

# Aboriginal Employment Plan 2019-2021

The Women's Aboriginal Employment Plan 2019-2021 is a key component of our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan and articulates our commitment to the diversity of our staff, and staff who are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. It provides a pathway for the Women's to strengthen our partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal community. This plan builds on the work that we have developed with previous Aboriginal Employment Plans.

The Women's Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan is underpinned by our genuine commitment to promote reconciliation by building relationships, respect, and trust between the Women's and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, their families, and communities.

The plan is structured around Reconciliation Australia's framework of relationships, respect and opportunities.

To advance on these core pillars, we will:

- Promote culturally safe practices across our organisation to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and babies receive high quality, accessible, and culturally appropriate care

- Strengthen our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, communities, Elders, and organisations
- Increase and improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment opportunities at the Women's
- Increase our organisational understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, customs, and identities.

To read the Women's Reconciliation Action Plan, visit: [www.thewomens.org.au/RAP](http://www.thewomens.org.au/RAP)

## Acknowledgment of traditional owners

The Royal Women's Hospital acknowledges and pays respect to the peoples of the Kulin Nations, the Traditional Owners of the Country on which our sites at Parkville and Sandringham stand and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

The Women's is committed to improving health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, children and families and we recognise the fundamental significance of cultural traditions, beliefs and connection to Country for the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We acknowledge the importance of kinship and family structures as a cohesive force that binds Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and we recognise their cultures, community connection, and self-determination as critical protective factors for wellbeing.

## Achievements to date

**Since 2012, the Women's has developed Aboriginal Employment Plans in line with the Victorian State Government's commitment in Kareeta Yirramboi to improve the employment and career development opportunities for Aboriginal people.**

Under our Aboriginal Employment Plan, we set out to increase employment participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to 1% of our workforce by 2015. Under our 2012-2015 AEP, a number of specialised employment pathways were established and expanded for our Aboriginal workforce including:

- Graduate Nurse and Midwifery Program
- Victorian Aboriginal Allied Health Cadetship.

The completion and retention rate for these professional student support programs are encouraging. Approximately 73% of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees recruited through these pathways are still employed at the Women's, whilst the completion rate for the fixed term 12 month programs is at 87%. The Women's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce grew from 0.1% in 2012 to 0.6% of our workforce in 2019.

Integral to the development of these employment pathways were the initiatives we undertook to support the employment and retention of Aboriginal staff.

These initiatives included:

- A review and revision of the recruitment policy to ensure there was a supportive environment for Aboriginal applicants in applying for a position at the Women's. This included the development of a procedure of support for resume development and interview preparation for all staff who identify as Aboriginal.
- Recognising that providing a culturally safe workplace is critical in the engagement of Aboriginal staff. Work was undertaken to enhance the cultural competence of the staff in the clinical areas where Aboriginal staff would be working.
- Commencing work with secondary schools in the development of a work experience program specifically for Aboriginal students. This program has worked with the schools to promote the health industry as a possible avenue for further study and employment.
- The development of some short videos which are promoted on the Women's website featuring some of our Aboriginal staff and what it means to them to be an Aboriginal staff member at the Women's.
- The introduction of mechanisms to monitor the percentage of our workforce who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, including reporting annually to the Board.

Whilst we are excited and proud of these results, we know more work needs to be done to build on the momentum that has started within our organisation. We anticipate that this Aboriginal Employment Plan will help us continue to grow a workforce that represents the diversity of the community we serve.



# Aboriginal Employment Plan 2019-2021

In line with our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), the Women's Aboriginal Employment Plan 2019-2021 will focus on relationships, opportunities, and respect. Each deliverable will work towards:

- Improved recruitment and selection process
- Capability building
- Ongoing engagement and retention of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.

## Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>Provide greater mentoring support and opportunities to come together to share ideas, stories and knowledge about how Aboriginal people can be more supported to follow their education, training and employment pathways.</b>	Establish support infrastructure to enable our Aboriginal employees to share their experience and develop their cultural capabilities through an Aboriginal staff support network and mentoring program.	Commence January 2020	Coordinator Badjurr-Bulok Wilam
	Continue to establish links with secondary schools to ensure Aboriginal students are learning about the career opportunities in health.	May 2021	Director People and Patient Experience
<b>Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.</b>	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination and conduct a review of the Women's policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions and future needs.	December 2020	Director People and Patient Experience
<b>Strengthen our commitment to closing the gap by establishing a governance structure to champion and enhance Aboriginal employment.</b>	Establish an Aboriginal Employment subgroup who will report to the People Culture and Engagement Sub Committee of the Board on the implementation of the RAP.	March 2020	Director People and Patient Experience

## Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>2% of our staff identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.</b>	Build an understanding of the current needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	June 2020	Director People and Patient Experience
	Develop a notification function in our recruitment platform so that when an applicant identifies as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, we can proactively contact them to offer recruitment assistance.	July 2020	Director People and Patient Experience
	Develop the Aboriginal employment page on the intranet highlighting key achievements.	June 2020	Director People and Patient Experience
	Build upon our relationships and partnerships with Aboriginal support units at universities, Aboriginal health organisations and the Aboriginal community to continue to develop pathways in graduate employment.	December 2020	Director People and Patient Experience and Manager Clinical Education Program

## Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>Raise Aboriginal cultural competency and awareness that helps non-Indigenous people to understand value and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.</b>	Develop a business case for increasing understanding value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	July 2020	Director People and Patient Experience
	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	August 2020	Director People and Patient Experience
	Deliver cultural awareness and cultural competency training to Women's staff and volunteers via e-learning and in partnership with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations.	May 2021	Director People and Patient Experience
	Train managers in recruiting methods for Aboriginal staff and ensure culturally appropriate policies and procedures such as ceremonial leave.	May 2021	Director People and Patient Experience