

Reconciliation Action Plan

October 2019 – October 2020



**Cancer
Council**
Australia



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN
REFLECT

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work and live, and pay our respects to Elders past, present, and future.



Our business

Cancer Council is Australia's leading cancer charity working across every aspect of every cancer. Every day, we work tirelessly across every aspect of cancer, funding research, delivering prevention programs, advocating for change, and providing support to those affected. We help people from the point of diagnosis through to their treatment and beyond. Cancer Council Australia works with its members, the eight state and territory cancer organisations, to undertake and fund cancer research, prevent and control cancer, and provide information and support for people affected by cancer. Our national office based in Sydney's CBD currently employs 45 staff members.





Cancer Council CEO statement

Cancer Council Australia is proud to be joining the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program and, in doing so, making a formal commitment to advance reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Our inaugural Reflect RAP is an important first step on our reconciliation journey.

Cancer Council is the only charity in Australia to work across every area of every cancer, from research to prevention and support. We are here for all Australians affected by cancer and our vision of a cancer free future is intrinsically linked to the ongoing journey of reconciliation. Addressing health issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities can only be done in a spirit of reconciliation and in understanding the contextual factors surrounding ill health for these communities. Cancer is no exception to this.

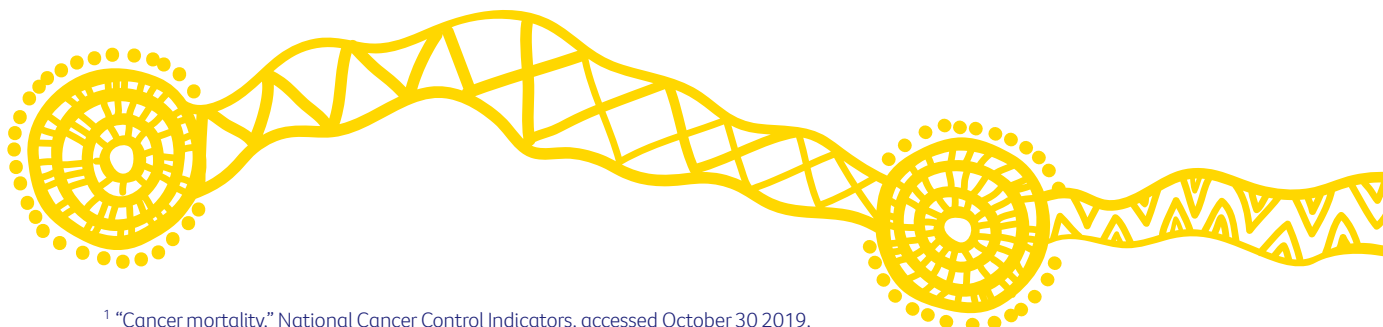
Cancer Council recognises the importance of understanding the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people affected by cancer and in developing approaches to cancer that are culturally safe. Cancer is the second most common cause of death for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, who are 43% more likely to die from the disease than other Australians, despite similar overall cancer incidence.¹

This distressing inequity highlights the important work needed to ensure services, information, and support are designed to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and provide them with the best chance of preventing cancer occurring or achieving best cancer outcomes.

Cancer Council Australia is committed to increasing its engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and to working with the existing structures for health and wellbeing established to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health. We are committed to a partnership approach that places cancer prevention, treatment, and care within a wider approach to improving the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We are committed to a just, equitable, and reconciled Australia. Finally, Cancer Council Australia recognises that sovereignty was never ceded and that this was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sanchia Aranda'.

Professor Sanchia Aranda AM
Chief Executive Officer
Cancer Council Australia



¹ "Cancer mortality," National Cancer Control Indicators, accessed October 30 2019, <https://ncci.cancer australia.gov.au/outcomes/cancer-mortality/cancer-mortality>



Message from Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia is delighted to welcome Cancer Council Australia to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program and to formally endorse its inaugural Reflect RAP.

As a member of the RAP community, Cancer Council Australia joins over 1,000 dedicated corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have formally committed to reconciliation through the RAP program since its inception in 2006. RAP organisations across Australia are turning good intentions into positive actions, helping to build higher trust, lower prejudice, and increase pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Reconciliation is no one single issue or agenda. Based on international research and benchmarking, Reconciliation Australia defines and measures reconciliation through five critical dimensions: race relations; equality and equity, institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance. All sections of the community—governments, civil society, the private sector, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities—have a role to play to progress these dimensions.

The RAP program provides a framework for organisations to advance reconciliation within their spheres of influence. This Reflect RAP provides Cancer Council Australia a roadmap to begin its reconciliation journey.

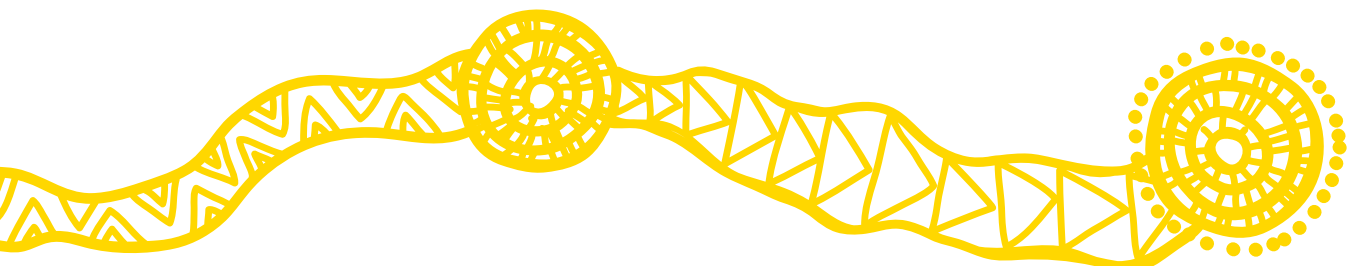
Through implementing a Reflect RAP, Cancer Council Australia will lay the foundations for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

We wish Cancer Council Australia well as it takes these first critical steps in its reconciliation journey. We encourage the organisation to embrace this journey with open hearts and minds, to grow from the challenges, and to build on the successes. As the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation reminded the nation in its final report:

“Reconciliation is hard work—it’s a long, winding and corrugated road, not a broad, paved highway. Determination and effort at all levels of government and in all sections of the community will be essential to make reconciliation a reality.”

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend Cancer Council Australia on its first RAP, and look forward to following its ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia





“Cancer Council Australia is committed to increasing its engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and to working with the existing structures for health and wellbeing established to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.”

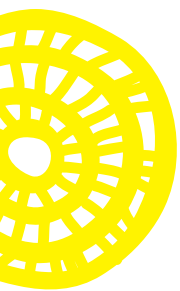
Our vision for reconciliation

Cancer Council's vision is a cancer free future and thanks to continuing advancements, nearly seven out of ten Australians diagnosed with cancer today will survive more than five years past their diagnosis.

While we have seen significant progress overall in Australian cancer survival rates, we acknowledge the work needed to improve the equity of cancer outcomes for all people affected, especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have cancer rates that are 10% higher than the rest of the population – and their mortality rates are also 40% higher for all cancers combined. The higher incidence of cancer is related to the higher prevalence of risk factors such as tobacco smoking, high risk alcohol consumption, and chronic hepatitis infection. Much of this risk factor burden is driven by entrenched social, cultural, and health inequalities.

Lung cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer and the leading cause of death for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. This is largely due to smoking with 42% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders identifying as current smokers compared to 12.8% of other Australians. Tobacco smoking accounts for 23% of the health gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and non-Indigenous Australians. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are 2.4 times more likely to be diagnosed with liver cancer and are 2.4 times more likely to die of liver cancer.

The higher rates of liver cancer are likely to be attributable to high hepatitis B infection rates, combined with high risk alcohol consumption. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are 2.5 times more likely to be diagnosed with cervical cancer and four times more likely to die from cervical cancer than non-Indigenous women. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are underscreened for cervical cancer which is likely to contribute to the higher mortality rates. Research suggests that current healthcare services do not meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. As a result, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are less likely to participate in screening programs and more likely to receive delayed or incomplete treatment. We need to close this gap, and we won't rest until we've dramatically reduced the significant impact cancer has on loved ones, families, and every member of our community. For us to achieve our vision, we recognise the work we need to do internally as an organisation to ensure we are supporting the national reconciliation movement. Our Reconciliation Action Plan has been championed and developed by our Reconciliation Action Plan Committee. The committee has been supported by Cancer Council's Chief Executive Officer and the Cancer Council executive team.



Journey of Hope

Creation Spirit guides us across many lands,
we travel – ceremony calls us.

The scorching sun bears down on freshwater
rocks, clear water cools our skin.

Knowledge flows from one camp to the next,
stream opens to river, single file across the
rocky ground.

Tortoise swims, lizard drinks, sand between our
toes this is a place of rest, a place of healing.

Country provides, we care for the land and the
land cares for us, we are woven together as one.

Clap stick, drum beats, ochre is ground
celebration begins.



The 'Journey of Hope' artwork explained:

Begins in the centre of the artwork, at the ceremony circle, the yarning circle. The 'U' shaped symbols represent people seated around a campfire preparing for ceremony. The daffodil shape represents Cancer Council Australia and everyone involved in the organisation, from the board, directors, staff, researchers, and representatives – a symbol of hope.

The pathways that lead into the central circle are the pathways that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people travel along from all different places and communities across Australia – urban, regional, rural and remote on their Journey of Hope – and to find the best possible treatment for their particular cancer.

The dots represent people and their families who travel with them to seek a cure for cancer. The circles below represent woven baskets that are held by community to support all people suffering from all forms of cancer. The vertical lines represent all different types of cancer.

The daffodil sits at the centre of the artwork and radiates hope for all people who are affected by cancer, both young and old, and their family and friends.



Our partnerships and reconciliation journey so far

Along with the Menzies School of Health Research, the Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet, and the Lowitja Institute, Cancer Council Australia is a founding partner of the National Indigenous Cancer Network (NICaN). NICaN was established to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with cancer, including their carers, families and communities. NICaN facilitates translation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cancer research into practice and aims to ensure that what's known about cancer in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders is available for use by people with cancer, their families, practitioners, policy makers and researchers. This is achieved by using existing information, identifying knowledge gaps and encouraging and supporting collaboration in research and service provision.

Cancer Council Australia has a clear and ongoing commitment to equity reflected within the organisation's current strategic plan (2018-2020). Activities defined under this focus area aim to improve cancer outcomes in Australia with a dominant focus on populations and cancers with poorer outcomes, which includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. This work includes understanding the nature of the differences in cancer outcomes and the factors contributing to these differences such as social determinants of health and availability of health services.



About the Artist

Riki Salam, Principal, Creative Director and Artist of We are 27 Creative developed 'Journey of Hope' for Cancer Council Australia's first Reconciliation Action Plan. Riki was born and raised in Cairns on Yidinji land in 1972 and is a member of and connected to Kala Lagaw Ya - Western Island groups (St. Pauls - Moa Island), Kuku Yalanji Peoples on his Father and Grandfather's side and a member of the Ngai Tahu people in the South Island of New Zealand on his Mother's side. Educated in both Cairns and Brisbane he has over 20 years of industry experience as a graphic designer and artist.

Riki has worked on many high-profile projects including the Qantas painted Boeing 747/800, Yananyi Dreaming, produced artworks for Telstra, Origin, Woolworths, the Healing Foundation and the Australian Human Rights Commission to name a few. Riki also designed the identity for the G20 in 2014. He works in pen, ink and brush, gouache on paper, and with acrylic paints, exploring concepts of traditional culture in a contemporary format.



Relationships

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1. RAP Working Group actively monitors RAP development and implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting	Establish a Terms of Reference for the Reconciliation Action Plan committee.	October 2019	Public Health Policy Manager
	Meet at least twice per year to monitor and report on RAP implementation.	November 2019 and April 2020	
2. Build internal and external relationships	Develop a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey.	December 2019	Media and Communications Coordinator
	Develop a list of RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey.	December 2019	
	Build partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations.	February 2020	
3. Participate in and celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	Encourage our staff to attend a NRW event.	May 2020	Media and Communications Coordinator
	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.		
	Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May- 3 June 2020	
4. Raise internal awareness of our RAP	Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness amongst all staff across the organisation about our RAP commitments.	October 2019	Media and Communications Coordinator
	Develop and implement a plan to engage and inform key internal stakeholders of their responsibilities within our RAP.	October 2019	

Relationships

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
5. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies	Research best practice and policies in area of race relations and anti-discrimination.	February 2020	Director, Finance & Corporate Services
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions and future needs.	February 2020	



Respect

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
6. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural learning and development	Capture data and measure our staff’s current level of knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, and achievements.	October 2019	Public Health Policy Manager
	Conduct a review of cultural awareness training needs within our organisation.	October 2019	
7. Participate in and celebrate National Aboriginal and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff of the meaning of NAIDOC Week which includes information about the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.	First week in July 2020	Media and Communications Coordinator
	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting community events in our local area.		
	Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external NAIDOC Week event.		
8. Raise internal understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols	Explore who the Traditional Owners are of the lands and waters in our local area.	December 2019	Cancer Care Policy Manager
	Scope and develop a list of local Traditional Owners of the lands and waters within our organisations sphere of influence.	February 2020	
	Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness and understanding of the meaning and significance behind Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols (including any local cultural protocols).	February 2020	
	Scope and develop a list of cultural advisers who can support us in understanding cultural protocols.	February 2020	

Respect

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
9. Celebrate/recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance	Identify and create a calendar for dates of significance.	November 2019	Media and Communications Coordinator
	Promote dates of significance.		
	Encourage staff to attend events commemorating significant dates.	October 2019	

Opportunities

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
10. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment	Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	Dec 2019	Director, Finance & Corporate Services
	Identify current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment and development opportunities.	May 2020	
11. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity	Develop an understanding of the mutual benefits of procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	Jan 2020	Director, Finance & Corporate Services
	Develop a register of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses for procurement.	May 2020	

Governance and tracking progress

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
12. Build support for the RAP	Define resource needs for RAP development and implementation.	October 2019– October 2020	Public Health Policy Manager
	Define systems and capability needs to track, measure, and report on RAP activities.		
	Complete the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia.	October 2020	
13. Review and Refresh RAP	Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges, and achievements.	October 2020	Public Health Policy Manager
	Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for review.	October 2021	
	Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement.	January 2022	

Contact details

Deshanie Rawlings
 Public Health Policy Manager
 02 8063 4100
deshanie.rawlings@cancer.org.au

