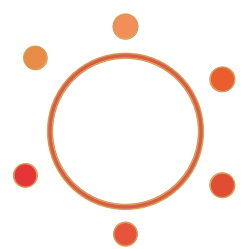




AIDS ACTION COUNCIL

Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

2014 -2017



Acknowledgements

The AIDS Action Council acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the first people of this land and have strived to retain their culture and identity through the period of non-Indigenous settlement for more than two centuries.

The Council acknowledges and respects the customs and traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their special relationship with the land, waterways and sea. The Council recognises the valuable contribution to the ACT made by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and will work towards a future of mutual respect and harmony.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people represent 3% of Australia's population, and within this population there is significant diversity in culture, language, geographical and socio-economical influence. Reducing the incidence of HIV in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples calls for a continuing emphasis on safe sex and injecting practices, combined with education and raising awareness. Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living with HIV requires reorienting the care and support

services provided by health services and other organisations. The AIDS Action Council acknowledges that for improvements in the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to be realised it is vital communities and individuals have the ability and freedom to be empowered and translate their capacity, knowledge, skills and understanding into action. Barriers to accessing health services, which must be addressed, include racism, stigma and discrimination and criminalisation.

The AIDS Action Council acknowledges particularly vulnerable groups of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who face additional stigma and discrimination associated with being young, a person who injects drugs, a sex worker, gay or a man who has sex with men, or a person living with HIV.

Message from our President

" With the launch of the AIDS Action Council's first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), we embark on our reconciliation journey. In doing so, we join hundreds of other public and private organisations across Australia which are all part of the RAP Community. "

The Council has progressed significantly along our reconciliation journey with some great achievements including:

- Observance of Welcome to Country and Acknowledgment of country protocols for significant events and meetings.
- Staff attending cultural awareness training run by local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members..

The Council is proud to present the Reconciliation Action Plan 2014-2017.

Dr Nathan Boyle - President

01.07.14

The Reconciliation Action Plan follows extensive consultation involving traditional owner groups, the Council staff and Board, Elders, the HIV community and the wider community.

The Reconciliation Action Plan is not just about words. It lists a number of key actions to be undertaken. Within the scope of the HIV community, we know the worth of cherishing traditions that stretch back over decades and our Reconciliation Action Plan pays respect to the history and traditions of Australia's first peoples.

Our vision for Reconciliation

Our vision for reconciliation is to ensure the AIDS Action Council is an organisation where our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, clients, volunteers, members and key stakeholders are respected, included and understood.

We will do this by:

- Building respect and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and peoples.
- Ensuring our events, programs and services are inclusive, respectful and culturally appropriate.

Our business

Since its incorporation in 1986, the AIDS Action Council has worked with the community to reduce the transmission of HIV and address the negative social and personal impacts of the disease. Our core work and focus is on transmission reduction, education, partnering, relationship building, evidence-based decision making, the minimisation of stigma and the removal of discrimination. Underpinning this is our commitment to being a successful and sustainable organisation capable of providing leadership and support to the sector.

The Council employs several full time, part time and casual staff over a variety of roles. Currently there is approximately 8.5 FTE and currently we have two Aboriginal staff members. Staff are employed in two streams – prevention and client services. Whilst the Council is funded to work in the ACT only, we have many connections and clients with our regional neighbours in Queanbeyan, Yass and Goulburn.

Our RAP

The AIDS Action Council recognises the need to develop a structured and holistic approach for strengthening our work and relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, especially those who may be impacted by HIV or at risk of HIV.

By developing a Reconciliation Action Plan, the Council hopes to clearly identify actions and realistic targets detailing steps and priorities which advise on the rights, health and dignity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are impacted by HIV or at risk of HIV.

The Council established a working group with representation from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Presentations and organisational discussions ensured all areas of the Organisation were represented by the RAP working group members.



Relationships

Respectful relationships are important to the Council because they are the foundation of improving engagement and in building trust and confidence between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians. The Council is committed to building on these key internal and external relationships to ensure a coordinated delivery of programs and services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Action	Who	Timeline	Targets
The RAP Working Group (RWG) continues to actively monitor RAP development, including implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting.	Executive Director	June 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RWG oversees the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP. Meet at least twice per year to monitor and report on RAP implementation.
Celebrate NRW by providing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and other employees to build relationships.	Executive Director	June 2017	Organise at least one internal event each year.
To strengthen links and promote reconciliation, the AIDS Action Council Board organises a meet and greet with the Boards of relevant Aboriginal organisations.	The Council Board and Executive Director	By June 2015	Members of the Board of the AIDS Action Council meet with members of the Boards of relevant Aboriginal Services, for example, Winnunga Nimmityjah, Aboriginal Legal Service, Ngunnawal Student Centre
Encourage, promote, support and celebrate dates of significance and cultural events including NAIDOC Week, Closing the Gap and ACT specific service open days.	Executive Director and all staff	By June 2015	A staff and/or Board representative from the AIDS Action Council is represented at 5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events and celebrations in the 2014-2015 year

Respect

Acknowledging, recognising and understanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their cultures, country and history will assist the Council to deliver better services, policies and programs.

Action	Who	Timeline	Targets
Engage in understanding the protocols around Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country ceremonies to ensure there is shared meaning behind the ceremonies.	Executive Director	By June 2014	<p>A series of Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country statements are developed in consultation with United Ngunnawal Elders Council and other traditional owner groups</p> <p>Appropriate protocols are performed at all staff meetings and external AIDS Action Council events</p>
Engage employees in cultural learning to increase understanding and appreciation of different cultural backgrounds in order to lay the foundation for other RAP actions to be achieved.	Executive Director	By June 2015	Develop and pilot a cultural awareness training strategy for the Council. All staff are provided with the opportunity to attend cultural awareness training, including completing an online module through the Share Our Pride website.
Encourage a culturally inclusive workplace by increasing the visibility of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures within the Council.	Executive Director	By August 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design email tag for staff use. Signs and/or artwork acknowledging country is created with the support of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and/or leaders and installed at the office.

Opportunities

Creating employment, training, peer support and learning opportunities between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians means we are working together to improve the social and economic disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Action	Who	Timeline	Targets
Investigate opportunities within the Council to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment opportunities.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review HR procedures and policies to ensure barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees are able to be addressed. Engage with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on employment strategies, including professional development. Pilot different approaches to increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within the Council (this may include training pathways, apprenticeships, internships, cadetships, work experience). <p>Advertise all vacancies in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media.</p>
Investigate opportunities to increase supplier diversity for the Council.	Executive Director		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review procurement policy and identify barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses which can be addressed. Investigate becoming a member of AIMSC or partnering with the local Indigenous Chamber of Commerce. Educate staff about using Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses. <p>Develop at least one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business.</p>
Explore opportunities to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Services to enhance support for Aboriginal People Living with HIV PLHIV.	Executive Director	Within 2015-2016 Business Plan	Partnerships developed with key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations (for example Aboriginal Medical Services).

Tracking progress and reporting

Action	Who	Timeline	Targets
Promote RAP publicly.	Executive Director and staff	By August 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAP endorsed by Reconciliation Australia and uploaded to the Council website. Hit rate to be reported to the Board Publicly launch RAP.
Report progress and implement RAP internally.	Executive Director	By June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report to ACT Health through the SFA. Report in the Council Annual Report.
Report achievements, challenges and learnings to Reconciliation Australia.	Executive Director	By June 2015, 2016, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia annually.

