

Ballarat Community Health Ltd

Reconciliation Action Plan

INNOVATE: JULY 2026 – JUNE 2028





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Pictured (cover): Banksia spinulosa growing at BCH's Cooinda site. Photo by Ballarat Community Health.

Pictured (above): The Reflect Garden at BCH's Cooinda wsite. Photo by Craig Spurr.

Acknowledgement

Ballarat Community Health (BCH) would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live, learn, and provide care – the Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Djab Wurrung, Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk Peoples. We recognise their deep and enduring connection to Country, community, culture, and healing.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. As healthcare providers and members of this community, we honour the knowledge systems that have supported the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for generations.

We commit ourselves to listening, learning, and walking together on the journey toward genuine reconciliation – where culturally safe care, equity, and truth-telling are central to our practice and relationships. May our work contribute to healing and to a future grounded in respect, justice, and shared responsibility.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ACCOS Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations

BADAC Ballarat & District Aboriginal Cooperative

BCH Ballarat Community Health

CEO Chief Executive Officer

DEI Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

NAIDOC National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee

RAP Reconciliation Action Plan

RAPWG Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group

A message from our Chair & CEO

We are delighted to share the Ballarat Community Health Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2026-2028. This RAP sets out BCH's continued commitment to progress strategies which are inclusive and empowering of First Nations people in our workplaces and community.

This is a second Innovate RAP for Ballarat Community Health, building on the commitments and achievements of previous plans. Each RAP has taken us further along the path of reconciliation through growing relationships, respect, and inclusion. We believe we have made genuine progress toward culturally safe and inclusive practices, and fostering positive relationships with our First Nations community in Ballarat and beyond. However, there is always more that can be done.

The Innovate RAP 2026-2028 provides opportunity for a deeper understanding of our sphere of influence, and the ways we can further engage stakeholders to develop and test strategies which meaningfully advance reconciliation.

BCH strives to provide services and environments which meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, fostering trust that their voices will be heard. Feeling safe and welcomed is a cornerstone of successful healthcare. By ensuring our services are culturally safe and inclusive, we are inviting First Nations community members to feel understood, valued, and respected, leading to improved engagement and wellbeing outcomes.

The deliverables of this Innovate RAP are guided by four key pillars: Relationships, Respect, Opportunities, and Governance. We want to work in partnership to achieve these objectives, recognising that reconciliation is a collective effort. In the delivery of this RAP, BCH invites guidance from our First Nations community on strategies which create inclusion and empowerment, to reduce barriers and inequity which exist across our country. We want to learn from and respect the shared knowledge and histories, resilience and self-determination of Australia's First Peoples – the oldest continuous living culture in the world.

The BCH Executive and RAP Working Group will have stewardship of the Innovate RAP, monitoring the progress of deliverables, influencing change, and identifying future opportunities. We sincerely thank members of the RAP Working Group for their important role, particularly the time, experience, and insights provided by Traditional Owners and external members.

BCH also recognises the valued guidance and support of Reconciliation Australia in the development of this Innovate RAP. We thank each person who has contributed to BCH's reconciliation journey to date, as well as each person who will be involved in this Plan's implementation.

Over the next two years, every person at BCH has a role to play in reconciliation. The BCH Innovate RAP 2026-2028 will guide these efforts, translating our intention into action.



Sean Duffy
Chief Executive Officer

Dr Jessie Harman AM (PhD)
Board Chair

From Karen Mundine, Reconciliation Australia's CEO



Pictured: Reconciliation Australia's CEO, Karen Mundine. Image supplied by Reconciliation Australia.

Reconciliation Australia commends Ballarat Community Health on the formal endorsement of its second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

With over 5.5 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. Ballarat Community Health continues to be part of a strong network of more than 3,000 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and transformed it into action.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners

to continuously strengthen reconciliation commitments and constantly strive to apply learnings in new ways.

An Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey. It is a time to build the strong foundations and relationships that ensure sustainable, thoughtful, and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

An integral part of building these foundations is reflecting on and cataloguing the successes and challenges of previous RAPs. Learnings gained through effort and innovation are invaluable resources that Ballarat Community Health will continuously draw upon to create RAP commitments rooted in experience and maturity.

These learnings extend to Ballarat Community Health using the lens of reconciliation to better understand its core business, sphere of influence, and diverse community of staff and stakeholders.

The RAP program's emphasis on *relationships, respect, and opportunities* gives organisations a framework from which to foster connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples rooted in mutual collaboration and trust.

This Innovate RAP is an opportunity for Ballarat Community Health to strengthen these relationships, gain crucial experience, and nurture connections that will become the lifeblood of its future RAP commitments. By enabling and

empowering staff to contribute to this process, Ballarat Community Health will ensure shared and cooperative success in the long-term.

Gaining experience and reflecting on pertinent learnings will ensure the sustainability of Ballarat Community Health's future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, providing meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Ballarat Community Health on your second Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine

Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

Artwork commissioned

At the start of 2026, Ballarat Community Health advertised to young First Nations artists, encouraging and inviting expressions of interest. Three artists have been shortlisted and commissioned to create pieces from which BCH will select artwork to be incorporated into our RAP as well as for future use in related documents and spaces.

The three artists shortlisted are:

- **Ashleigh Kanoa** – a proud Gunditjamara young person.
- **Nioka Nalder** – a proud Wamba Wamba, Mutthi Mutthi and Yorta Yorta young person.
- **Amaiyah Edwards** – a proud Dja Dja Wurrung young person

Artwork will be incorporated and unveiled at a launch event later in the year.

Our vision for reconciliation

Ballarat Community Health's main vision for our role in reconciliation is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, along with all other communities, achieve the best possible health and wellbeing outcomes. By committing to our Innovate RAP, it enables us to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in an authentic way to bring meaningful, tangible, and sustainable results in support of First Nations' reconciliation through a person-centred approach.

One of the primary goals of our organisation is to address the health inequity and inequality across the community, to have real and lasting impact, and to be sustainable. We want to work in partnership with the Ballarat community, especially the Wadawarrung First Nations Community, to create opportunities and supportive environments that develop and maintain optimal health and wellbeing.



BCH shares Reconciliation Australia's vision of a reconciled, just, and equitable Australia; an Australia where the voices, experiences and ideas of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are central, and where health inequities are proactively addressed.

Pictured: The black swan holds cultural significance in many Dreamtime stories across Victoria. In one story, Waa the Crow gifted his own black feathers to an injured white swan, transforming it into the bird we know today. This story speaks to generosity, connection, care for others, and the strength that comes from community. We have chosen this image as a symbol of respect, belonging, and our commitment to walking together. Image supplied by Tourism Midwest.

Our business

Ballarat Community Health is a regional healthcare organisation committed to creating healthy communities through the provision of accessible, affordable, and quality health and wellbeing across Ballarat and the Central Highlands. With a workforce of approximately 300 employees, BCH delivers a broad range of health and community services from six locations across the region, while also offering vital outreach services to ensure accessibility for all.

As an inclusive and community-driven organisation, BCH currently employs three Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and recognises the importance of cultural safety and representation within the workplace. Our core business is healthcare, and we engage with both internal staff and a wide network of external stakeholders, including clients, community groups, service partners, and government agencies. Through this integrated approach, BCH plays a significant role in shaping healthier communities across the region.

Our reconciliation journey

We are developing a second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to build on the strong foundations since beginning our RAP journey in 2018. Our commitment to Reconciliation is long-standing and deeply embedded, with initiatives such as the formation of the Ballarat Reconciliation Action Network (BRAN), which supports other local organisations on their RAP journey. This next phase reaffirms our dedication to strengthening relationships, respect, and opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, both within our organisation and the wider community. Our RAP is championed by CEO Sean Duffy and the Executive Team. The RAP Working Group includes a diverse mix of internal and external voices, such as Bonnie Chew from Mirriyu Consulting and Rachel Muir from Catholic Care, as well as staff from across BCH, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Ballarat Community Health has made significant progress in delivering on our first Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan, a living document which relates to the initiatives and actions across BCH in its journey towards reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

We have continued to work hard to ensure that our RAP actions are embedded across the organisation in a way that is genuine and authentic. We are continually learning more about what is required from us as an organisation, and as individuals, including our role in reconciliation. We're very proud of the progress we've made to date, and we are committed to continuing our journey to do better as an organisation in providing a culturally safe environment and in influencing positive change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and communities. With our intent to undertake a second innovate RAP, we hope to build on our current momentum to continue progressing meaningful action towards reconciliation and building on the strength and resilience of First Nations peoples.

As a healthcare organisation, we will actively work towards Closing the Gap, with a focus on the following targets:

Outcome 1: Everyone enjoys long and healthy lives

Outcome 2: Children are born healthy and strong

Outcome 4: Children thrive in their early years

Outcome 7: Youth are engaged in employment or engagement

Outcome 13: Families and households are safe

Outcome 14: People enjoy high levels of social and emotional wellbeing

Outcome 17: People have access to information and services enabling participation in informed decision-making regarding their own lives.

Some highlights from our most recent Innovate RAP are as follows:

- Staff were able to partake in a Walk on Country hosted by Shannen Mennen (Wadawurrung Traditional Owners) through the Lal Lal and Moorabool falls. This took place on the Eve of National Sorry Day. Staff were able to explore the lands of Bunjil, investigate Scare Trees, and connect with the rich history of the lands they walked on.
- Our organisation connected with community through our engagement with BADAC. Most notably in support of their annual Community Day event, hosted in recognition of NAIDOC Week.
- We formalised an organisation wide 'Acknowledgement of Country' and protocol document, creating easy to use and visual lanyard cards.
- We developed and implemented a staff engagement strategy which raised and encouraged Reconciliation, both internally and externally whilst supporting Yes23.

- We continued to advocate for and supported staff to take an alternate day off in lieu of January 26th.
- We became a founding member of the Ballarat Reconciliation Action Network (BRAN) – a network created to support and assist organisations within the Ballarat Community to successfully implement and drive their RAPs.
- Conducted a full audit of all policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs, as well as publicly release our Statement of Commitment – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reconciliation.
- We strengthened our engagement in the procurement of goods and services within First Nations organisations.
- We commissioned bespoke artwork from Wotjobaluk Peter Kennedy ‘Dalguna Tyerrang’ which told a story of healing together, this artwork has been used in our annual report, acknowledgement of country cards, in key areas of sites (CEO office, Boardroom, Cooinda) and also on staff BCH polo shirts.

Pictured (right): Scenery from the staff walk on Country with Shannen Mennen at Moorabool Falls, Lal Lal. Photo by Ballarat Community Health.



Our Reconciliation Action Plan

Our Reconciliation Action Plan provides a clear and meaningful framework for BCH to strengthen its commitment to reconciliation and deepen respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, Organisations, and Communities. Through our Innovate RAP, BCH seeks to embed understanding, respect, and cultural safety across all areas of our organisation, ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are considered in everything we do.

Working in partnership with local First Nations voices, BCH aims to deliver culturally safe, coordinated health services that complement rather than duplicate existing supports. Our RAP

supports improved outcomes by building workforce capability, nurturing inclusive workplaces, reducing inequities in health, education and employment, and challenging structural barriers that perpetuate disadvantage.

Guided by the pillars of Relationships and Respect, and overseen by our RAP Working Group, this plan reflects BCH's ongoing commitment to learning, truth-telling, and action. Through strong partnerships, cultural understanding, and sustainable business practices, BCH strives to contribute to meaningful, lasting reconciliation for the communities we serve.

*Pictured: The Reflect Garden at BCH's Cooina site.
Photo by Ballarat Community Health.*

Our working group



Sponsor for the RAP

Sean Duffy, Chief Executive Officer



RAP Coordinator/Lead

Claire Shaw, Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement

RAP Working Group will continue to include a diverse mix of internal and external voices, led by members of our Senior Leaders and staff from across BCH, including those with lived experience as members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and external First Nations advisors, including longstanding RAP Working Group partners, Bonnie Chew from Mirriyu Consulting and Rachel Muir from Catholic Care.



Pictured: BCH staff walk on Country with Shannen Mennen at Moorabool Falls, Lal Lal. In Wadawurrung, 'Lal Lal' translates to 'dashing of waters'. Photo by Ballarat Community Health.

Relationships

Building strong relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians is critical to the work of Ballarat Community Health and aligns directly with our strategic purpose of creating healthy communities. As a holistic health care organisation, our focus is on both mental and physical health, and we recognise that fostering meaningful connections between all community members – especially First Nations peoples – is essential to achieving health equity and improving outcomes for everyone.

Ultimately, strong relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider community support our goal of creating healthier, more inclusive, and resilient communities. By fostering mutual respect and collaboration, we can better address the health disparities faced by First Nations Peoples and work towards a more equitable future for all.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Continue to meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.	June 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEO (lead) Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement (support)
	Develop and implement an engagement activities register to identify and track work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	June 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement (lead) Executive Managers Community and Public Health and Primary Care and Ageing (support)
	Update and action the BCH Partnering with Consumers Framework to include consultation with traditional owners/First Nations people regarding the delivery of relevant community projects and programs.	June 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEO (lead) Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement (support)
	Meet annually with key stakeholders and Aboriginal health providers to better understand each other's key priorities, share relevant information, and strengthen relationships.	July, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEO (lead) Executive Managers Community and Public Health and Primary Care and Ageing (support)
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Develop a communications strategy to support all sites to participate in NRW activities.	1 April, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May – 3 June annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement
	Encourage and support staff, Executive Members and the Leadership Committee to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May – 3 June annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement
	Organise at least one NRW event each year.	27 May – 3 June annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement
	Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	May, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Review and improve staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforces.	July 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement
	Enhance our intranet page to include further information for managers and employees about how they can participate in reconciliation initiatives throughout the year and support their teams to engage in reconciliation initiatives.	September 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Provide 'year in review' document highlighting our achievements and challenges to date.	August, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	Publicly demonstrate our ongoing commitment to reconciliation on our website, in our publications and at our sites and through further actions during dates of significance throughout the year.	August, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement
	Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	Quarterly from 1 July 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement (lead) • Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement (support)
	Continue to collaborate with other like-minded organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation and seek out opportunities to learn from good practice examples in other RAP organisations.	Quarterly from 1 July 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement
	Continue to engage with other like-minded organisations, via the BRAN (Ballarat Reconciliation Action Network) to seek opportunities to learn from each other and good practice examples, to continue progressing our reconciliation journey.	Quarterly from 1 July 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Continue to review People and Culture policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs, benchmarked and reviewed where appropriate by community.	January, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Manager, People & Culture (lead) • Quality & Governance Team (support)
	Continue to communicate and make accessible our anti-discrimination policy.	January, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Manager, People & Culture (lead) • Communication and Engagement Officer (support)
	Continue to offer the option for employees to take an alternative public holiday to January 26th (voluntary).	January, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Manager, People & Culture (lead) • Communication and Engagement Officer (support)
	Explore Ballarat Community Health becoming a signatory to the <i>There's nothing casual about racism</i> campaign.	30 June 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement
	Update BCH Values and Behaviours training module to include information on the effects of racism.	December 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Officer
	Equip our senior leaders on the most recent conversations and research surrounding the effects of racism.	December, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement (lead) • Quality Officer (support)



Pictured: Lake Wendouree, one of three significant lakes in the region. Image supplied by Tourism Midwest.

Respect

Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights is fundamental to the core business of Ballarat Community Health. Truly understanding the unique experiences, values, and traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is essential to providing culturally appropriate healthcare. It enables our staff and broader community to develop a deep appreciation for these cultures and the challenges faced by First Nations Peoples, including the impacts of colonisation, dispossession, and systemic inequality. This understanding allows us to provide more effective and sensitive health services.

Cultural safety is a cornerstone of successful healthcare delivery. By adapting our services to be culturally appropriate and inclusive, we ensure that First Nations clients feel understood, valued, and respected, which can lead to improved engagement with our health services. Respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples also means advocating for their rights, including their right to self-determination, cultural expression, and access to equitable health services.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights through cultural learning.	Develop annual calendar of significant dates the organisation will celebrate to promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Wellbeing.	January, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement
	Develop a communication plan for increasing organisational awareness and sharing of significant dates around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, and achievements.	1 January 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement
	Look for opportunities to incorporate Wadawurrung language and First Nations artwork across our sites and facilities and publications.	1 January 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement
	Continue to review & enhance our cultural learning strategy in consultation with local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors.	1 January 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement
	Develop further Acknowledgement of Country resources for meeting rooms and corporate documents.	30 September 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Educate staff about the importance of including Language Groups, Traditional Lands and Aboriginal Place Names into client records	June 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Manager Community and Public Health (lead) Senior Manager Systems, Data and Projects (support)
	Provide mentoring and training to support staff to Ask the Question for identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients so that appropriate cultural support can be arranged if required.	31 December 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality Officer
	Continue to build awareness and communicate with team members about BCH's cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country and Inclusive Language.	1 July 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement
	Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	Annually, where required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement
	Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	Daily, where required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Managers (lead) Executive Business Partner (support)

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement (lead) Communication and Engagement Officer (support)
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	Review organisational policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	April, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Manager, People and Culture Quality Officer (support)
	Collaborate with leadership team to promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff.	First week in June, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement
	Undertake a comprehensive review of BCH service access points and client pathways to identify and remove barriers experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, including cultural, procedural, and practical barriers and implement co-designed solutions that support culturally safe, timely access to care.	June 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement (lead) Executive Manager Community and Public Health and Executive Manager Primary Care and Ageing (support)

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Ensure Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients and their families receive culturally safe, appropriate, and timely care.	Develop a communications plan to externally promote BCH's culturally safe services, programs, and supports available to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	June 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement (lead)
	Look to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in BCH consumer and advisory groups, or consultation forums, where possible to help shape service quality, accessibility, and client experience.	October, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement (lead) Executive Managers Community and Public Health and Primary Care and Ageing (support)
	Include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in the promotion of at least 50% of any new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health initiatives and observances being facilitated.	June 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement (lead)



Pictured: Building entrance to BCH Cooinda. The word 'Cooinda' translates to 'happy place'. Photo by Ballarat Community Health.

Opportunities

Ensuring that we actively engage and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our workforce, services, and partnerships is crucial to our commitment to the Ballarat Community. A diverse workforce enriches our organisation and contributes to more accessible and high-quality health services. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff bring essential cultural insight and lived experience, helping build trust with First Nations community members and deliver a culturally responsive and effective healthcare experience.

We place great value on developing strong, collaborative relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities. These partnerships are crucial to delivering health services that are responsive to the needs of First Nations peoples.

This RAP focuses on First Nations data sovereignty – the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to govern the collection, access, and use of their own data. It recognises the importance of self-determination and cultural authority in shaping outcomes that impact communities.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development.	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	January 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Manager, People and Culture (lead) Business Partner – Employee Experience (support)
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention, and professional development strategy.	June 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Partner – Employee Experience
	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development strategy.	June 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Manager, People and Culture (lead) Business Partner – Employee Experience (support)
	Engage with relevant training and employment organisations to provide student placement and future employment opportunities.	June 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Partner – Employee Experience (support)
	Explore cultural supervision, ongoing support, and mentorship needs to form mutual respect, understanding, and growth, ensuring a supportive and inclusive environment for all staff.	June 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Manager, People and Culture
	Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	June 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Partner – Employee Experience

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Continue to review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace	June 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Manager, People and Culture Business Partner – Employee Experience
	Review and map current procurement categories and identify areas where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers can be considered or must be explored.	June, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Manager Finance and Infrastructure
	Establish and strengthen relationships with the Wadawurrung community to explore collaborative procurement opportunities, support local suppliers, and promote community economic outcomes.	September 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Operating Officer Senior Manager Finance and Infrastructure (support)
	Ensure that all vendors participating in tender processes provide evidence of their reconciliation commitments and engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.	June, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Operating Officer Senior Manager Finance and Infrastructure (support)
	Annually review Kinaway membership.	June, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Manager Finance and Infrastructure

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	Review and enhance our Statement of Commitment and new Client Information to emphasise our commitment to data sovereignty at BCH.	June 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement (lead) Quality Officer (support)
11. Incorporation of data sovereignty to ensure the safeguarding of personal information.	Work with community to create a data management framework that respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander needs, values, and cultural considerations when collecting and recording data.	June 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement (lead) Senior Manager, Systems, Data and Projects (support)
	Review applicable BCH policies and procedures to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data sovereignty is upheld, supported, and clearly understood by both staff and clients.	June 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality Officer
	Look to map primary health care pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, including internal and external referral pathways, allied health services, ACCOs, and other known providers in the Ballarat region.	June 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Manager, Primary Care and Ageing

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
12. Identify, map, and promote culturally safe primary health care pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, in partnership with local providers and ACCOs	Develop culturally appropriate resources that clearly explain primary health care pathways and how to access them, including contact points and referral guidance.	June 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Nurse - GP Clinics (lead) Communication and Engagement Officer (support)
	Provide staff with training and resources to effectively navigate and refer Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients through mapped primary health care pathways.	June 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Manager, Primary Care and Ageing
	Establish mechanisms for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and community partners to provide feedback on primary health care access and pathway effectiveness, ensuring improvements are responsive and culturally informed	June 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Manager, Primary Care and Ageing



Pictured: Artwork by proud Wotjobaluk woman Helen "Leni" Morris, part of a series entitled 'Tracking Through Time'. The artwork symbolises ages past and present and the connection between them and is designed to impart a sense of endless engagement, education and enlightenment. Photo by Craig Spurr.

Governance

Strong, accountable governance is critical to the successful implementation of our second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan and to progressing reconciliation in a meaningful and sustainable way.

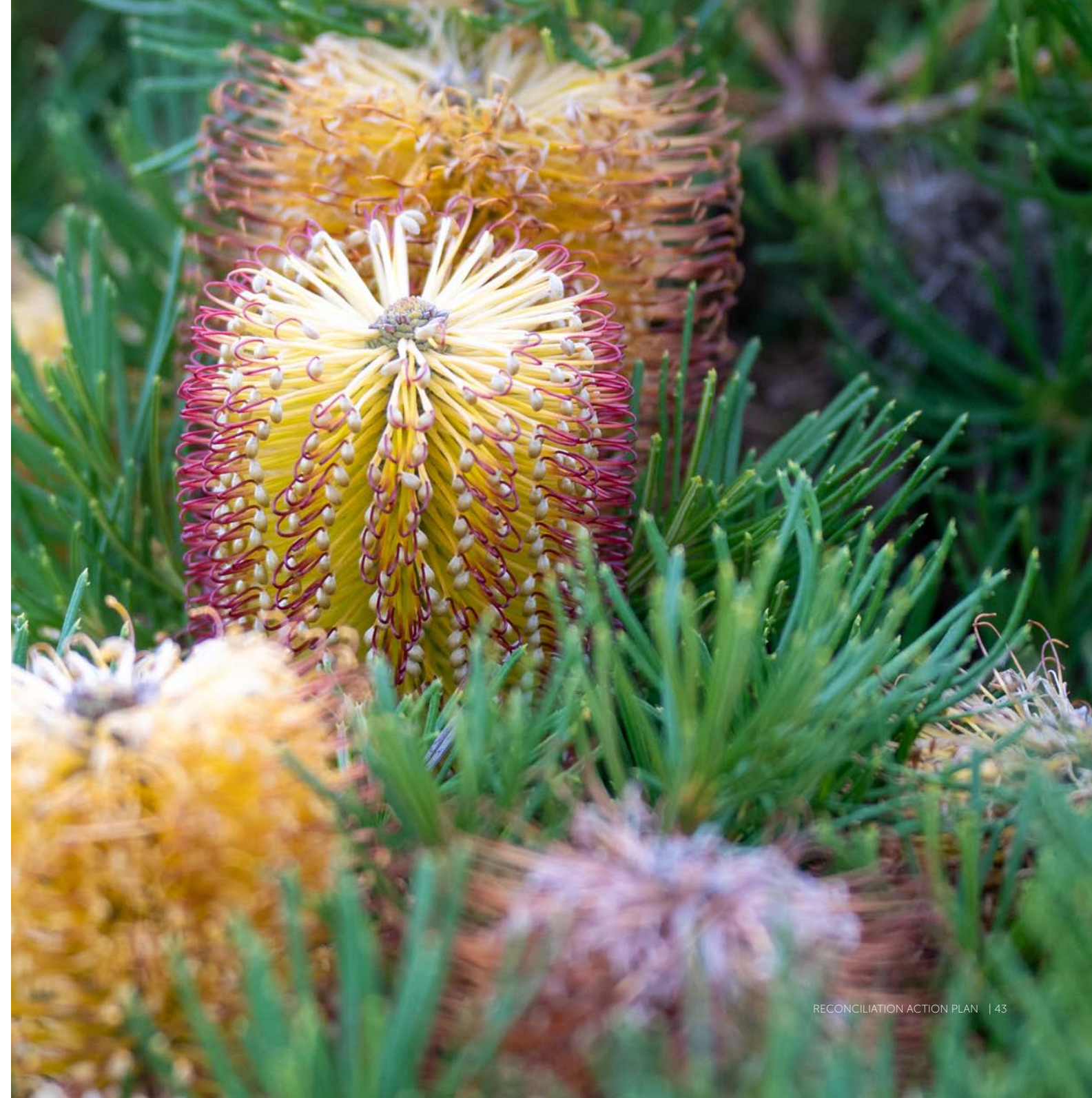
Through clear leadership accountability, defined roles, and culturally informed oversight, we aim to strengthen the structures that support RAP delivery. This includes executive sponsorship, active RAP Working Group governance, regular reporting to leadership and the Board, and the integration of RAP actions into strategic planning, policies, and performance frameworks. These mechanisms ensure transparency, consistency, and continuous improvement throughout the life of the RAP.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
13. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RAPWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RAPWG, inclusive of internal and external members.	January, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement
	Review the RAPWG Terms of Reference yearly.	October, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement
	Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	Quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement
	Cultivate ideas through stakeholder engagement and form recommendations to Executive for inclusion within the next RAP.	January 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement
14. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Continue to appoint internal RAP Champions from Executive and Board.	July, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement
	Ensure the monitoring of resource needs for RAP implementation continues.	Review 6 monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement
	Continue to include our broader leadership team and staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	Review 6 monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	Develop and implement a RAP evaluation plan.	December, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement
	Track the RAP's implementation and report quarterly to the Executive team.	Quarterly review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement
15. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence.	June, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement
	Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings both internally and externally.	December, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link to access the online RAP Impact Survey.	1 August, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality Officer
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality Officer
	Report RAP progress to all staff including senior leaders, quarterly.	Quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings, annually.	October, annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager, Marketing Communication and Community Engagement
	Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement
	Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	June 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement
16. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges, and achievements.	January 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement
	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	January 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of Governance, Quality and Engagement

*Pictured (right): Banksia spinulosa growing at BCH's Cooina site.
Photo by Ballarat Community Health.*



CONTACT DETAILS

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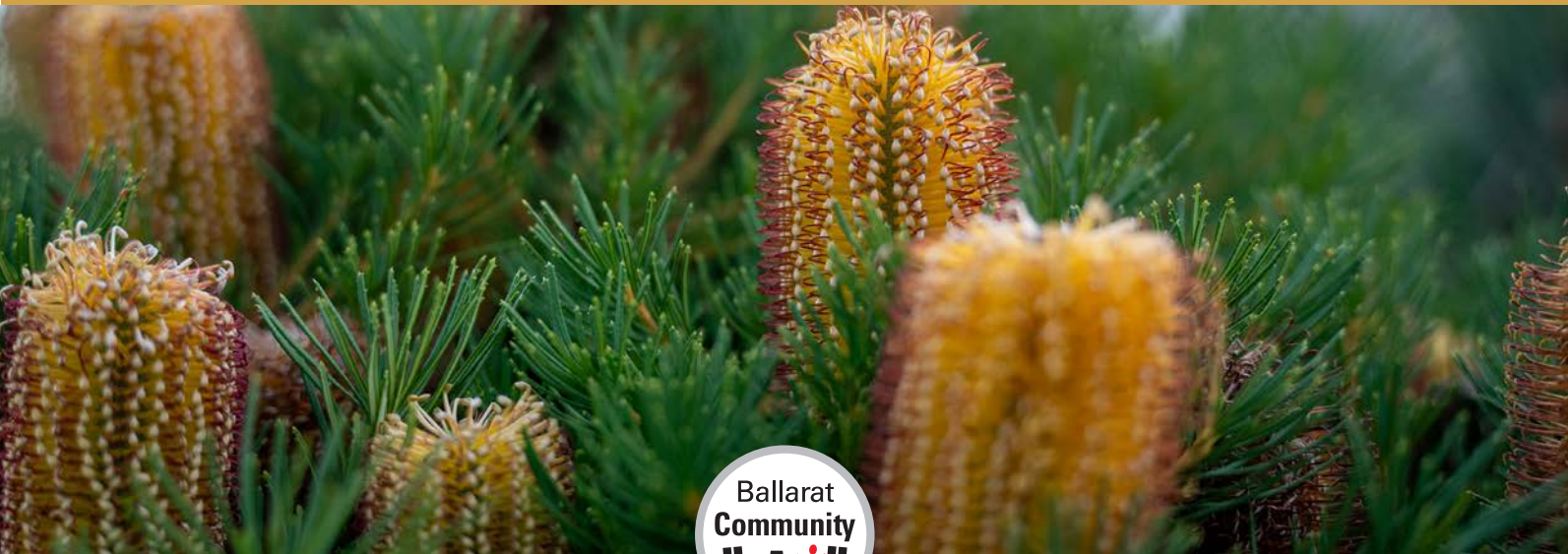
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