



Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan
March 2017 – February 2019

The artworks on the front and back covers have been created by Noongar Elders in the Katanning region. We are grateful for their permission to reproduce their artwork.

Front cover

The artwork on the front cover by Mr Harold Miller depicts multiculturalism surrounded by Aboriginal culture (Australia's first people traditional custodians). Aboriginal identity is shown by the colours red, black and yellow in the inner circle and the surrounding ochre colours.

Harold Miller is a 56 year old Noongar man from the Gnowangerup district with ties to the Central Great Southern, Lower Great Southern and Avon District areas of Western Australia.

Back cover

The artwork on the back cover is by Mrs Gabrielle Hansen. The lizards represent the traditional foods, the colours in the painting bring childhood memories of Gabrielle growing up in the bush environment on the reserve in Tambellup, WA, where she was surrounded by all the different colours belonging to the land.

The vibrant colours represent the trees, flowers and the different seasons. The circles and the dots represent how Noongar people travelled from one place to the other to meet with other families.

Gabrielle Hansen is a Noongar woman from the Gnowangerup, Tambellup and Katanning area belonging to Noongar Country.

It is acknowledged that there are different ways of spelling the word Nyoongar and we recognise that Noongar is preferred in the Great Southern. The spelling used in this RAP (Nyoongar) is in accordance with the advice received from the local Elders associated with the Looking Forward Project, unless referring to Aboriginal people or events in the Great Southern in which case Noongar is used.

Acknowledgment of the Nyoongar People

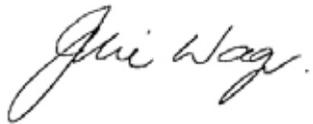
Palmerston Association acknowledges the Nyoongar people as the traditional owners of the land upon which Palmerston provides services and we pay our respects to Elders, past and present.

Statement from the CEO and Chairman of the Palmerston Association Board

This Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is a commitment – a commitment to our staff, a commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities in Western Australia. Our commitment is this: in acknowledging that many wrongs have been committed against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Western Australia and of Australia since colonisation, Palmerston Association stands firm in its intent to work in different ways to improve the health and social wellbeing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with whom we work.

This Reconciliation Action Plan has been shaped by the contributions of many: our Board, our staff, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other Australians, Elders, other First Australian organisations, Reconciliation WA and Reconciliation Australia. It has evolved with the thoughtful consideration of many over time and is itself part of the journey of listening, learning and change.

On behalf of Palmerston, we would like to thank all those who have assisted us in the development of this Reconciliation Action Plan.



Julie Wager
Chairman
Palmerston Association Inc



Sheila McHale
Chief Executive Officer
Palmerston Association Inc

What does a Reconciliation Action Plan mean to our staff?

“ For an Aboriginal person looking for a job, they’ll turn to Palmerston as a place to work. ”

“ A message to the organisation that things will be different. ”

“ That it will set us apart as a leader. ”

“ That Aboriginal people will feel comfortable about approaching Palmerston without judgement and feel it is a respectful and positive place to come and work. ”

“ A way forward to do things differently to improve opportunities and correct the wrongs of past practice. ”

“ For people to be inspired by Palmerston. ”

Palmerston Association Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2017-2019

This Reconciliation Action Plan is a shared plan between the Aboriginal community through the Elders and Palmerston, its staff and stakeholders. It has been a true partnership and the 'our' is Palmerston and the community together.

Our vision for reconciliation

Our vision for reconciliation is built on trust and relationship building, respecting the wisdom of Elders and providing opportunities.

It includes a commitment to change, creating an environment of cultural competency, building trust with Elders and communities. It also involves working together with our Aboriginal staff. It is a vision that recognises the past and embraces the present opportunities for change. If we listen, we can achieve our vision.

Our vision is this: Aboriginal people feel comfortable walking through Palmerston's doors, knowing they will be treated equally, respectfully, in a safe and culturally secure way, with genuine inclusiveness. Palmerston will have Aboriginal staff in senior management roles and have trust and faith in them. When Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are looking for support they think of Palmerston as the place to go and when Aboriginal people are looking to work in the drug and alcohol sector, they think immediately of Palmerston.

Our business

Palmerston Association prides itself on nearly 40 years of service and commitment to Western Australian communities supporting individuals and/or families with drug and alcohol issues. On this foundation, Palmerston has built a strong reputation for professional care for its clients whether in a residential setting or community based service. We are an accredited organisation under the Standard on Culturally Secure Practice (Alcohol and other Drug Sector).

Palmerston aims to be a value driven, high performing, empathetic and adaptive organisation, striving for excellence in service, and to provide the best outcomes

for the Western Australian community. We also aim to be a culturally diverse and culturally secure organisation, operating in a competitive market.

Our core services include counselling and support for adults, youth and families, a family program, support for people with both mental health and alcohol and other drug concerns, support for local communities through prevention and community development activities, counselling and support services for court diversion clients, continuing care programs including SMART (Self Management and Recovery Training) groups, assessment services for Palmerston Farm Therapeutic Community (TC) residential program.

We provide services to the communities in the South and South East metropolitan region, the Great Southern and the central Perth district. The residential service accepts referrals from across Western Australia.

Our work supports people with alcohol and other drug issues. The number of Aboriginal clients accessing our services varies across the branches. Data for the 2015/16 financial year reveal that overall 9.3% of our clients were Aboriginal; however in Katanning, 50% of our clients were Aboriginal. In Albany 14% were Aboriginal and at the Farm TC, Aboriginal people comprise 16% of all residents from across the State.

We aspire to improve our accessibility to First Australians, families and communities.

As at 1 March 2017, Palmerston Association employed approximately 119 contracted staff (92 FTE's). Palmerston Association employed eight (8) Aboriginal staff. Palmerston is WA focussed and operates in the metropolitan and Great Southern regions, including the South Metro Community Alcohol and Drug Service (Fremantle, Rockingham and Mandurah), South East Metro Community Alcohol and Drug Service (Thornlie), Great Southern Community Alcohol and Drug Service (Albany, Denmark and Katanning), Palmerston Perth and Palmerston Farm Therapeutic Community (TC). Palmerston has a permanent presence in Armadale.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

Palmerston Association aspires to develop a RAP which respects the histories, cultures, beliefs and diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Palmerston already has a solid foundation for its RAP, having established strong relationships, partnerships and gained invaluable knowledge from our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, stakeholders and Elders with whom we are closely connected through the Farm TC and the Looking Forward Aboriginal Mental Health Project (the Looking Forward Project, LFP). This project, which began in 2011 is a participatory action research aimed at increasing access to and the responsiveness of the mental health and alcohol and other drugs service system for Nyoongar families in the South East metropolitan area of Perth. The project team, led by respected Aboriginal researcher Dr Michael Wright has worked with public, private, not for profit organisations and peak bodies and 18 Elders. Palmerston became a partner to the project in December 2012.

We are developing our RAP in the spirit of reconciliation. In 2015, the CEO invited interested staff to self-nominate as champions for a RAP. From this, a group of Aboriginal and other Australian staff was formed. This reference group met in early 2015 to discuss the foundations for a RAP, and identified what Palmerston was doing well and what the organisation could do better. The group also identified further opportunities to improve our response. This session was facilitated by Reconciliation WA.

The RAP reference group met again with all our Aboriginal staff to workshop the development of the RAP. This workshop was facilitated by Reconciliation Australia and was attended by external stakeholders including Aboriginal staff from the Mental Health Commission (MHC) (formerly the Drug and Alcohol Office), and staff from the Aboriginal Alcohol and Drug Service (AADS). The CEO and the Board of Palmerston Association have been fully committed to the development of the RAP and several of the Board members attended the workshop along with the CEO and the entire executive management team. We were privileged that the Elders who advise the Farm TC attended the workshop to discuss the work of the Looking Forward Project. Following this session, the draft RAP was developed. It

was further workshopped by Aboriginal staff and the reference group and was referred to the Elders for comment. The Aboriginal staff met again in January 2016 to progress the draft. A final meeting was held in October 2016 and the draft RAP was approved in principle by the Palmerston Board in October 2016. The document was then endorsed by the Katanning Elders and the Kwinana Elders in December 2016.

It is also good governance to have a strong cultural agenda underpinned by a RAP. A RAP is a strong statement of our commitment to cultural change. Developing a RAP was a requirement of our accreditation and one we gladly embarked upon developing. For a full list of staff and Elders involved, please refer to page 19.

I want Palmerston to be a culturally secure place where everyone feels welcome. Our RAP has been created collaboratively by thoughtful, experienced and talented people. It is a fantastic plan and I am proud to commit to it and proud that the whole of Palmerston will be committed to it.

Julie Wager, Chairman of the Board

Activities and achievements – progress towards reconciliation

We have been fortunate to learn new ways of relating to the local Nyoongar community under the guidance of the Elders in the Kwinana region and Noongar Elders in the Katanning region. The organisation's Strategic Plan for 2016 to 2020 commits to continuing this learning and listening. One of the five organisational objectives of the Strategic Plan is a commitment to improve our culturally secure services. The key actions to which the executive management team has committed and which are endorsed by the Board of Palmerston Association are embedded in this RAP. The development of a RAP which respects the histories, cultures, beliefs and diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples was one of these key actions.

Our partnership with the Looking Forward Project has informed and changed the way we have approached our cultural learning and security. By committing to engage and work with the Elders, Palmerston Association has been encouraged to understand the Nyoongar worldview, acknowledge Nyoongar culture and history and to reframe the way we offer and deliver services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Through our involvement with the Looking Forward Project, the wisdom of the Elders brought new insights and we learnt an incredibly valuable lesson. A simple but significant new inclusion in the Farm Therapeutic Community (TC) brochure is an explanation that the TC is on Nyoongar Whudjuk land. The Elders advised that the land had been hunting grounds and had no known traditional sites such as those for men's/women's business. This is particularly significant for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents who are not Nyoongar as they now have a clearer cultural understanding of the land.

When the organisation established a new service in Katanning, we immediately made contact with the Elders in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community through the Aboriginal project officer.

The team invited the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to drop in to yarn and thus began the establishment of respectful relationships. Through a system of "vouching" (endorsement) by the Elders, the Katanning service became accepted by key Elders and potential consumers.

Developing culturally appropriate protocols, establishing Elders' groups in outlying towns, making connections with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education officers in primary schools and at community events have had a huge impact.

Our metropolitan staff have participated in cultural training presented by Danny Ford, a highly respected Aboriginal cultural trainer. Our Great Southern staff also received training via the then Drug and Alcohol Office, now the Mental Health Commission. Our Great Southern team were trained by Aboriginal psychologist and consultant Dr Tracy Westerman, in the use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific assessment tools.

Our Board also received cultural training.

Palmerston Association was the winner in November 2016 of the Australian Institute of Management WA workplace diversity excellence award, reflecting in part the impact of work with Elders.

Activities and achievements – progress towards reconciliation

Our job adverts now state “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are strongly encouraged to apply” and we advertise certain positions as 50(d) in accordance with the Equal Opportunity Act (1984).

An inaugural meeting of Palmerston’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff took place in November 2015. This provided an opportunity to come together, tell their stories and share experiences. The meeting, facilitated by Danny Ford, provided the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff the opportunity to discuss what was working well for them at Palmerston and what could be improved. The conversations from this meeting have informed the development of this RAP.

We are delighted to have MOUs with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific organisations such as Nidjalla Waangan Mia, Moorditj Koort and the Southern Aboriginal Corporation and Aboriginal Alcohol and Drug Service (AADS).

Branches have recognised Sorry Day and celebrated NAIDOC week and follow cultural protocols, such as Welcome to Country, Acknowledgment of Country and

smoking ceremonies. Desk flags are visible in numerous branch reception areas. We recognise the traditional custodians on email signatures. Such examples of cultural acknowledgment are being embedded in the RAP.

An Aboriginal Cultural Security Guide was developed by Palmerston to improve our capacity to deliver culturally secure services. This was made available to other human services organisations.

At the Farm TC, a yarning circle and fire pit was built to encourage residents to share stories of culture and heritage. Significant art work has been produced by residents and displayed and the Aboriginal flag is flown.

Our Board is fortunate to have as one of its members a respected Aboriginal academic and national researcher.



The Reconciliation Action Plan is a great way to promote ‘togetherness’ and not only ‘talking’ but also ‘listening’ from all Australians.



Reconciliation is an opportunity to connect with our history, reflect on mistakes made and learn from each other. It’s a responsibility we all share.



Relationships

Palmerston Association believes it is imperative that we continue to build strong relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians in order to strengthen our response to people in need of our services.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
Palmerston RAP governance The RAP Working Group (RWG) actively monitors RAP implementation, including actions, tracking progress and reporting	CEO	Mar 2017	• Formally establish the RWG, comprising eight people with an equal number of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff, reporting to the CEO
	RWG members	May 2017	• Elect co-chairs of RWG
	Co-chairs of RWG	Jun 2017	• Establish Terms of Reference for the RWG
	Co-chairs of RWG	Apr, Oct 2017	• Meet at least six monthly to monitor and report on RAP implementation
	Co-chairs of RWG and Chairman	Mar 2017	• Oversees the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP
	Lead: CEO Drivers: managers Metro; South East; Great Southern; Residential services	Jul, Dec 2017 Jul, Dec 2018	• RAP objectives reported to the Board every six months and at the AGM
Aboriginal staff forum Establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff Forum	Aboriginal diversion worker and coordinator Thornlie	May 2017	• Aboriginal staff forum is established
	Chair and members of Forum	Jun 2017	• Establish Terms of Reference for the Aboriginal staff forum
	Chair and members of Forum	Jun, Oct 2017, Mar, Jun, Oct 2018, Feb 2019	• Minimum of three meetings per year with the Aboriginal staff forum

Note: throughout this section

'Each branch coordinator' refers to the coordinators of Fremantle, Rockingham, Mandurah, Perth, the Farm Therapeutic Community, Thornlie, Albany and Katanning. Each coordinator has responsibility for driving the relevant action and is accountable to their individual branch manager. Activities marked with an asterisk* are ongoing activities throughout the life of the RAP. However for reporting and tracking purposes, a September date has been used so that progress is captured in annual reporting.

Relationships (Continued)

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
<p>National Reconciliation Week (NRW) and Sorry Day Celebrate NRW by providing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and other employees to build relationships and recognise Sorry Day</p>	Each branch coordinator	May 2017, 2018, 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise at least one internal event for NRW each year Register our NRW event via Reconciliation Australia's NRW website Support an internal and/or external NRW event Ensure RWG participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW
<p>Relationships with communities Each branch develops appropriate and respectful connections with Elders, communities and organisations to create opportunities for joint projects and mutually beneficial outcomes including improved outcomes for Aboriginal consumers through targeted culturally competent service provision and higher engagement and retention levels in services.</p>	Each branch coordinator	Oct 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify, develop a list and contact local Elders belonging to each area
	Each branch coordinator	Nov 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific plans to be implemented in each location
	Each branch coordinator	Sep 2017, 2018*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing informal gatherings, such as morning teas on special occasions and smoking ceremonies
	<p>Lead: managers Metro; South East; Great Southern; Residential services Drivers: each branch coordinator</p>	Sep 2017, 2018*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement at a local level
	<p>Lead: managers Metro; South East; Great Southern; Residential services Drivers: each branch coordinator</p>	Sep 2017, 2018*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with Elders at least once per year to form relationships and seek advice
	<p>Lead: managers Metro; South East; Great Southern; Residential services Drivers: each branch coordinator</p>	Nov 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively identify opportunities to work in partnership with Aboriginal organisations we have developed relationships with including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AADS Nidjalla Waangan Mia staff exchanges with AADS (at least once a year) Moorditj Koort Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre Southern Aboriginal Corporation Langford Aboriginal Association Champion Centre

Relationships (Continued)

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
Relationships with communities (continued) Relationship building starts at the top and the Kwinana Elders have requested that the CEO and Chairman of the Board report back to the community on the implementation of the RAP	Lead: managers Metro; South East; Great Southern; Residential services Drivers: each branch coordinator	Nov 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for staff to visit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services on a day exchange (at least twice per year)
	CEO and Chairman of the Board	Sep 2017 and 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual meeting is held with the Elders
Raising awareness of Reconciliation Regular communications, sharing and distribution to raise internal and external awareness of Palmerston Association commitment to reconciliation	Chairman/ CEO	Mar 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch the RAP
	CEO's EA	Apr 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RAP is made available on website and distributed to key stakeholders and community leaders
	CEO/Co-chairs of RWG	Jun 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement and review a strategy to communicate RAP to all internal and external stakeholders • Promote reconciliation through ongoing active engagement with all stakeholders
Consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers Build strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and consumers to build trust within communities and to help shape and improve our services and our cultural competence	Managers Metro; South East; Great Southern; Residential services	Sep 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and explore ways Aboriginal consumers can provide feedback on how we can improve our services
	Each branch coordinator	Sep 2017, 2018*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers and communities are invited to informal gatherings at Palmerston
	Manager, Residential services	Nov 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for Farm program and staff to cater to Aboriginal family systems
	Manager Metro; South East; Great Southern; Residential services	Sep 2017 Sep 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measurable improved outcomes for Aboriginal consumers. Clients self report on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o improved relationships o improved health o reduction in alcohol and other drug use harm • Data shows increased number of clients

What does a Reconciliation Action Plan mean to our staff?

“ It is the first step in a process of breaking down entrenched barriers within services that hinder access to services by Aboriginal clients. ”

“ Reconciliation – hope for a better future, two parties coming together and peace from all cultures coming together living in harmony. ”

“ It shows genuine recognition that there is prejudice in Australia and this can be reflected in the workplace (often without thinking) and that hopefully this will help address that issue and bring genuine change for the better. ”

“ It is an essential recognition of cultural differences that should lead to better understanding, changes in work practices and attitudes. ”

Respect

Palmerston Association acknowledges the importance of culture and heritage to wellbeing and healing. We appreciate the opportunity to learn about, understand and share in these oldest living cultures and to celebrate these cultures.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
Aboriginal cultural protocols Engage employees in understanding the protocols around Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country ceremonies to ensure there is shared meaning behind the ceremonies	CEO, senior counsellor, Rockingham, each branch coordinator	Jul 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, which will guide all Palmerston's events, both formal and internal such as staff meetings, counselling groups
	Each branch coordinator	Aug 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all employees are aware of cultural protocols in place
	Each branch coordinator	Sep 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a list of key contacts for organising a Welcome to Country and maintaining respectful partnerships
	Each branch coordinator	Sep 2017, 2018*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traditional ceremonies such as 'Welcome to Country', 'Acknowledgement of Country' and smoking ceremonies performed at significant events as appropriate Include Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of important internal and external meetings
Cultural development Engage employees in cultural learning to increase understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements	Lead: CEO Drivers: managers Metro; South East; Great Southern; Residential services	Apr 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure cultural competency training is undertaken by all staff
	CFO	Jun and Dec 2017, 2018 Mar 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural training for all new staff is provided Cultural induction program is developed to reflect local Aboriginal environment Cultural induction program is included in organisational induction
	CEO		
	CFO	Dec 2018	
	CEO	Sep 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a cultural awareness training strategy for our staff which provides a deeper understanding of cultural learning
CFO	Oct 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate opportunities to work with local traditional owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultants to develop cultural awareness training 	
Recognise 50th anniversary of the 1967 referendum	Senior counsellor Rockingham	Apr 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop ideas for the recognition of the 1967 referendum

Respect (Continued)

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
Celebrating NAIDOC week Provide opportunities for Aboriginal employees to engage with culture and community through NAIDOC week events	CFO	Oct 2017	• Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC week
	Each branch coordinator; manager residential services	Jun 2017, 2018	• Support opportunities for employees to participate in NAIDOC week events
	Coordinator Katanning	Jun 2017	• Support the organisation of a NAIDOC Ball in Katanning
Create a culturally safe environment Create a culturally secure workplace environment that is welcoming and respectful to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	Managers Metro; South East; Great Southern; Residential services	Sep 2017	• Nyoongar artwork is displayed in all sites
	Each branch coordinator	Nov 2017	• Unfurl Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flag at the Farm TC during all significant, celebratory or ceremonial calendar events and display at other sites
	Each branch coordinator	Jun 2017	• Display desk flags in reception area
	CEO	Jun 2017	• Organise a display statement of Acknowledgement of Country
	Each branch coordinator	Aug 2017	• Ensure statement of Acknowledgement of Country is displayed in all offices
	CEO and co-chairs of RWG	Sep 2017	• Consult with the RWG on flags, language and plaques
	CEO	May 2017	• Develop an internal calendar of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance
	CEO's EA	Jun 2017	• Disseminate calendar to all staff
	Each branch coordinator	Sep 2017, 2018*	• Promote community events to branches
	CEO's EA	Sep 2017, 2018 Feb 2019	• Record activities at Corporate as a central point

Respect (Continued)

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
Board membership Ensure Aboriginal membership at Board level is maintained in order to reflect the importance of Aboriginal leadership at the highest level of governance	Chairman	Sep 2017 Sep 2018 Feb 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to ensure Board membership includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation • Aim to increase Aboriginal representation on the Board to two members by February 2019
Cultural standards Commit to consumer focused and culturally secure continuous quality improvement (CQI) of services	Lead: CEO Drivers: managers Metro; South East; Great Southern; Residential services	Bi-monthly from May 2017 to Feb 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous quality improvement of services against performance indicators prescribed by the Standard on Culturally Secure Practice, through the CQI process
	Lead: CEO Drivers: managers Metro; South East; Great Southern; Residential services and each branch coordinator	Dec 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of accreditation status

“
 The RAP should help us give back the power and ownership of counselling process and recovery work to our Indigenous clients.
 ”

“
 The RAP is important to teach/advise/inform staff of different values, social norms and cultural structures to make our service more culturally appropriate.
 ”

“
 It is an important step towards honouring our Aboriginal staff and embracing Aboriginal culture in our work and personally.
 ”

Opportunities

Palmerston Association seeks to improve employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within its workforce and to develop our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff into leadership positions. Adopting different ways of recruitment and retention to increase the number of Aboriginal staff is another aim of the organisation. We also believe that by improving our cultural awareness, we will be more responsive to the needs of Aboriginal people in our service. This will in the long term assist in opening up opportunities for our clients.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing Investigate opportunities within our organisation to increase and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees	CFO	Apr 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review HR procedures and policies to ensure there are no systemic barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees seeking opportunities and development
	Each branch coordinator	Jan 2018, 2019 Apr 2017, 2018 Jul 2017, 2018 Aug 2017, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on employment strategies, including professional development
	Managers Metro; South East; Great Southern; Residential services	Sep 2017, 2018*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot different approaches to increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within Palmerston
	CEO	Oct 2017, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer two places to the National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Conference (NIDAC)
	Managers Metro; South East; Great Southern; Residential services	Jun 2017, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Endeavour to achieve 10% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce
	Managers Metro; South East; Great Southern; Residential services	Oct 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Job Description Forms and adverts for Aboriginal specific positions to ensure they are appropriately worded and reflective of the job required to be done
	CFO	Sep 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and retention strategy, including reference to the WANADA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment and retention guide and connecting with key Aboriginal employment and training groups

Opportunities (Continued)

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing (continued)	CEO's EA	Mar 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job adverts include 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are strongly encouraged to apply' • Consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, on the most appropriate and effective advertising avenue to target Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
	Managers Metro; South East; Great Southern; Residential services	Mar 2017 to Feb 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include Aboriginal staff in recruitment processes for new Aboriginal specific positions
	CEO	Jan 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with tertiary and further education institutions to explore student placements and/or as a source for future employees
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander career development Personal development opportunities for Aboriginal staff employed at Palmerston, including leadership and professional development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff	Each branch coordinator	Mar 2017 to Feb 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff into leadership positions
	CFO	Jan 2018, 2019 Apr 2017, 2018 Jul 2017, 2018 Aug 2017, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate personal and professional development opportunities and goals for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, by monitoring training needs as outlined in the performance appraisal
	CEO	Jan 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore partnerships with universities for counselling scholarships for Palmerston followed up with a commitment to employment
Supply diversity Investigate opportunities to increase supplier diversity.	CFO	Sep 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review procurement policies to identify any barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses
	CFO	Jan 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore at least one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business
	Managers Metro; South East; Great Southern; Residential services	Oct 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and communicate to staff a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses that can be used to procure goods and services • Investigate Supply Nation membership

Opportunities (Continued)

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
Working with clients and families Ensure that clinical practice is informed by a Nyoongar world view, as described and explained in the Looking Forward Project research	Managers with CEO	Jun 2017	• Liaise with the Looking Forward Project team to describe 'Nyoongar world view' and its relevance to practice
	Coordinators	Sep 2017, 2018	• Increased engagement of Aboriginal consumers in the service each year of the implementation of the RAP (baseline 7% - as at 1 March 2017)
	Coordinators	Sep 2017, 2018*	• Improved referral pathways with Aboriginal organisations

Tracking progress and reporting

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
Report achievements, challenges and learnings to Reconciliation Australia for inclusion in the Annual Impact Measurement Report.	CEO	Sep 2017 Sep 2018	• Complete and submit the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia annually
	CEO	Jun 2018	• Investigate participating in the RAP barometer
Ensure RAP progress, implementation, achievements and challenges is shared externally and internally	Managers Metro; South East, Great Southern, Residential services	Jul 2017 Jan, Jul 2018 Jan 2019	• Ensure funders are informed of the RAP through Palmerston's compliance reports
	CEO	Sep 2017 Sep 2018	• Publically report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings in annual report
Review, refresh and update RAP	CEO	Mar 2018	• Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements
	CEO	Nov 2018	• Send updated RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal feedback and endorsement
Chairman and CEO to report to Elders	CEO and Chairman	Oct 2017, 2018	• Annual meeting is held

Board members, Staff, Elders and others involved in the development of this RAP

Abbigale Rutigliano	Gareth Griffiths	Mel McAleer	Danny Ford (Kambarang Services)
Alan Ferris	Harold Miller	Meryl Hansen	Doris Getta (Elder, Kwinana)
Anna Stearne	Helen McDonnell	Noelene Johnson	Gabrielle Hansen (Elder, Katanning)
Ben Headlam	Ingrid Coomer	Patricia Morrison	Garry Ryder (Elder, Katanning)
Bram Dickens	Jeremy Quan-Sing	Paula Wood	Graham Eades (Elder, Katanning)
Carlo Bellini	Jeremy Rigg	Roger Pickett	James Back (Reconciliation WA)
Charlotte Kuhlman	Judy Alcock	Sandra Harris	Lorna Hunter (AADS)
Chelsea Simon	Julie Wager	Sandy Davidson	Marg O'Connell (Looking Forward Project)
Craig Wright	Kate James	Sheila McHale	May Penny (Elder, Tambellup)
Danielle Prongue	Kate Lolohea	Sherry McLaughlin	Michael Winton (AADS)
Dave O'Neill	Katherine Papas	Terry Slomp	Michael Wright (Looking Forward Project)
Deb Slade	Kim MacNaughton	Tony Silipo	Rose Walley (Looking Forward Project)
Elaine King	Louise Forster	Trish Hitchins	Tamika Townsend (Reconciliation Australia)
Emma Rose James	Luke Caddin	Wendy Shannon	Tanya Jones (Looking Forward Project)
Emma Thomas	Marcia Gerrard	Beth Parkin (Reconciliation Australia)	Theresa Walley (Elder, Kwinana)
Francisco Rodriguez	Mareese McLoughlin	Charlie Kickett (Elder, Kwinana)	Ursula Swan (Mental Health Commission)

“ A way forward and an understanding of each other’s cultures and respect for different beliefs and a bringing together of people. ”

“ Reconciliation to me means acknowledging the past whilst looking to the future with the hope of both healing and embracing unity, respect and equity for all Australians. ”

“ Cultural awareness is an integral part of our work, hopefully the RAP will reflect that work. Without it we are not going to be culturally effective. ”

Contact details

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Artwork by Mrs Gabrielle Hansen
(description provided on page 2)

