

Department of Health

Office of Aboriginal Health

Reconciliation Action Plan

2008 - 2013

THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HEALTH SYSTEM
AFFIRMS OUR COMMITMENT TO RECONCILE WITH ABORIGINAL
AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE THROUGH
STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS AND CREATING NEW WAYS OF
WORKING

The Western Australian Government Health System values the rich and vibrant cultures we share in our land of many peoples. We unite with all Western Australians as we embark together upon our Journey of Healing toward the vision for:

*'A united Australia, which respects this land of ours,
values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage
and provides justice and equity for all'.*

THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HEALTH SYSTEM VALUES AND RESPECTS:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the First People, belonging to the land and sea of Australia for more than fifty thousand years.
- The spiritual wisdom of Aboriginal Culture that has survived through great adversity to remain one of the oldest living cultures in the world.
- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander holistic view of health, which connects the Mind, Body, Heart, Soul, Spirit, Environment and Culture of the whole person, to their family and their community through strong links with the land and sea.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander views, beliefs, rights, and customs.



THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HEALTH SYSTEM:

- **Acknowledges Past Policies and Injustices** against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, including colonisation without consent, dispossession of land, separation of children from families, assimilation, segregation and discrimination.
- **Acknowledges and supports the Apology** to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, including the Stolen Generation for the mental, social, emotional, physical and cultural pain and suffering caused by the shared involvement of our health system in these past policies and injustices.
- **Recognises the Continued Impact** these past policies and injustices have on the disturbing level of ill-health and disadvantage among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families and communities, which is many times that of the wider community.
- **Acknowledges Our Shared Responsibility for Action** to heal the wounds of past injustice and building on the positive initiatives of many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations by:

Improving our Understanding of the impact of past actions on the present and the future.
Enhancing our awareness of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander holistic view of health that links the mental, physical, emotional, social, environmental and cultural aspects of health and well-being of the person, the family and the community through linkages with the land and sea.

As we reach beyond the boundaries of western health care, the Western Australian Government Health System especially values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander holistic view of health in developing a health system that respects the views, beliefs, rights, and customs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Western Australian Government Health System affirms our commitment to strengthening partnerships and creating new ways of working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People that are based on our shared values of:

Respect, Acceptance, Honesty, Openness, Patience, Trust and Good Faith.

Our RAP

Our RAP was developed through consultation with our Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff of the Office of Aboriginal Health and assistance from the Department of Indigenous Affairs. Consultation was also undertaken with the Executive Directors of Area Health Services. The RAP will be open to further consultative and feedback processes when published on the Department of Health website.

Monitoring and Public Reporting...

The Department's Executive will monitor the actions identified in this Reconciliation Action Plan. Progress against the various indicators will be reported on in the Department's Annual Report and on the Reconciliation Australia website

Relationships – Working together to build a stronger future.			
Focus Area: Healthy Workforce and Leadership			
Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
Establish a Working Group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff members to monitor and report to Corporate Executive on progress of implementing the RAP.	Office of Aboriginal Health	From April 2008	Working Group to meet at least 4 times a year to review RAP implementation and report on progress.
Support and consult the WA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker Association.	Office of Aboriginal Health	From 2006 19 & 20 Feb 2008	Continued funding committed by the Department. Provide funding for the inaugural Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker conference.
NAIDOC and National Reconciliation Weeks events.	Office of Aboriginal Health	Annually from May 2008 to 2013	Event participation by Department of Health staff. Staff are notified by Global emails of functions and encouraged to attend.
Develop and establish metropolitan interagency forum for Department of Health Aboriginal employees to improve sector networking and sharing of information on Aboriginal health issues and priorities.	Office of Aboriginal Health	Established July 2008 Quarterly from July 2008	Formation of Committee to guide the establishment of the Network. Report to the Department Executive on actions taken on the issues raised.
Focus Area: Healthy Partnerships			
Disseminate the findings of the first National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework Report 2006 throughout the department. The Health Performance Framework measures	Office for Aboriginal Health All divisions	From December 2007 Monthly	Facilitate monthly meetings on the findings of the first report of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework to discuss implications for policy and program

Continue reform of Industrial Award conditions in support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees by including Cultural/Ceremonial leave provisions in Health Department Awards.	Health Industrial Relations Service	Review annually	Awards continue to include Cultural /Ceremonial conditions.
Acknowledge traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander custodianship of the land at major functions and events. Fly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags.	All divisions	Annual/ Ongoing Ongoing	Acknowledge traditional owners at events and functions. Display/fly the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags with the Australian flag at departmental premises all year round.

Opportunities – Reducing Inequalities in Health, Maximising Health outcomes.

Focus Area: Healthy Workforce and Leadership

Provide career development opportunities and increase our intakes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, including graduates, cadets and trainees providing a variety of placements.	All divisions	Annual review July 2008 Annually in January each year Annually between January and March	A target of 2.8% increase in the recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health professionals has been set for the 2007/08 financial year. This will be reviewed at the commencement of the 2008/09 financial year and a new target will be set. Provide 2 placement opportunities through the Graduate Development Program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. Offer a minimum of 20 scholarships each year through the Office of Aboriginal Health Scholarship Program.
Develop, implement and review annually the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Framework.	Office of Aboriginal Health and All Divisions	Quarterly	Formation of Steering Committee to monitor and review progress of Framework implementation. 4 x meetings per year. Include progress statement in Department of Health Annual Report
Provide secondment opportunities for up to one year between Area Health Services, AMS's and OAH for staff to	All Divisions	From Jan 2008	Provide detail of placements in Office of Aboriginal Health Business plan.

"Make the Health of Aboriginal People Everybody's Business".			
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Tracking Progress and Reporting			
Actions	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
Launch of DOH RAP	Office of Aboriginal Health	March 2008	RAP launched through the Global email messaging system.
Publish the DOH's RAP on our website and the Reconciliation Australia website. Provide regular updates on implementation process.	Office of Aboriginal Health	April 2008	RAP published and placed on the DOH and Reconciliation Australia website, reported on annually, and updated as actions completed.
Review and report on the Current RAP and develop successive plans	Office of Aboriginal Health	January 2008 Annually	Report on RAP annually to Reconciliation Australia Refreshed RAP developed and provided to Reconciliation Australia annually.

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Reconciliation Australia
 RECONCILIATION ACTION PLANS