermore, the ever-increasing number of Aboriginal people within the organisation means there are many more opportunities for learning.

It also means there are many more "guides" to help effectively shape our service delivery and to help engage communities to be active participants in creating change into the future.

I am very excited to support and be a part of ac.care's Stretch RAP.



Our Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan

Whilst there are many examples of ac.care's successful attainment of our initial Reconciliation Action Plan goals, some of the most significant have been:

- Recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the organisation, with 11% of staff identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people
- Creation of a new position and successful recruitment of a senior Aboriginal advisor
- Appointment of an Aboriginal person to a senior human resources role
- Appointment of an Aboriginal person as our executive director for out of home care
- Provision of a multitude of cultural awareness training opportunities for all ac.care staff, volunteers, board members and foster carers

- Embedding practices such as inviting Elders to provide Welcome to Country openings for significant events and staff opening all formal meetings across the organisation with an Acknowledgement of Country

- Ensuring all ac.care site branding and signage demonstrates respect, inclusion and safety for First Nations people, with cultural artworks, statements of acknowledgement and localised language featured on buildings and inside community centres and offices.

The previous Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan included tracking the progression of ac.care as a more inclusive agency welcoming of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and proudly securing a growing level of employment of Aboriginal staff, including to key positions.

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff represented 3% of the organisation in 2017. When our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan was endorsed in 2018, this

had grown to 5%, expanding to 8% in 2020, growing to over 11% in September 2021. This has been achieved through various developments within ac.care, including rewriting of position descriptions to take into account life experience, community connection and cultural understanding, recognising valued attributes staff can bring to our team beyond formal qualifications.

Some roles were also reidentified, such as general youth worker positions reclassified as Aboriginal youth worker roles where relevant, encouraging Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples to apply.

Our reputation as a culturally safe organisation has been boosted by the growing representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in key positions across our teams, along with public acknowledgements of respect, such as via social media, and participation in NAIDOC and National Reconciliation Week events.

Meanwhile, our ongoing recruitment actions include

engaging with the community directly to spread word of employment opportunities, such as at Aboriginal-controlled organisations and through interagency forums and other networks.

We are an increasingly appealing employer for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as our achievements in Aboriginal services and other programs are promoted extensively online and in the media, building trust and credibility within the communities in which we operate.

Our increased representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees is also prominently highlighted and celebrated in employment advertisements in newspapers and online, encouraging other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to join our team and continue this growth.

But like all journeys, there have also been many challenges and ongoing learning for ac.care in relation to our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan.

Our Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan

These have included recognising the diversity that exists within communities, ensuring advice and support reflects this diversity and accepting that engaging First Nations people and communities takes considerable investment of time and other resources. This is highly dependent upon having the right people creating these relationships.

This Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan builds upon ac.care's previous achievements, challenges and learnings. It offers the organisation clear guidance about its new reconciliation goals and the activities to be implemented to reach them. Examples of this building on from past efforts include reviewing and co-designing guiding principles for engagement with local Aboriginal communities, stretching efforts to further increase employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (including to positions of seniority) and looking at all the essential "ingredients" to retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and providing

appropriate opportunities for professional development. This extends to ongoing reviews of racism policies, building cultural respect and competency of the entire workforce and providing support for staff to work in a culturally appropriate way.

Our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan was championed by community services general manager Kirsty Barnett, who remains committed to the Stretch RAP, which will be championed by marketing and communications manager Jason Wallace, alongside Board convenor Rick Fisher and the ac.care Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group, which involves a strong representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and representatives from all sectors of the organisation and supported by a RAP project officer.

Our Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan was developed through internal consultation via our Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group (RAPWG), with all staff, including our Aboriginal Employees Network, invited

to contribute, along with the ac.care Strategic Leadership Team, which includes representation by management of all ac.care's program areas. Consultation also included feedback on our plan from senior leadership of Aboriginal community controlled organisations with which ac.care has close working relationships, including Pangula Mannamurna Aboriginal Corporation and Moorundi Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service.

Due to the geographical spread of our organisation and diversity of ac.care's programs, three Regional Reconciliation in Action Groups (RiA) have been formed to help engage all staff in ac.care's reconciliation journey and ensure the aims of our Reconciliation Action Plan are actively pursued and monitored in all regions. Each group includes representation by at least one Aboriginal person, who may be appointed externally from the broader community if a local Aboriginal member of the ac.care

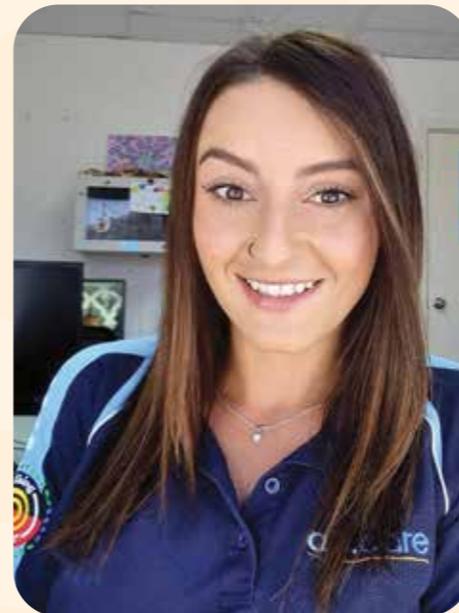
team is unable to participate. Inaugural chairpersons have also been appointed in each region to lead the local Reconciliation in Action groups and be part of the Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group, providing direct communication between the agency-wide and regional groups. These people and their roles are identified in the Stretch RAPWG membership list above.

We recognise the path to reconciliation is a long one after centuries of dispossession and are committed to stretching our achievements and embedding culturally appropriate practices across ac.care, including increased employment of First Nations people at all levels of the organisation, from trainees and frontline service staff through to senior management, advocating for respect and understanding of First Nations cultures and our nation's history and to do more to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and communities.

Meet our Riverland, Murraylands and Limestone Coast Stretch RAP leaders

Katisha Jackson

Riverland Reconciliation in Action Group Chairperson



I am a proud Yorta Yorta and Wemba Wemba woman and my job role is coordinator for the HIPPY program for ac.care based in the Riverland.

The Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) is a home-based, early learning and parenting program that empowers parents to be their child's first teacher and support the transition to schooling, with a focus on Aboriginal families in our regions.

After years of working with Aboriginal families as part of the community, I am proud to endorse ac.care's Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan and lead the ac.care Riverland Reconciliation In Action

group within the organisation.

Having a strong passion and commitment to working with our First Nations community, backed with experience, allows me to guide the agency's focus on ensuring all ac.care people appreciate the importance of being culturally safe within the workplace and ensuring we are building respectful relationships within the community.

I am personally proud to be a part of ac.care's RAP leadership and ensure we are making the right steps in this organisation that truly embrace the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the role we can all play in reconciliation.

Dimitri Pinney

Murraylands Reconciliation in Action Group chairperson

I WORK in ac.care's Intensive Family Support team, based in the Bridge Street office in Murray Bridge, on Ngarrindjeri Country, and am proud to chair the Murraylands Reconciliation Action Group.

Being an active part of reconciliation is very important to me both personally and professionally.

Since living in Australia, a key part of my journey has been connecting with, learning from and about Aboriginal people, culture and history - past and contemporary.

Through my wife, I have close Pitjantjatjara (far north-western South Australian cultural group) family in Central Australia, which continues to give important insight into the diversity, challenges and achievements of



contemporary Aboriginal people.

I worked and lived in Central Australia for eight years, with and for Aboriginal people and organisations in youth work, alcohol and other drugs services and community development in both

remote and urban situations.

I believe it's essential for all Australians to stand with our First Nations people and that their voices be heard about their experience of colonisation and its impacts and that we support the healing process of reconciliation.

I am proud to be an active part of ac.care's Reconciliation Action Plan.

The Murraylands RAP group consists of ten people and we meet monthly to plan our six weekly education events and larger events (such as for NAIDOC and Reconciliation weeks).

We are lucky to have four Aboriginal members of the group, giving an essential voice in our planning and delivery.

Nakan ("seeya")

I WORK as a Community Referral Worker on Boandik Country at the Mount Gambier Family Relationship Centre, operated by ac.care. It is an honour to chair the Limestone Coast Reconciliation In Action Group. Our team consists of passionate like-minded staff representing all our local ac.care sites and services, along with ac.care's Aboriginal Senior Advisor Kathy Rigney and Boandik Elder Aunty Michelle.

At its heart, reconciliation is about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians, such as myself. It is important to build on relationships by respecting the cultural significance of First Nations People and recognising their deep connection to culture and country, not only in my professional

practices, but also everyday life.

I have been proud to represent ac.care in community events focused on the Close The Gap campaign, NAIDOC Week and National Reconciliation Week, alongside colleagues, community members and other organisations.

I am grateful for opportunities to walk alongside the traditional custodians of this land and hear about their lives.

It is important to listen and learn from those that have experienced trauma and heartache over many generations due to the effects of colonisation and ongoing racism so we can break the cycle.

My hope is to see healing for First Nations people in this country that has always been rightfully theirs and always will be.

Lynette Heiming

Limestone Coast Reconciliation in Action Group Chairperson





Our goals - relationships

We will develop respectful, meaningful and sustainable relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to work together and walk alongside each other. Connections and how we honour those connections are essential to the delivery of our services. Creation of partnerships and cooperation in each unique community in which we provide services has been a shared journey and enhancing existing and building new relationships with First Nations people, communities and organisations is a vital component of our delivery of services to provide opportunities for all country people.

Building strong relationships between First Nations peoples and other Australians, including among our employees, is vital to ensure we support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, welcome and appropriately assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and maintain a strong reputation among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as an employer of choice and trusted partner in developing a better future. We strive to strengthen

relationships with Aboriginal controlled organisations in all regions in which we operate, along with making Elders welcome contributors to guiding our work and inspiring our people.

ac.care also recognises the importance of input externally and internally from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to our governance and the need to work in partnership with communities, including local Aboriginal community controlled organisations, to work together on providing relevant, engaging and culturally appropriate services. Featuring the voices of First Nations people in our public and internal communications is also vital to share our journey of working together, inspire others and encourage engagement and connection across cultures.

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|---|--|--|---------------------|
| Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and co-design guiding principles for engagement with Aboriginal communities by working with local stakeholders and organisations, including, but not limited to, Pangula Mannamurna Aboriginal Corporation and Moorundi Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service. | July 2022, 2023, 2024 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuously review and improve our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement plan and its guiding principles in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to ensure we respect, effectively consult with and engage First Nations people, organisations and communities in decision making in relation to service delivery. | August 2022, 2023, 2024 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and build on formal partnerships with Pangula Mannamurna Aboriginal Corporation and Moorundi Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service to help achieve better health and wellbeing outcomes, including provision of services to clients within their premises. | August 2022, 2023, 2024 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a formal partnership with an Aboriginal operated service or organisation in the Riverland to enhance connections with ac.care and improve health and wellbeing outcomes in the region. | November 2023 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek input from regional Reconciliation in Action teams to identify any new or emerging Aboriginal community controlled organisations or community leaders who should be consulted or involved in cultural matters, including service delivery and working with Aboriginal peoples from diverse nations. | July 2022, November 2022, July 2023, November 2023, July 2024, November 2024 | Regional RiA Chairs |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain representation, participation and relationships in First Nations Staff Networks of Anglicare SA and Anglicare Australia. | November 2022, 2023, 2024 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure ac.care representatives on Anglicare SA agencies First Nations Staff Network are supported and funded to attend meetings in person as part of work duties. | November 2022, 2023, 2024 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure ac.care representatives on Anglicare Australia First Nations Staff Network are supported and funded to participate in all meetings and events, including annual in-person gathering, if held, as part of work duties. | November 2022, 2023, 2024 | CEO |

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|---|--|---|------------------------|
| Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate Reconciliation Australia's National Reconciliation Week resources to all staff. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Communications Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event in each core region of the Riverland, Murraylands and Limestone Coast. | 27 May – 3 June 2022, 2023, 2024 | RAPWG Co-Chairs |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Reconciliation in Action Groups to encourage and support external organisations within their areas to host NRW events. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Regional RiA Chairs |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all staff and senior leaders, including board directors, are supported with appropriate HR policies and procedures to participate in external events in all three core regions to recognise and celebrate National Reconciliation Week. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise three internal NRW events, one for each region, including at least one organisation-wide NRW event, each year. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Regional RiA Chairs |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register all NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Communications Manager |
| Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement strategies to engage all staff to drive reconciliation outcomes. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | RAPWG Co-Chairs |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Reconciliation In Action groups to promote and instigate calls to action among staff on significant national campaigns, including, but not limited to, Uluru Statement from the Heart, Raise the Age and Racism. It Stops with Me, reviewing delivered activities and upcoming opportunities at quarterly meetings. | May, June, September, November 2022, 2023, 2024 | Regional RiA Chairs |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly. | November 2022, 2023, 2024 | Communications Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement strategies to positively influence our external stakeholders, such as suppliers and service partners, to drive reconciliation outcomes. | November 2023 | CEO |

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|---|--|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with Local Government bodies within our regions, including Mount Gambier City Council, Limestone Coast Local Government Association, Rural City of Murray Bridge, Berri Barmera Council and neighbouring council bodies, to implement ways to advance reconciliation, including support for NAIDOC Week and National Reconciliation Week events. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with SA Anglicare agencies and Anglicare Australia to implement ways to advance reconciliation, including through consultation with cross-agency First Nations staff forums to provide advice to CEOs. | November 2022, November 2023 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day via social media channels with posts explaining the importance of the day. | August 2022, 2023, 2024 | Communications Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review placement of South Australian Aboriginal mission history posters and other cultural and reconciliation education materials at public ac.care sites. | June 2022, 2023, 2024 | Communications Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feature videos of ac.care leaders and Aboriginal staff reflecting on RAP themes at least twice per year on our social media platforms to demonstrate leadership on reconciliation matters within the regions we serve. | May, July 2022, 2023, 2024 | Communications Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide Walking Together lapel pins to new staff, volunteers and board members as part of induction and review to ensure purpose of pin is explained upon presentation, including expectations all our team contribute to achieving Stretch RAP targets. | July 2022, 2023, 2024 | RAP Champions |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all branding and signage to ensure consistent use of Walking Together symbol alongside use of ac.care logo. | June 2022, 2023, 2024 | Communications Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the Anglican Diocese of The Murray, as our founding supporter, to implement a RAP and provide support from the RAPWG to help facilitate this process. | April 2023 | CEO |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use ac.care's social media channels and relationships with mainstream media to promote and advocate on behalf of state and national campaigns related to reconciliation and self-determination. This includes, but is not limited to, Uluru Statement from the Heart, Raise the Age and Racism. It Stops With Me. | October 2022, 2023 | Communications Manager | |

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|---|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Aboriginal controlled organisations remain represented as partners in Country South SA Homelessness Alliance, led by ac.care. | November 2023, 2024 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior management representatives to support and work alongside leaders of Aboriginal operated organisations as partners in Country South SA Homelessness Alliance to ensure they have opportunities to influence South Australian Housing Authority policies and practices through alliance meetings, including contributing to decision-making regarding service delivery for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. | November 2023, 2024 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update procurement procedures to ask businesses whether they have a RAP and their level of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment as part of the process for tenders and supply contracts to influence external bodies to consider their commitment. | June 2022, 2023, 2024 | Senior Finance Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Minya Porlar Creche team to initiate their first Narragunnawalli RAP. | November 2023 | RAPWG champion |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure representation at a minimum of two RAP Leadership Gatherings annually. | Review June 2022, 2023, 2024 | RAP champion and co-chairs |
| Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review HR policies and procedures concerned with anti-discrimination and racism to facilitate continual improvement. | December 2022, 2023, 2024 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to review anti-discrimination and racism policy and processes. | December 2022 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement and communicate an anti-discrimination and racism policy for our organisation. | May 2022 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review ac.care anti-discrimination and racism policy for our organisation and communicate to all staff. | February 2023, 2024 | Human Resources Executive Manager |

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|--|---|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior leaders to publicly support anti-discrimination campaigns, initiatives or stances against racism using approved and consistent ac.care key messages. | October 2022, 2023 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure education opportunities are available for senior leaders and managers on the effects of racism, bias and privilege. | December 2022 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote ac.care's commitment to Racism. It Stops With Me campaign through website, annual report, social media and public media release. | November 2022 | Communications Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to screen relevant documentaries about culture and racism matters agency-wide at least annually and facilitate discussions following the films using associated resources. | July 2022, 2023, 2024 | Senior Aboriginal Advisor |
| Repair relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians by facilitating truth-telling initiatives. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate and implement (if appropriate) culturally safe truth-telling speaking engagements by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff and clients at internal and external events, meetings, service activities and commemorative occasions. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | RAP champion |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share relevant resources regarding truth-telling about the cultural history of First Nations people and colonisation through internal and external communications channels, including social media, during commemorative occasions and as recommended by Senior Aboriginal Advisor. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | RAP champion |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with First Nations staff and/or First Nations advisors on a culturally safe approach to our truth-telling initiatives. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | RAP champion |

Daniel Giles - Connection

Art from the land of the First People of the River Murray

I am a proud Ngintait, Nganguruku and Yankunytjatjara man based in the Riverland.

I have always been artistic and creative and recently created my own business Blak Scarlett - Art.

I have experience developing both digital and canvas art and am keen to promote Aboriginal art to the public.

This work depicts our connection to the land, which is where everything starts.

We are made from it, learn from it and live from it.

We must continue to build, strengthen and pass on our knowledge of caring and nurturing on to the next generation.

As we continue to move forward, we acknowledge all people need a safe home, enough money to live on and strong positive relationships.

We ensure the strength and resilience of First Nations People is passed on to our youth, as the future is in their hands.





Our goals - respect

Staff at ac.care live and breathe the process of reconciliation, always working respectfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues and clients, acknowledging cultures and celebrating the past and future of the world's oldest living cultures on the land on which we work.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members represent around a third of people supported by ac.care's services. It is vital our staff, communications and service delivery are culturally appropriate and representative of people we strive to support, encouraging a shared and mutually respectful experience between staff and clients. A 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 forms the basis for ac.care's vision for reconciliation to work in a meaningful and respectful way with local Aboriginal

communities through relationships built on respect, compassion and trust.

Demonstrating respect is vital for the welfare, recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, as well as ensuring our clients feel welcomed and supported to access our services.

Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures, histories, knowledge and rights are important to ac.care due to our inclusive values and core business focused on services for all country people.

Promoting connection, understanding and pride in cultures and histories is vital to maintain a sense of identity for First Nations people, especially vulnerable clients in out of home care or facing homelessness.

Promoting pride in culture can also enhance a sense of self-worth and wellbeing for clients and staff, while also breaking down barriers to service access by demonstrating a safe and welcoming space.

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|---|--|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning. | • Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within ac.care. | May 2022, November 2023, 2024 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | • Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to strengthen implementation of cultural learning strategy. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | • Review implementation and communicate details of cultural learning strategy for staff and Board. | November 2022, 2023, 2024 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | • Commit all RAP Working Group members, HR staff, all managers and Board directors to undertake formal and structured cultural learning. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | • All new ac.care employees and board members to complete formal and structured Aboriginal Cultural Learning with face-to-face delivery within 6 months of their start date. | November 2022, 2023, 2024 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | • Review provision of formal and structured Aboriginal Cultural Learning opportunities to ensure these are provided for all ac.care employees every 2 years and incorporate elements of cultural immersion, such as site visits and bus tours, and regional specific cultural learning guided by local communities of each region. | November 2022, 2023, 2024 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | • Provide opportunities for all staff to undertake a mandatory regional cultural immersion activity or experience every two years. | November 2023 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | • Review delivery of cultural awareness training for all foster carers in ac.care's network to ensure all carers receive training within 12 months of being approved as carers. | July 2022, 2023, 2024 | Foster Care Manager |

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|---|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a minimum of three delegates – one for each region – to the biennial SNAICC conference as well as the opportunity for staff to connect remotely to provide opportunities to gain a greater understanding of approaches to deliver better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. | August 2023 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review provision of cultural education resources to ensure materials are easily accessible for all staff to continue learning. | August 2022, 2023, 2024 | Senior Aboriginal Advisor |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review release of relevant SNAICC resources to ensure material has been shared effectively with staff via internal communications networks. | October 2022, 2023, 2024 | Communications Manager |
| Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase staff understanding on the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country statements. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Communications Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually review and communicate cultural protocol guidelines to staff across all regions, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country, customised for all local communities we operate in. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Communication Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol for at least six significant events each year and ensure they are appropriately financially remunerated. | November 2022, 2023, 2024 | RAP Champions |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide advice to empower all staff to confidently include Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of all formal meetings. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Communications Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate requirement for all staff and senior leaders, including Board directors, to provide an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at all public events. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Acknowledgment of Country plaques at all public ac.care sites – ac.care Murraylands Centre, Berri office, Millicent and Mount Gambier community centres, Mount Gambier Family Relationship Centre and Mount Gambier head office. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Communications Manager |

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|--|--|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Reconciliation in Action Committees to encourage and support organisations within their areas to host at least one NAIDOC Week event in each core region in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Regional RiA Chairs |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group members to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event annually. | July 2022, 2023, 2024 | RAPWG Co-Chairs |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support all staff to participate in community-based NAIDOC Week events, including one in each core region. | July 2022, 2023, 2024 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable ac.care staff to play a lead role in designing, supporting and delivering NAIDOC activities. | July 2022, 2023, 2024 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review human resources policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week events. | June 2022 | CEO |
| Demonstrate respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through the visual promotion of cultures and histories throughout ac.care locations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement at least one external Aboriginal mural on an ac.care building in each of our core three regions – Murray Bridge, Berri and Mount Gambier. | April 2023 | Communications Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess where ac.care can incorporate local Aboriginal language into the work environment, including signage, marketing materials, cultural protocol documents and other communications, in consultation with Traditional Owners. | September 2022, 2023, 2024 | Communications Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Aboriginal language dictionaries/guides are provided at ac.care sites where they are available locally for the Aboriginal nation of the area and encourage use of language, within cultural protocols, in communications where appropriate. | September 2022, 2023, 2024 | Communications Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate Aboriginal land names in all site titles, including email signatures and postage, in consultation with Traditional Owners. | September 2022 | Communications Manager |

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|--|---|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Demonstrate respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through the visual promotion of cultures and histories throughout ac.care locations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Uluru Statement From the Heart is displayed prominently at all public sites, including Murray Bridge, Berri, Millicent and Mount Gambier community centres, Mount Gambier Family Relationship Centre and Mount Gambier head office. | July 2022 | Communications Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure AIATSIS language maps are purchased and displayed at all public sites, including Murray Bridge, Berri, Millicent and Mount Gambier community centres, Mount Gambier Family Relationship Centre and Mount Gambier head office. | July 2022 | Regional RiA Chairs |
| Support foster carers and residential care workers to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in care remain connected to culture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Placement Principle is a high priority through discussions at quarterly regional foster and residential care meetings to ensure placement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in care with members of the child's community remains a high priority for all our out of home care staff, with any obstacles identified and reported to out of home care executive manager. | October 2022, 2023, 2024 | Out of home care Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek guidance regarding foster and residential care service development and delivery from Aboriginal organisations, leaders, Elders, mentors, advisors and communities. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Out of home care Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review services to maintain commitment to working alongside Aboriginal children and young people in care and their families, carers or support staff to explore cultural connections, identifying the child or young person's community, Country and language group. | June 2022, 2023, 2024 | Out of home care Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review service delivery to ensure when Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children are placed in home-based care that the carer is informed of aspects of the child or young person's Aboriginal identity, including community, Country and language group. | June 2022, 2023, 2024 | Out of home care Executive Manager |

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|--|---|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Support foster carers and residential care workers to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in care remain connected to culture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review service delivery to ensure in circumstances where an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander child or young person is placed with a non-First Nations carer, the carer receives information and advice, including training where available, on culturally appropriate caring to ensure the child or young person's cultural values, beliefs and practices are respected and upheld. | June 2022, 2023, 2024 | Out of home care Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work in partnership with regional Department for Child Protection offices to ensure culturally appropriate support is provided for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in our shared care. | June 2022, 2023, 2024 | Out of home care Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure cultural identity plans are in place for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in ac.care residential and foster care placements. | June 2022, 2023, 2024 | Senior Aboriginal Advisor |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure staff are trained to use the Winangay Aboriginal Assessment Tool for assessment of new foster carers in all three regions – Limestone Coast, Riverland and Limestone Coast – to allow a culturally appropriate approach for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicant families. | November 2022, 2023, 2024 | Foster Care Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt local Aboriginal language names for all residential care homes in consultation with local Elders and young people residing in these homes and ensure young residents and all staff understand the meaning and pronunciation of these names. | August 2022 | Out of home care Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review resources to ensure appropriate materials are up-to-date and available to all foster carers about local Aboriginal histories, cultures and opportunities within regions to encourage engagement in Aboriginal cultural learning and engagement opportunities. | August 2022, 2023, 2024 | Foster Care Manager |

Ray Love - Nori

Art from Ngarrindjeri Land



I AM a proud Ngarrindjeri man – an artist, community worker and footballer, but my first love is my family, including my wife and the children we raise and support together, both our own and those who have joined our mob in need of foster care and become a part of our family.

I am proud to have contributed to the ac.care Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan with an artwork after a long association with this important community organisation.

The Nori artwork features the totem animal of my people – the Ngarrindjeri.

The circles represent the 18 tribes

(Lakklinyeris) in the Ngarrindjeri Nation.

The white line represents the river and pathways that connect us all.

Meanwhile, the dots are the water that surrounds us and also represents the people of all different shades and from various places, but all connected and united as one nation.

Lines off to the sides of the river and paths mean you may stray and go down a different path, but you will always be connected to home and there is always support available whether through your family, your mob and nation or organisations like ac.care.





Our goals - opportunities

We want all people across the country communities we serve to have safe homes, enough money to live on and strong positive relationships so they have opportunities to enjoy a full life with a sense of wellbeing. Our mission, to provide opportunities for life, applies to all people in the communities we serve, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, whether staff, clients or partners in our work.

We want to see Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples given opportunities to thrive while maintaining respect for cultural connections. This includes advancing our employees through professional development opportunities while maintaining respectful workplaces to ensure we retain and recruit further Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to roles across the agency. A large percentage of our clients are First Nations people and it is important our staff mix reflects the people we work with, while employment with our agency also provides valuable career and

professional development opportunities.

We also seek to further our work with Aboriginal-controlled organisations to enhance their capacity, while collaborating to increase the impact of our services.

ac.care can also help provide opportunities beyond our communities as the size of our agency allows us to support First Nations-owned businesses through procurement of supplies, helping ensure the dollars we spend support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by supporting employment through these valued enterprises.

We will enhance our strong, culturally safe policies to continue supporting and encouraging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and volunteers to be effective employees in their roles with ac.care and advocate for positive outcomes for all country people.

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|--|---|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff through the ac.care Aboriginal Employee Network to consult on an annual review of recruitment, retention and professional development strategies. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually review and update an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review job advertisements with communications manager and Aboriginal Employee Network to ensure job vacancies effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review advice for managers in ensuring recruitment practices are culturally safe and inclusive in consultation with Senior Aboriginal Advisor and Aboriginal Employee Network. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review provision of mentoring support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to take on management and senior level positions. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review efforts to directly approach suitable Aboriginal employees to encourage applications for acting roles and project positions to develop skills for ongoing leadership roles. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase First Nations staff to 39 (15%). | November 2023 | Human Resources Executive Manager |

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|--|--|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain First Nations staffing at a minimum of 15%. | November 2024 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review goal to ensure 5% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff recruits are people provided with opportunities to enter the workforce through traineeships or are supported by ac.care to return to the workforce, such as after parenting, by offering targeted entry level positions, such as in HIPPY and Minya Porlar Creche. | May 2024 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve employment outcomes by providing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff with two days of paid cultural leave to participate in cultural activities, in addition to 10 days of unpaid additional leave for cultural and family responsibilities. | May 2022 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employ a minimum of 2 First Nations trainees across the organisation annually. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide formal, face-to-face leadership training for a minimum of two First Nations staff annually. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase number of First Nations staff in level 6 positions and above from 3 to at least 5. | November 2023 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate continuation of Aboriginal Employee Network through support across the agency for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to attend quarterly meetings, including annual face-to-face gatherings, and provide feedback on other support required to maintain engagement in network. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share case studies and knowledge around our approach to First Nations employment and retention with other organisations via the RAP network and fellow Anglican organisations through our annual report, the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and stakeholder newsletters. | September 2022, 2023, 2024 | RAP Co-Chairs |

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|---|--|---------------------------|--|
| Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy. | November 2022, 2023, 2024 | Senior Finance Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff through existing internal and external communication channels, highlighting Aboriginal owned and operated businesses, particularly within our geographical service areas. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Senior Finance Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annually review potential for Supply Nation membership based on expenditure and increasing existing investment through support for smaller Aboriginal-owned entities based in our regions. | November 2022 | Senior Finance Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses. | November 2022 | Senior Finance Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses as a portion of overall suppliers to ac.care by 10% annually. | July 2022, 2023, 2024 | Executive Manager – Planning, Finance & IT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the proportion of spend with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers by 25% annually. | July 2022, 2023, 2024 | Executive Manager – Planning, Finance & IT |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train all relevant staff in contracting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses through Supply Nation directory and other supplier lists for relevant smaller enterprises. | February 2023 | Senior Finance Manager |

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|--|--|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Improve quality of care provisions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples that lead to better health and wellbeing outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the cultural and personal safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children remains in focus across the agency's activities through implementation of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. | June 2023 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete an engagement and consultation project in Murray Bridge to redesign the national Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) to provide culturally-engaging local delivery with a focus on improving educational outcomes for First Nations children. | December 2022 | General Manager Community Services |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a process to engage communities and clients to conduct cultural audits of programs, including intake and assessment processes, particularly focused on provision of services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. | November 2022, 2023, 2024 | Senior Aboriginal Advisor |
| Support existing and emerging Aboriginal-controlled services and organisations external to ac.care | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement processes to make our facilities available for use by Aboriginal community-controlled organisations to help achieve better health and wellbeing outcomes. | October 2022 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate processes to allow staff to provide advice and practical support where possible and upon request to Aboriginal controlled organisations and community committees. | November 2022, 2023, 2024 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure appropriate staff have capacity to contribute to external committees and other Aboriginal community-led groups around identifying additional service needs and facility requirements and support advocacy for resources. | November 2022, 2023, 2024 | CEO |

Bonnie-May Saunders - My Country

Art from Boandik land



My name is Bonnie-May Saunders. My parents are Theodore and Rosslyn Saunders. I was the first Grandchild to my Nana Eunice Saunders and she alongside my parents instilled in me the importance of family and culture. I have always felt the sense of belonging and been thankful for the guidance from my family.

I am a proud Boandik, Meintangk, Gunditjmarra, Ngarrindjeri and Narrungga Woman. I was raised here in Berrin and have lived here most of my life and now with my husband we are raising our two sons on Country.

My Home as it is represented in this piece is full of beautiful colours.

We have our beautiful green lush land which feeds our Kurras, Kabirs and

many other animals in the region. If you do not know the translation of these animals, I urge you to please buy our Bunganditj Dictionary and become familiar with our language as I am sure you will be seeing it around Berrin more and more!

We have the four waterholes on the corners and the stream connecting them to one another. These represent our water that we are so incredibly blessed with here on Country. We have beautiful lakes yes, but we also have our beautiful beaches.

They surround us all along the coast and it doesn't matter where you are because you are always close to water.

Continued over page

Bonnie-May Saunders - My Country

Art from Boandik land

In the centre we have a symbol which represents people sitting and talking together. This has a big emphasis on the fact we have a great facility here in Berrin called the Mount Gambier Family Relationship Centre.

FRC is a great resource and support which does a fantastic job of keeping families connected and linking them in with supports. I have put this at the centre as it is crucial in our community to have families feeling supported and stronger both culturally and individually too.

Lastly the prints going from one waterhole to the other is to show that we are rich with animals here in our region.

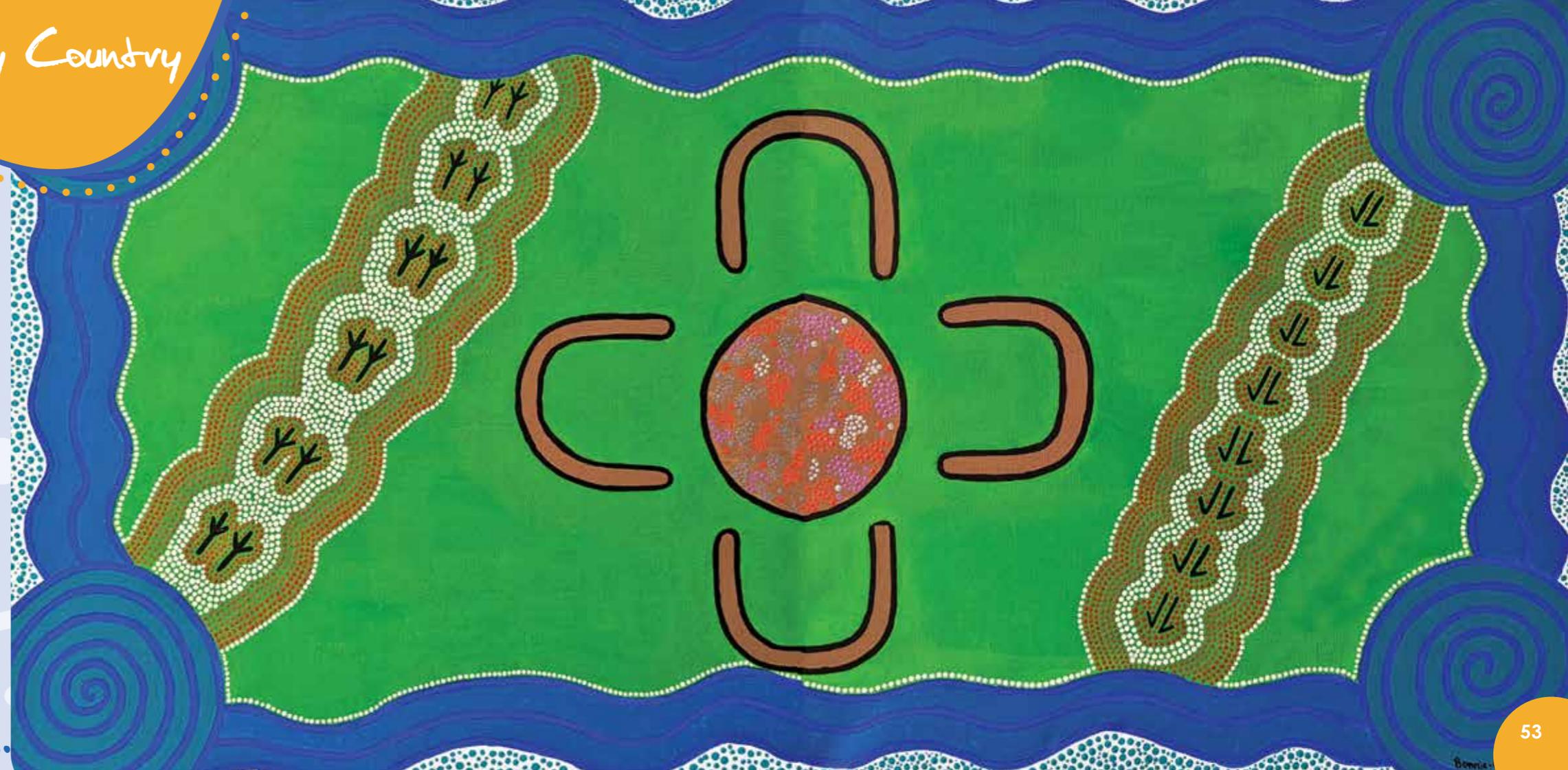
We have a duty to protect our land, animals and one another

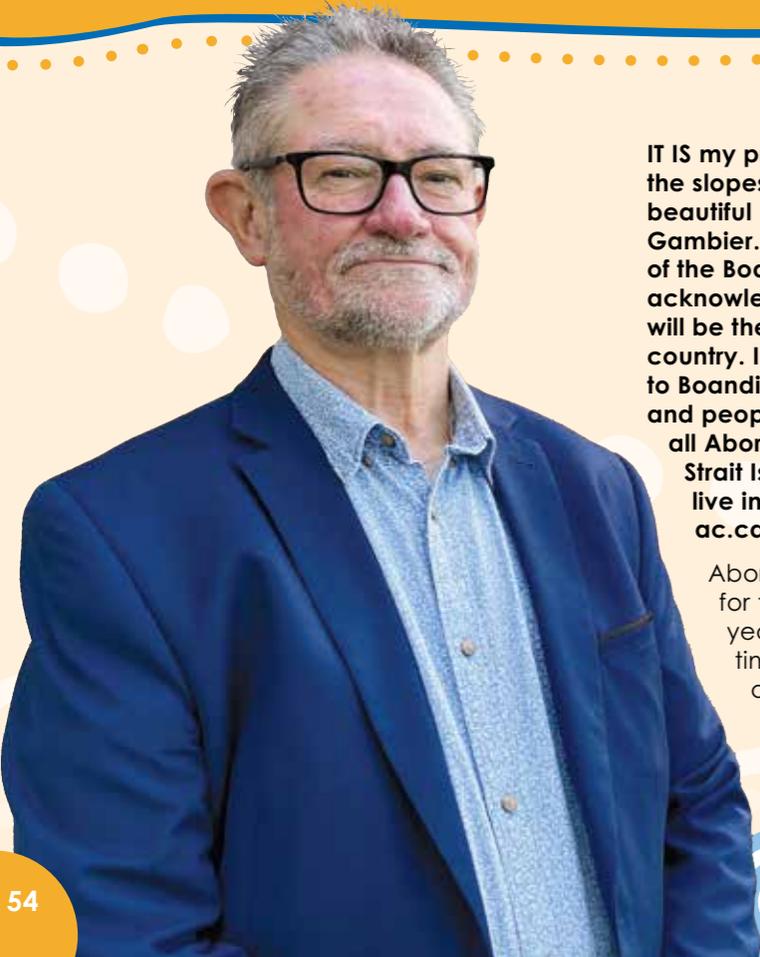
as Aboriginal People, but to also educate others about Our Land. I wanted this piece to show that the FRC is on Boandik Land and that we are surrounded by culture in our community.

My piece is simple, yet the meaning is truly close to my heart. I hope that people look at my piece and remember the importance of culture, families and most of all being connected to Boandik Country.

'Home' was well thought out and although I have zero experience in painting when I was approached, I jumped at this great opportunity. I am a firm believer in taking any opportunity and learning from it, so thank you ac.care.

Bonnie-May Saunders





IT IS my privilege to live on the slopes of WarWar, the beautiful Blue Lake of Mount Gambier. These are the lands of the Boandik Nation who I acknowledge are and always will be the owners of this country. I pay my respects to Boandik leaders, Elders and people of all times, and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who live in the areas in which ac.care works today.

Aboriginal people cared for this land for 60,000 years, through the times of the volcanoes and colonisation. I very much regret

and lament the failings of the past and the hurt caused to these proud people. It is my personal goal to learn as much as I can about Boandik culture and history and I sincerely thank Boandik and Ngarrindjeri Elders who have, in the most kind and caring way, helped me in my journey.

The vast operational area of ac.care includes many traditional lands and nations. ac.care has a unique opportunity to make a real and positive difference for First Nations people, to move forward from uncertainties, diminished opportunities,

resources and services to a more hopeful and equitable future for all.

I am proud of the content of our Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan and the culture-changing process leading ac.care to this point. The RAP is a clear and detailed plan which will enable us to walk together with Aboriginal people toward a better future for all people regardless of culture or circumstance.

This future acknowledges the strength of diversity, the value of truth telling, of listening and learning, the value of equality and self-determination.

It is my hope that as our Stretch RAP is put into action, Aboriginal people in our leadership, workforce and in our care will be included and participate at every stage and gain ownership and control of a future they design.

I hope we can provide the encouragement and support needed for growth and regrowth of traditional connections to spirituality, family and heritage, country, culture and language.

**Richard Fisher,
ac.care board convenor
and board RAP champion**



SHARING CULTURE: Boandik woman Auntie Michelle Jacquelin-Furr speaks at the opening of ac.care's 2021 National Reconciliation Week screening of Kanyini at the Riddoch Arts and Cultural Centre.



Our goals - governance

Our Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan is embedded in all areas of our organisation and we have structures in place to implement and monitor our delivery of measurable actions across ac.care, including directing of resources to deliver within timeframes.

Awareness and adoption of the Stretch RAP from board level throughout corporate support areas and frontline service delivery ensures the document actively drives action focused on improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

across the regions and communities in which we operate, contributing to the national movement towards reconciliation and a fairer future for all.

SHARING CULTURE:

Ngarrindjeri people, including ac.care senior Aboriginal advisor Kathy Rigney's extended family, spent time around the campfire with ac.care board members and support staff, sharing culture and life experiences during a 2021 cultural immersion camp-out.



| ACTION | DELIVERABLE | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|---|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| Maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RAPWG) to drive governance of the RAP. | • Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation. | May, August, November 2022 February, May, August, November 2023 February, May, August, November 2024 | RAPWG Co-Chairs |
| | • Maintain Regional Reconciliation in Action Groups, with a chairperson for each region, to ensure aims of the RAPWG are actively pursued and monitored in all regions. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | RAPWG Co-Chairs |
| | • Review RAPWG and Regional Reconciliation in Action Group membership to ensure Aboriginal representation. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | RAPWG Co-Chairs |
| | • Review terms of reference for the RAPWG. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | RAPWG Co-Chairs |
| Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments. | • Embed resource needs for RAP implementation by allocating sufficient annual budget for planned actions. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | CEO |
| | • Embed key RAP actions in performance expectations of senior management and all staff through job description reviews. | July 2022 | Human Resources Executive Manager |
| | • Embed appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments. | May 2022 | RAPWG Co-Chairs |
| | • Maintain an agency-wide RAP champion from senior management, along with a Board director to be identified as the Board RAP champion, reviewed annually. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | CEO |

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|--|--|--|---------------------|
| Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include RAP as a standing agenda item at senior management meetings. | May, August, November 2022 February, May, August, November 2023 February, May, August, November 2024 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide ac.care Board with ongoing support, advice and education from an Aboriginal organisational mentor to ensure First Nations perspectives are considered in governance. | May 2022, 2023, 2024 | Board RAP Champion |
| Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact Reconciliation Australia to ensure that our primary and secondary contact are up-to-date to ensure we are receiving important correspondence | June 2022, 2023, 2024 | RAP Project Officer |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow up with Reconciliation Australia if we have not yet received our unique reporting link to participate in the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire. | August 2022, 2023, 2024 | RAP Project Officer |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia. | September 2022, 2023, 2024 | RAPWG Co-Chairs |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report RAP progress to all staff, senior leaders and the ac.care Board quarterly. | May, August, November 2022 February, May, August, November 2023 February, May, August, November 2024 | RAPWG Co-Chairs |

| ACTION | DELIVERABLE | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBILITY |
|--|--|--|------------------------|
| Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional Reconciliation in Action Groups to meet quarterly between agency RAPWG meetings to drive activity within their regions and report back to RAPWG on progress. | May, June, September, November 2022, March, June, September, November 2023, 2024, March 2025 | Regional RIA Chairs |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly report against our RAP commitments annually, outlining achievements, challenges and learnings via our annual report. | October 2022, 2023, 2024 | Communications Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require each member of the Senior Leadership Team to provide evidence to the CEO at the group's last forum of the calendar year of at least one specific action they have taken (other than training) to contribute to the goals of the RAP. | November 2022, 2023, 2024 | CEO |
| Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer. | May 2022 May 2024 | RAP Co-Chairs |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP. | May 2024 | CEO |

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

1300 accare

(1300 222 273)

accare.org.au

care@accare.org.au

Head Office

Mount Gambier

(08) 8724 5400

70-72 White Avenue, Mount Gambier

ac.care

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



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

STRETCH

