



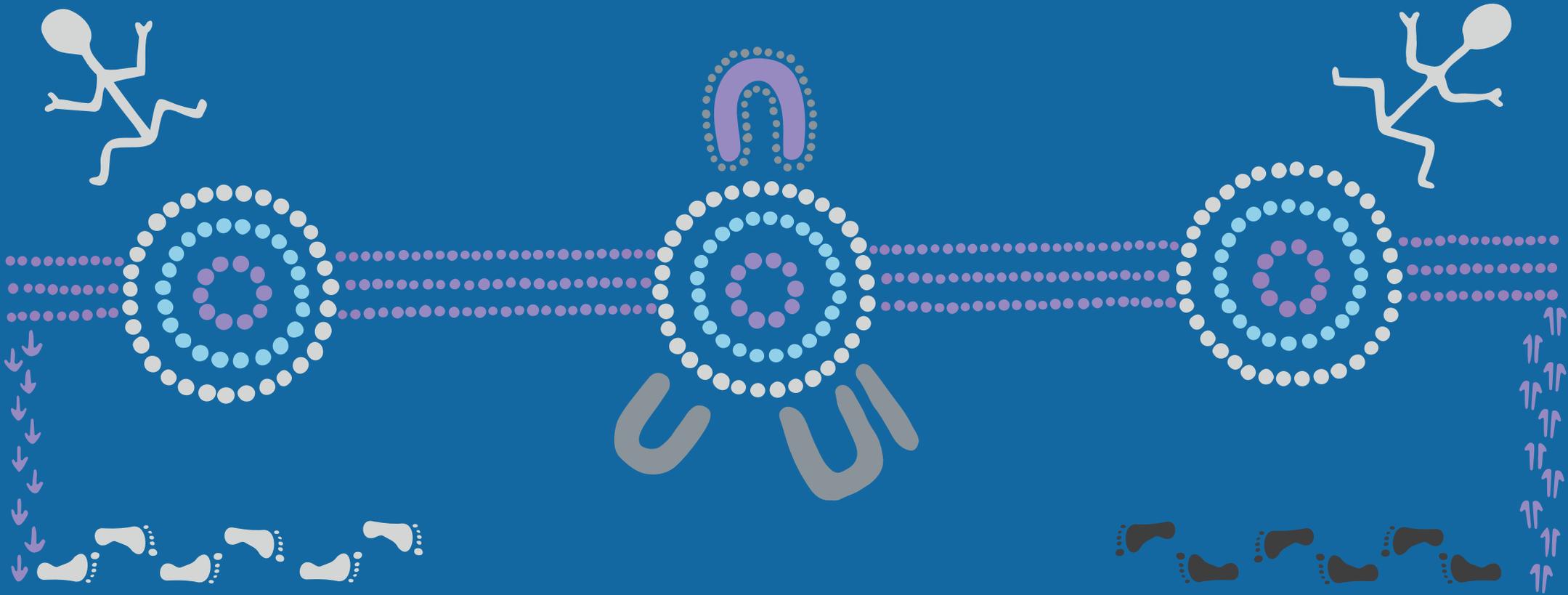
RECONCILIATION  
ACTION PLAN

REFLECT



**Good Shepherd**

Australia New Zealand



# Reconciliation Action Plan

May 2023 – May 2024



## Acknowledgement of Country

Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand acknowledge that First Nations Peoples, tangata whenua, as the traditional custodians of the lands on which we live and work.

We also acknowledge that Good Shepherd has not always been in right relationship with these traditional custodians, their culture, or their lands.

In the case of Aotearoa, we acknowledge Māori as tangata whenua, and we acknowledge and commit to Te Tiriti O Waitangi.

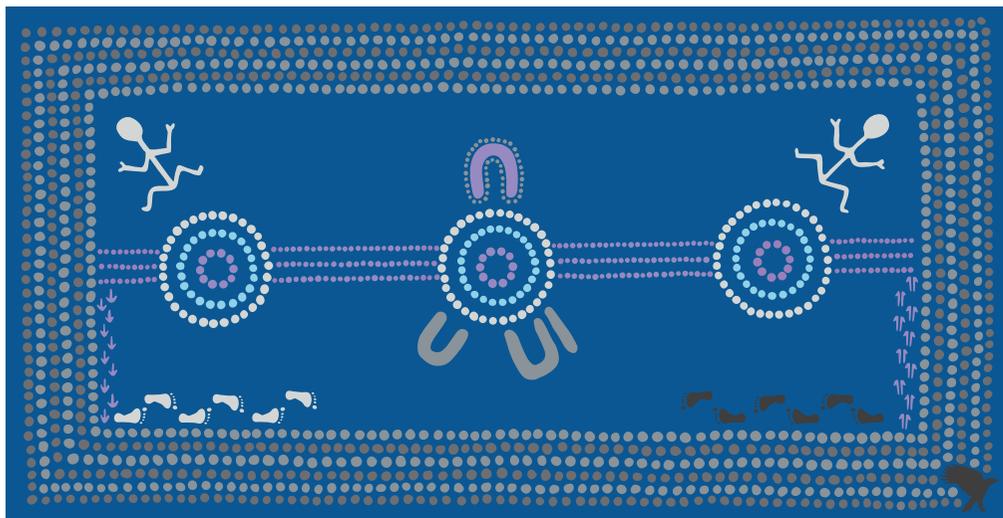
In the case of Australia, we acknowledge that the lands were never ceded, and that First Nations Peoples seek Treaty, Truth and Voice through the Uluru Statement from the Heart, which we fully support.

We pay our deep respects to Elders past and present and commit to seeking ongoing opportunities for friendship and partnership with Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Māori custodians of all lands and language groups.

# **Reconciliation Action Plan**

May 2023 – May 2024

# About the artwork



## Artist

D. Kerr  
Yorta Yorta

*Walkabout Learnings, 2022*

This painting is about walkabout; wandering the Country and talking to Elders; learning about culture and Ancestors and our Dreamtime.



This artwork was created through The Torch, a not for profit organisation, that provides art, cultural and arts industry support to Indigenous people incarcerated, and those freed from incarceration, in Victoria.





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**Stella Avramopoulos**

Chief Executive Officer  
Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand



**Anne Astin**

Board Chair  
Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand



# A message from our CEO and Board Chair

## Reflect RAP CEO & Board Chair Statement



### *Dadirri; listen deeply and connect*

– Miriam Rose Ungunmerr

It is with great pride that we present Good Shepherd's Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). This is our commitment to supporting an equitable Australia where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, children and their families have the same opportunities as non-Indigenous Australians, and no longer have to contend with the structural barriers that hinder them in their daily lives.

We understand that reconciliation is a necessary first step towards healing and the realisation of justice and equity for First Nations peoples. Without reconciliation, and without authentic partnerships built on respect and trust, we will continue to be diminished as individuals, communities and as a nation.

Good Shepherd is a microcosm of the society in which we live, and we must reflect and change our own processes and systems first; we cannot talk about reconciliation and tackling racism without first committing to First Nations justice.

We are committed to actively addressing racism and the historical and contemporary legacies of colonisation in order to support women, girls and families to be safe, well, strong and connected.

While violence against women and children is prevalent in all communities, sadly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women experience disproportionate rates of family violence and financial hardship.

We must use this Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan to take a moment of deep listening, or *dadirri*, as Miriam-Rose Ungemerr, Senior Australian of the year and renowned Aboriginal Artist and Educator reflects. *Dadirri* is a practice we weave through all our work at Good Shepherd, a moment of reflection, connection and contemplation.

Our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan sets out the tangible steps we will take to achieve meaningful and lasting change. Over the next 12-months, led by our internal Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group and championed by our leadership, Good Shepherd will engage in authentic reflection with our workforce and our Board, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.

Further to this, our RAP Working Group members will support our teams, spanning across four states, to develop their own localised reconciliation activity plans – bringing our commitment to reconciliation to life in every corner of our organisation.

We look forward to engaging in the practice of *dadirri*, deep listening and learning through our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan now and into the future.



# Statement from CEO of Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia welcomes Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand joins a network of more than 2,200 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. The program's potential for impact is greater than ever, with close to 3 million people now working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. This Reflect RAP will lay the foundations, priming the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives, for the most effective outcomes.

These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.

It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

This Reflect RAP enables Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand to deepen its understanding of its sphere of influence and the unique contribution it can make to lead progress across the five dimensions. Getting these first steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand Australia, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.

**Karen Mundine**

Chief Executive Officer  
Reconciliation Australia





# A message from Uncle Ron Briggs

Senior Aboriginal Cultural Advisor

I'm a Yorta Yorta, Gunditjmara, and Wurundjeri man, and I have strong connections to culture and the health and wellbeing of my people, and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across this land.

The health and wellbeing of First Nations peoples across this country is in dire straits; many of our children and young people are being removed from their family, from Country, losing connection to language and culture. The rate of youth detention for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people aged 10 – 17 years is higher than for non-Indigenous young people in every state and territory across the nation. First Nations women are 32 times more likely to be hospitalised and 11 times more likely to die from assault than non-Indigenous women in Australia. These statistics are shameful, and are indicative of the colonial legacy which First Australians bear the brunt of, to this day, on a daily basis.

Understanding the history of First Australians, understanding our trauma, is part of the reconciliation journey that Good Shepherd has embarked upon. This is what drew me to joining Good Shepherd. I knew they were starting with a Reflect RAP again, after some big organisational changes, and it told me that Good Shepherd were committed to walking alongside the First Nations peoples of this country.

Reconciliation in all its forms, including through the Reconciliation Action Plan process, is an important step forward towards advancing the rights of First Nations peoples, and their future generations.

To move towards reconciliation is to listen. Then comes understanding and acknowledgement. This includes understanding and acknowledging the past as well as how individuals and organisations, play a role in the continual oppression and disadvantage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The journey of reconciliation is one with no end.

A Reflect RAP is centred around listening. It is about developing respectful, positive and productive relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders in order to build trust. It is about being honest, confronting the truth, and sitting with the discomfort. Then, doing better, because now you know better; you've heard what First Nations peoples are saying. This is the foundation needed for a healthy relationship between our nation's First Peoples and non-Indigenous people. This is how we begin to heal and move forward as a country.







Good Shepherd  
Australia New Zealand

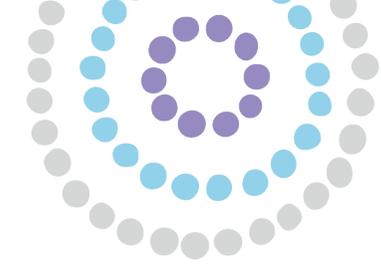
STRONG  
TOGETHER

Good Shepherd

Cobs  
NATURAL  
SNACK PACK  
POPCORN  
GLUTEN FREE  
5 SNACK PACKS

Cobs  
sqs  
SHELF READY TRAY  
DISPLAY  
REMOVING FROM THE CARTON  
TEAR HERE AND OPEN THE CARTON

# Our Business



## Our history

The Sisters of the Good Shepherd were established in 1835 by Saint Mary Euphrasia Pelletier in Angers, France. The Sisters trace their origin to the Order of Our Lady of Charity, a religious congregation founded in France in 1641 by a French priest, Sant John Eudes. The order was founded out of his concern for young girls and women who were abandoned and uncared for in society. At the urging of a Catholic laywoman, Madeleine Lamy, John Eudes established a refuge for such women, which was originally organised and managed by lay people.

On June 24, 1863 the first four Sisters arrived in Sandridge, Port Melbourne and with help from Bishop Dr James Goold, purchased land in Abbotsford (now known as Abbotsford Convent, officially opened on 25 August 1863). These first four Sisters faced immense challenges, especially in providing a home for people in need and obtaining sufficient funding for their work. Within one year of opening, 32 people had been admitted to Abbotsford House, and by the end of 1866, 163 people were in care on the site.

The Sisters made every effort to be self-sufficient. They maintained a farm and produced gardens and a commercial laundry which provided a large source of income for the convent. More funds were raised through events such as annual bazaars,

Christmas appeals and charity sermons. The Sisters were helped by many individual benefactors as well as Government. Importantly, it is necessary to recognise and acknowledge that the conditions within residential care settings, like those run by Good Shepherd, were tough and isolating for many children and young people, and we apologise whole-heartedly to those who experienced mistreatment and neglect whilst in our care. We are committed to a transitional justice approach that acknowledges and is accountable for past failings and promotes openness and continuous improvement, to ensure the wrongs of the past are not repeated.

From the mid-20th century, the philosophy of protecting vulnerable persons from harm or exploitation within the Convent premises gradually evolved into one of moving outside to help people in need. Large Convents were closed from the mid-1960s onwards. Over forty smaller houses were established to accommodate Sisters as well as many people who formerly lived in Good Shepherd care. The pastoral work of the Sisters continued, supplemented more and more by lay partners working in agencies established by the Sisters to continue their mission.

In 1956 St Clare's school was established in Perth. Today it is a secondary school that provides a safe school environment for girls who may find traditional school situations difficult. In 1976 the Sisters created Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service, an Incorporated Association, making it a separate legal entity from the Sisters. This new entity also incorporated a long-established project of the Good Shepherd Sisters in St Kilda.

The first office and service was established in Collingwood where services were provided such as support for women and girls experiencing hardship, microfinance loans to people living on low incomes and housing support for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. During the 1990s offices were also established in Hastings on the Mornington Peninsula and at St Albans in Melbourne's west.

In 1981, the Good Shepherd Sisters started the first No interest Loans Scheme (NILS) program through Good Shepherd Youth and Family Services. The program offered eligible clients with no interest loans to purchase essential household items. This fair and equitable model of credit was based on a commitment to upholding individual dignity and respect and was rapidly taken up by the community.

In 2012 The Good Shepherd New Zealand Trust was established to assist marginalised and economically disadvantaged people, working in partnership with Good Shepherd Microfinance to establish microfinance programs in New Zealand, by and for New Zealanders.

In 1982 Rosemount Good Shepherd Youth and Family Services was established in Sydney's inner west, with the aim of meeting the needs of marginalised and disadvantaged young people. Rosemount is now based in Marrickville and has grown to provide an innovative range of services working to address the social and economic exclusion of young people and their families. Rosemount's focus is on creating opportunities through the provision of a range of programs designed to meet the immediate education, psychological and financial needs of disadvantaged and marginalised young people and their families so that they may reach their full potential.

In 2004 Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand was established as a Stewardship Committee to explore innovative ways the ministries could be governed. In 2008 it became a company limited by guarantee to manage Good Shepherd assets, to oversee the other Good Shepherd agencies (ministries) and strengthen its international links.

In 2014, Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand, Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service and Rosemount Good Shepherd Youth and Family Service merged to become one organisation. We agreed to be known as Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand, with a new strategic focus to streamline the Good Shepherd network, to grow our mission, to become a leader in social and financial inclusion and to deepen our co-responsibility partnership with the Good Shepherd Sisters.

In 2019, Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand and Good Shepherd Microfinance merged to become one entity again.

## Who we are

Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand is a not-for-profit organisation that challenges the critical and ongoing issues facing women, girls and families. Our values are the foundation of our work: **audacity, zeal, the value of each person, reconciliation and justice** (see p. 15 for more detail). Our programs and services ensure people do not fall through the cracks, helping them to feel safe and take control over their own lives. Good Shepherd offers a range of safe and affordable financial programs to people who are financially vulnerable and provide financial counselling and support to improve financial capability, knowledge and confidence. Our programs promote economic wellbeing for people with low incomes, especially women and girls, and enable



them to move from financial crisis to resilience and inclusion. We support children, young people and families to realise their value and improve their relationships through education, counselling and wellbeing programs. Good Shepherd's specialist domestic and family violence services support women and children to achieve safety, stability and recovery. Good Shepherd has been working with the community for over 200 years and is part of a global network spanning more than 70 countries.

## Our values

- Seeing the **value of each person** and respecting everyone's rights.
- **Reconciliation** by supporting people to find peace, wellbeing and wholeness within themselves, with each other and in their environment.
- **Justice** by challenging systems and behaviours that disadvantage people and advocating for positive change.
- **Audacity** having the courage to speak out, follow new paths and take action for the Mission.
- **Zeal** we are wholehearted in our purpose.

Our purpose is to enable fullness of life for women, girls and families experiencing hardship. Good Shepherd provides safety and connections that help women, girls and families live fulfilling lives.

Our vision is for all women, girls and families to be safe, well, strong and connected..

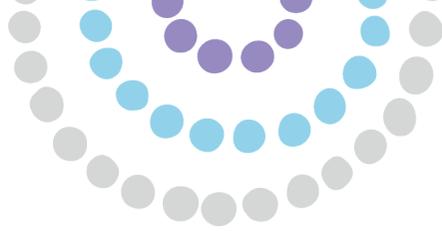
Our mission is to tackle the significant issues impacting women, girls and families.

Good Shepherd programs and services are provided across 14 office locations across Australia. We provide services in:

- Victoria on Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Country, Bunurong Country, Wadawurrung Country, and Braiakaulung Country;
- New South Wales on Gadigal Country;
- Perth on Whdjuk Noongar Country;
- South Australia on Kurna Country; and
- Queensland on Gimuy Country and Yugambah Country.
- In addition to this, our Telephone and Online team is a national team which has been built on a working from home model and as such we employ 40 staff members who work from home, delivering a service across Australia. (as of 23/01/2023).

Good Shepherd employs 474 staff (as of 23/01/2023), a mix of full- and part-time employees. Ten (2.1%) of our employees have identified as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people (as of 23/01/2023). We are cognisant that this figure does not reflect the national population proportion of First Nations peoples and we are committed to increasing our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce over the coming years, particularly in leadership positions, through activities identified in our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan.





# Our RAP

Good Shepherd's Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan will be championed by our Chief Executive Officer.

## Our commitment and work towards reconciliation – history through to the present.

Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand understands reconciliation with the First Nations peoples of Australia to be a critical step towards healing and the realisation of justice and equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It is our belief that until reconciliation and genuine partnerships built on respect and trust are achieved, we will continue to be diminished as individuals, communities and as a nation.

Good Shepherd's vision of reconciliation recognises the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as First Nations peoples and First Custodians of the lands we call Australia, and we value their cultures, knowledge systems and connections to land and water. We also acknowledge and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples right to self-determination and that this land that is known as Australia, was and always will be, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' sovereignty was never ceded.

The Good Shepherd Sisters have a long history working with Australia's First Nations peoples. For example, one of our surviving Sisters took up a sabbatical role living with other Sisters, engaging and learning about Indigenous life on Palm Island in 1986; the Sisters dedicated one Sister who would work in Broome, specifically with the First Nations communities between the 1960s and 1980s. Good Shepherd Sisters also worked with Aboriginal communities to support them to set up their own local microenterprise and supporting community members by finding outlets for them to sell their arts and crafts.

The Good Shepherd Sisters also acknowledge that we have not always been in good relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and specifically recognise that from the late 1860s to the late 1970s, the Sisters of the Good Shepherd provided residential care for children and young women who were unable to live with their families, had no accommodation within the community or were not attending school. Conditions were tough and isolating for many, and the Sisters have apologised wholeheartedly to those who experienced mistreatment and neglect. In acknowledging the experiences of former residents and our own actions which impacted on former residents, we commit to ensure that the wrongs of the past are not repeated – this is a critical part of our work today.

**“we commit to ensure that the wrongs of the past are not repeated.”**

In early 2000, the Good Shepherd Sisters released their “Statement towards Reconciliation” to affirm that Good Shepherd acknowledges the custodianship of the land by Aboriginal and





Torres Strait Islander peoples and that reconciliation is central to the renewal of this nation.

Between 2007 and up to 2021, in partnership with the Mary MacKillop Foundation, Good Shepherd has supported more than 100 First Nations women realise their potential through the Indigenous Reconciliations Scholarships program, assisting recipients with their goals of further study. Reconciliation Scholarships are one of the ways we aim to disrupt the systemic disadvantage experienced by First Nations women and girls.

Through this scholarship program, First Nations women aged from 18 – 56 years old have been supported to achieve qualifications ranging from Bachelors of Education, Nursing, Arts, Communications, Business, Medicine, Community Management and Indigenous Studies to Certificates in Early Childhood, Diplomas of Enrolled Nursing and TAFE Education Support. Students are generally supported for one to five years. Although the scholarship program was discontinued in 2021, Good Shepherd Sisters have provided sufficient funding for the current students to finish their studies.

In 2013, we launched our 2014 – 2015 Reconciliation Action Plan in conjunction with Jason Eades. This document provided the organisation as it was then, with a clear path for relationship building, partnership opportunities and service delivery within the community.

The Good Shepherd St Clare's school finalised their own Reconciliation Action Plan in November 2016.

In 2018, Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand and its Network partners at the time reached an agreement to develop and

publish a renewed Reconciliation Statement which was released in July 2018. This renewed Commitment from across the Good Shepherd Network highlighted how reconciliation with the First Nations peoples of this country aligned closely with our own Good Shepherd values and stated our commitment to reconciliation, acknowledging that we cannot achieve social justice and dignity for all unless we have reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians.

*“we cannot achieve social justice and dignity for all unless we have reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians.”*

Prior to the merge between Good Shepherd Microfinance and Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand, GS Microfinance had submitted its own Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan to Reconciliation Australia for final review. As a result of the merger, increased funding and programs Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand has grown significantly and broadened the scope of services delivered. The newly formed executive leadership group made the decision that the organisation should develop a Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan, this provides an opportunity for the organisation to engage all employees and stakeholders in a reflective process of developing the RAP, building genuine relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, and creating a vision for reconciliation within our sphere of influence.





## Our vision for reconciliation

Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand is committed to supporting an equitable Australia where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, children and families have the same life opportunities as all other Australians, and where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples no longer contend with the structural barriers that harm and hinder them in their daily lives. Intrinsicly, this is a commitment to helping and facilitating First Nations Australians to realise their right to self-determination; ensuring that as this country's First Nations peoples, they are able to make decisions about their own political, economic, social and cultural development.

**“facilitating First Nations Australians to realise their right to self-determination”**

Our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan will outline practical steps that turn good intentions into real action and provides the organisation with a clear framework to drive and transform sustainable cultural change. In doing so, we will begin to explore how we can address internal systems that create disparity and build the cultural competency of our workforce. Further to this, we will continue to progress our Integral Ecology work; a renewed commitment to minimising our collective impact on the earth, acknowledging the deep history and connection that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have to this vast land and being proactive in taking better care of the traditional lands we are so privileged to live, work and rest on.

Our goals are to address systemic inequity and racism in the workplace, in service delivery, and in spaces where we have influence. We acknowledge that the Australia we live in today has been built on a colonial legacy of oppression. As an organisation, we are a microcosm of the society we live in, and therefore we must reflect on our own processes and systems; we cannot talk about tackling racism without first committing to First Nations justice.

We recognise truth-telling and deep listening as a critical component of this process. To do this we must be transparent about our history with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, children and families. Acknowledging our organisational history and apologising for harms caused, is critical. We intend to work locally with communities we have existing relationships with and establish constructive new relationships to build cultural capability, share resources and invest in the health, wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, children and families.

Throughout implementation we will ensure the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are respected, valued, heard and influential in supporting the work we do. Good Shepherd is accountable to its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, employees, their community, Reconciliation Australia and First Nation controlled organisations throughout Australia, to deliver a culturally safe service that supports the best outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, children and families.



## Implementation

Our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan will be developed by a Good Shepherd Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group (Working Group) to be established in early 2023. It is envisaged that the Working Group will be comprised of 12 – 15 representatives from across the organisation. Known Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees have been individually contacted and invited to join the Working Group in whatever capacity they wish. Our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan is championed internally by the Chief Executive Officer.

Supporting our organisation wide Reflect RAP will be localised Reconciliation Activity Plans, to be developed by RAP Allies with support from members of the Working Group. As an organisation with broad geographic reach, we feel that it is important that our Reconciliation Action Plan is supported by localised activity plans which will be tailored to individual sites/locations or program areas. This then allows our reconciliation activities with First Nations community groups to be tailored in a way that ensures meaning and engagement across the organisation.

To ensure that all levels of Good Shepherd are engaged on our reconciliation journey and our Reflect RAP, our activities, where appropriate, will include members of the Good Shepherd Board. Our Working Group will drive the implementation of our RAP and provide quarterly updates to the Senior Leadership Team.

Our Reflect RAP will be reviewed by our Executive Leadership Team and endorsed by the CEO and the Board prior to submission to Reconciliation Australia.



## Our partnerships/current activities

At an organisation-wide level, Good Shepherd employees are encouraged to engage with National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week activities. Both significant events have been included in our organisational social justice calendar as whole-of-organisation events. Such events are usually hosted by our CEO and guest speakers are invited to join with Good Shepherd in recognising both significant weeks.

Several Good Shepherd programs have existing and strong relationships with Aboriginal community groups and organisations (see below for more information)

### First Nations LaunchMe Program

Good Shepherd's LaunchMe program is a start-up for sole traders and small business that provides people on low incomes with tailored support to grow their business. With 1:1 coaching, referral to business specialists and an internal online learning platform, LaunchMe is provided in South Australia and Victoria, and is funded by the respective state governments.

In South Australia, the LaunchMe program offered to pilot a First Nations LaunchMe Program and this has now received a further two years of funding with a coach two days a week, specifically focused on supporting First Nations sole traders and entrepreneurs. What started off as a pilot, this component of our LaunchMe program is now ingrained into our program of work that the South Australian government funds on an ongoing basis. In the 2022 financial year, the First Nations LaunchMe Program supported 10 First Nations participations (target of up to 6).

### No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS)

Good Shepherd Sisters set up the No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS) in 1981, recognising that financial services in Australia excluded those on low-incomes. Since its establishment, the NILS program has grown across Australia and New Zealand and offers people experiencing financial vulnerability the chance to purchase essential items through a loan with no interest. Nationally, in FY 2023, 27% of NILS clients identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

### Financial Resilience Program (QLD)

Delivering a financial capability program in 20 different locations across rural, regional and remote Queensland targeting culturally appropriate financial support to some First Nations communities.

### Family & Domestic Violence No Interest Loans Scheme (FDV NILS)

Family & Domestic Violence No Interest Loans Scheme is a specific service for women who are experiencing or have experienced family or domestic violence across Australia. The FDV NILS can provide loans up to \$3,000, designed to keep women safe at home or to support them to move out safely, or rebuild their lives up to 10 years after the violence had occurred. Working with a network of NILS providers, Good Shepherd have begun to establish relationships with agencies who work specifically with First Nations communities, to ensure that this service offering is reaching all victim survivors of domestic and family violence.



Good Shepherd is working with Catholic Care NT to offer FDV NILS to women across the Northern Territory, particularly in more remote areas and communities where there are higher rates of systemic and intergenerational violence. Through this work our FDV NILS program team have identified the need to reconsider our approach when seeking to build rapport and trust with First Nations communities, in order to increase engagement with the program, particularly when access to technology such as email is limited and when contact with qualified and accredited First Nations language translating services is also limited.

We have a formal Partnership Agreement with the Mirrabooka FDV Hub, known as the Naala Dookan Healing Centre in Western Australia which includes three Aboriginal Corporation partner organisations (Wadjak Northside Aboriginal Corporation, Karla Kuliny Aboriginal Corporation and Ebenezer Aboriginal Corporation). In addition, we work closely with the following FDV NILS Retail Providers who deliver services or outreach to First Nations communities or have a larger client cohort who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander: Uniting Country (Northern Regional, SA), Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Women's Legal Centre (Sydney Metro, NSW), Mirrabooka FDV Hub or Naala Djookan Healing Centre (Perth Metro, WA), Catholic Care NT, Central Australian Women's Legal Service (Central Australia & Alice Springs, NT), Community Accommodation and Support Agency (CASA) Mackay (Mackay and Whitsundays, QLD).

### Family Violence and Integrated Family Services

Good Shepherd has maintained a strong partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) over many years as we deliver specialist family violence services and integrated

family services in the Bayside Peninsula and Brimbank-Melton areas of Melbourne. Supported by various regulatory frameworks, our practitioners regularly liaise and consult with VACCA team members about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients. This strong partnership has resulted in mutual and reciprocal information sharing and referrals where appropriate. Our history in working with local Aboriginal groups has also meant that we have built respectful relationships with Aboriginal community members which has seen Good Shepherd being invited to attend local events for National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week. Further to this, Good Shepherd has sponsored an award at the Nairn Marr Djambana – Frankston Gathering Place NAIDOC Awards over many years.

### Advocacy

The Research, Advocacy and System Impact team is embedding the aims of the Reconciliation Action Plan into our priority areas and ways of working. The team is: using intersectional thinking to inform our processes and analysis; pursuing allyship and advocacy on issues impacting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, such as supporting the Save Sorry Business campaign; building Good Shepherd's capacity to respond to the impacts of colonisation through the 'intergenerational disadvantage and trauma' portfolio; and, publicly supporting the Uluru Statement from the Heart.





# A Good Shepherd Mission moment

## Eunice Bartlett

Proud First Nations woman, Eunice Bartlett desperately needed a loan to have her car repaired. However, the overwhelming paperwork and her lack of trust in 'white services,' left her feeling apprehensive about reaching out.

"I didn't want to feel stigmatised. For an Aboriginal person, unfortunately sometimes you can expect a negative experience,"Eunice explains.

Eunice was referred to Good Money in Salisbury by NAB and she loved the process and the service so much she said she plans to come out of retirement to help connect her community to NILs.

When asked if Eunice would recommend NILs to others, she said. "I already have told people about NILs – I told my sister and have already talked to five or six of my relatives. NILs has made a big difference in my life, and I am keen to connect my community to the program.

"I feel so happy!"





NAIDOC Family Day, 2023

## The Good Shepherd emblem consists of two shepherds' crooks.

One of the shepherd's crooks represents the care of Good Shepherd people for women, girls and their families who are experiencing diminished safety, strength, wellness and / or connectedness.



The other shepherd's crook represents the advocacy and action undertaken by Good Shepherd people in order to combat unjust systems which increase the risk of women, girls and their families experiencing diminished safety, strength, wellness and / or connectedness.



# Good Shepherd

Australia New Zealand

[goodshep.org.au](http://goodshep.org.au)

for all young girls, and families to be safe, well, strong and connected.



Yes23  
.com.au





# Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	May 2024	Lead: Executive General Manager, Client Services, Executive General Manager Ecosystem Enablement and Executive General Manager Good Shepherd Institute Support: General Manager Clinical Governance
	Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations and make this information available to all Good Shepherd staff.	May 2024	Lead: Executive General Manager, Client Services Support: Executive General Manager, Ecosystem Enablement
	Review Good Shepherd's formal and informal agreements with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations across Australia.	Feb 2024	Lead: Executive General Manager, Client Services, Executive General Manager Ecosystem Enablement and Executive General Manager Good Shepherd Institute Support: Executive General Manager, Ecosystem Enablement
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Identify organisations that Good Shepherd could partner with to jointly participate with in National Reconciliation Week events.	May 2024	Lead: Executive General Manager, Ecosystem Enablement
	Organise and host an internal organisation wide event to celebrate National Reconciliation Week.  Board members to be invited to attend.	Organise: March 2023 Host: 27 May – 3 June 2023	Lead: Executive General Manager, Corporate Services & General Manager Clinical Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's National Reconciliation Week resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2023	Manager, Inclusion & Cultural Safety
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external National Reconciliation Week event.	27 May- 3 June 2023	Lead: RAP Co-Chairs & Secretariat
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate National Reconciliation Week.	27 May- 3 June 2023	Lead: Executive General Manager, Client Services & Executive General Manager, Corporate Services
	Encourage and support Waranarra school students and staff to participate in National Reconciliation Week events, internally and externally	27 May – 3 June 2023	Executive General Manager, Client Services
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff – including maintaining regular communication to staff about reconciliation activities and RAP development and implementation progress.	May 2023 and quarterly thereafter	Lead: Chief Executive Officer Support: General Manager Clinical Governance
	Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	May 2024	Lead: Executive General Manager Ecosystem Enablement and Executive General Manager Good Shepherd Institute Support: Senior Aboriginal Cultural Advisor
	Identify RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	May 2024	Lead: Senior Aboriginal Cultural Advisor Support: RAP Working Group





Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	Plan for and convene 'Truth-telling' reflective sessions for all staff to attend to coincide with Invasion/Survival Day; National Reconciliation Week; NAIDOC Week	January 2023 May 2023 July 2023 January 2024 May 2024	Lead: Executive General Manager, Mission & Culture Support: Inclusion and Continuous Quality Improvement team and Senior Aboriginal Cultural Advisor
	Review and update Good Shepherd's Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to reflect Good Shepherds commitment to truth-telling, addressing historical injustice and self-determination.	Feb 2024	Lead: Executive General Manager, Mission & Culture Support: Senior Aboriginal Cultural Advisor
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination with the aim of building awareness across the workforce on how individually and collectively we can tackle racism in the workplace and in our spheres of influence.	May 2024	Lead: Executive General Manager Corporate Services Support: Executive Leadership Team
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify opportunities to strengthen existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	May 2024	Lead: Executive General Manager Corporate Services Support: General Manager Clinical Governance
	Undertake a cultural safety audit at all Good Shepherd sites.	May 2024	Lead: Senior Aboriginal Cultural Advisor & General Manager Clinical Governance Support: Executive Corporate Services and General Managers Integrated Place-based Services



# Voice to Parliament statement



The Uluru Statement from the Heart calls on all of us to build a better future by establishing a First Nations Voice to Parliament enshrined in the Constitution.

As Australia's oldest charity supporting women, girls, and their families, Good Shepherd wholeheartedly supports the Voice to Parliament and the full implementation of the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

A Voice to Parliament is an historic step forward. It enshrines an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice in the Australian Constitution and creates a mechanism for their participation in the decisions, laws and policies that affect their communities. It is also an opportunity to formally acknowledge and pay our respects to the world's oldest, continuous culture, and their connection to their lands and waterways.

The Voice to Parliament is an important step in implementing the Uluru Statement from the Heart in full. Voice, Treaty and Truth are fundamental elements if we are to right the wrongs of the past, turn good intentions into action, and build fair and truthful relationships with First Nations peoples.

The Uluru Statement from the Heart aligns with our values of justice and reconciliation, and our commitment to work towards these with audacity and zeal. Now that the proposed wording for Constitutional change has been put to Parliament for debate, we look forward to working with other service organisations and within our communities to share information, build understanding and achieve this milestone together.

We have been invited to walk alongside First Nations peoples, and we humbly accept this invitation to contribute to collective efforts, to deliver a future that is hopeful, fair and just.





# Respect

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 a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation, including the Board.	May 2024	Executive General Manager Corporate Services and General Manager Clinical Governance
	Conduct a review of cultural capability and learning needs within our organisation, including that of Good Shepherd Board members.	May 2024	Executive General Manager Corporate Services, Executive General Manager Good Shepherd Institute and General Manager Clinical Governance
	Create an internal intranet Reconciliation page with updated resources and activities for the workforce	Aug 2023	Lead: Executive General Manager, Ecosystem Enablement Support: Senior Aboriginal Cultural Advisor
	Identify cultural awareness activities for RAP Working Group members to participate in	July 2023	Lead: Senior Aboriginal Cultural Advisor Support: General Manager Clinical Governance
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.	September 2023	Lead: Senior Aboriginal Cultural Advisor Support: RAP Working Group and Manager, Inclusion & Cultural Safety



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	Increase staff and Board understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	May 2024	Lead: Manager Inclusion & Cultural Safety and Senior Aboriginal Cultural Advisor Support: RAP Working Group
	Invite Traditional Owners of the land, skies, and waterways to provide a Welcome to Country at significant Good Shepherd events	May 2024	Executive General Manager, Ecosystem Enablement and Executive General Manager, Client Services
	Provide an Acknowledgement of Country at all external and internal events and meetings as per Good Shepherd policy	May 2024	Lead: Chief Executive Officer Support: Executive Leadership Team
	Support staff by providing culturally appropriate resources regarding the delivery of an Acknowledgement of Country	May 2024	Manager, Inclusion & Cultural Safety
	Display Acknowledgement of Country plaques at all Good Shepherd locations in consultation with Traditional Custodians.	January 2024	Lead: Executive General manager Corporate Services Support: Senior Aboriginal Cultural Advisor
	Promote the option for staff to include the Country they're working on in their email signatures	December 2023	Executive General Manager, Corporate Services



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning and history of NAIDOC Week.	June 2023	Manager, Inclusion & Cultural Safety
	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area and encourage staff to attend.	June 2023	Executive General Manager Client Services
	RAP Working Group, members of the Executive Leadership Team and senior leaders to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July 2023	Lead: RAP Working Group Co-Chairs and Secretariat Support: RAP Working Group





# 'Ballerrt Kulin – Strong Man'

Simone Thomson, proud Wurundjeri and Yorta Yorta woman

In the Aboriginal world, we are defined by our totems which have been passed down through our family line over thousands of years. This is who we are spiritually connected to, and who we believe guides and protects us. Our spirit animals are only from the countries in which our songlines are from – we do not choose them. They choose us.

Uncle Ronny's Yorta-Yorta totems on his father's Moira Clan side is the Kangaroo, strong and agile – curious. His Ulupna Clan totem is the Emu – inquisitive, social and friendly though enjoys his solitude. Through his father's and great-grandfather's Yarra-Yarra Clan of the Wurundjeri Tribe, Uncle Ron's totem is the Bronze Winged Pigeon who is always cautious and never far from water.

Black and red feathers represent his mother's Guntijmarra Clans' totem which is the Black Cockatoo. They have a sacred voice and are known to be good communicators, intelligent and loving.

We have no written word; our symbols tell our stories. A person is represented by the 'U' symbol, or 'n'. From the bird's eye view, a person sitting crossed legged on the ground makes this shape. Community is always represented by the circle and 'U' symbols; people sitting around the campfire speaking to one another, listening to the stories of the Elders, learning from our teachers. The strong connection Uncle Ronny has to his people is represented in the communities shown throughout Country and the journey tracks that lead him from one to the other.

Uncle Ron is of the river country, his connection to water is crucial as this is a healing and spiritual place. River red-gum trees line the banks of the river indicating the strength of his relationship to the trees as a proud Aboriginal man. These trees are used for our hunting tools symbolising his role as a protector and warrior. His journey tracks along the river are seen as his kangaroo and emu totem tracks – they tell of his journey throughout his life and the obstacles he has faced – it has never been a straight road.

Small, arced mounds line the riverbank. They are the connections to his family spread across Country. They are the connections of the past from his ancestors who continue to walk beside him on this life journey. They are always present, they are always near.

The traditional language of the Wurundjeri People is Woi-Wurrung. In the Woi-Wurrung language, the name Wurundjeri is in two parts. 'Wurun', meaning the manna gum tree, and 'djeri', the white grub that lives in the tree – the witchetty grub. The clusters of gum leaves represent the lands of the Wurundjeri People, and reflect Uncle Ron's bloodline to his ancestral lands, and acknowledges the lands on which he lives and works.

The strong proud river redgum tree stands centre in the earth. It's spiritual connection to Country is seen through the tiny dots tying it to the soil and the songlines of our ancestors. A strong male's hand reaches for the shield that is carved from the tree, a warrior's hand. This hand represents Uncle Ron and his role as a defender and protector of his people, an up-and-coming Ngarrangetta – a strong leader.

A strong man, a ballerrt kulin.



# Opportunities



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	May 2024	Executive General Manager Corporate Services and General Manager Clinical Governance
	Explore a change to the Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand Constitution to create dedicated First Nations board positions	May 2024	Lead: Chief Executive Officer Support: Executive General Manager Client Services
	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	May 2024	Executive General Manager, Corporate Services and General Manager, Human Resources
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	May 2024	Executive General Manager, Corporate Services
	Update Procurement Policy to include ethical procurement protocols to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses have a fair and equitable opportunity to provide products and services.	May 2024	Executive General Manager Corporate Services and General Manager Clinical Governance



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	Increase our preferred supplier list to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned suppliers.	May 2024	Executive General Manager Corporate Services and General Manager Clinical Governance
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	May 2024	Executive General Manager Corporate Services and General Manager Clinical Governance







# Governance

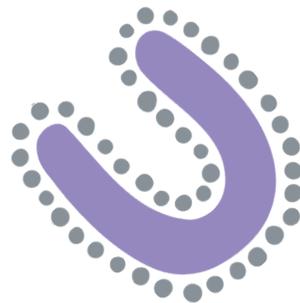
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation.	May 2023	Manager, Inclusion & Cultural Safety
	Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	May 2023	Manager, Inclusion & Cultural Safety
	Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	May 2023	Manager, Inclusion & Cultural Safety
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	June 2023	Executive General Manager Corporate Services and General Manager Clinical Governance
	Engage Good Shepherd's Board, Provincial Leadership Team (PLT) and Executive Leadership Team (ELT) in the delivery of RAP commitments.	June 2023	Lead: Chief Executive Officer Support: RAP Working Group



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	Integrate relevant actions and improvements into our internal CQI system and reporting processes to ensure opportunities for improvement are sustainable, accountable and contribute to systems change.	Feb 2024	Executive General Manager Corporate Services and General Manager Clinical Governance
	Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	December 2023	General Manager Clinical Governance
12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	May 2024	General Manager Clinical Governance
	Report Reconciliation Action Plan progress to the Board, RWG, Executive Leadership Team, Operational Leadership Team and to the Good Shepherd workforce more broadly.	Aug 2023 Nov 2023 Feb 2024 May 2024	Lead: Chief Executive Officer Support: RAP Working Group



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	Contact Reconciliation Australian to ensure that our primary and secondary contacts are up-to-date to ensure we are receiving important correspondence.	May 2023	Manager, Inclusion & Cultural Safety
	Follow up with Reconciliation Australia if we have not yet received our unique reporting link to participate in the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	Aug 2023	Manager, Inclusion & Cultural Safety
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	May 2024	Manager, Inclusion & Cultural Safety



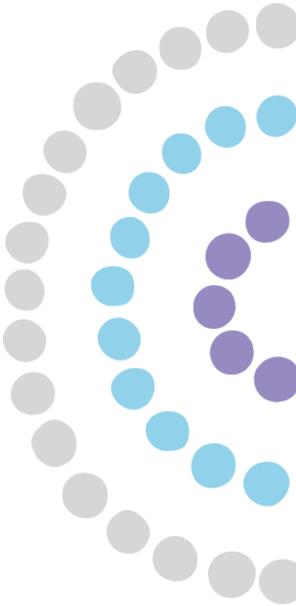


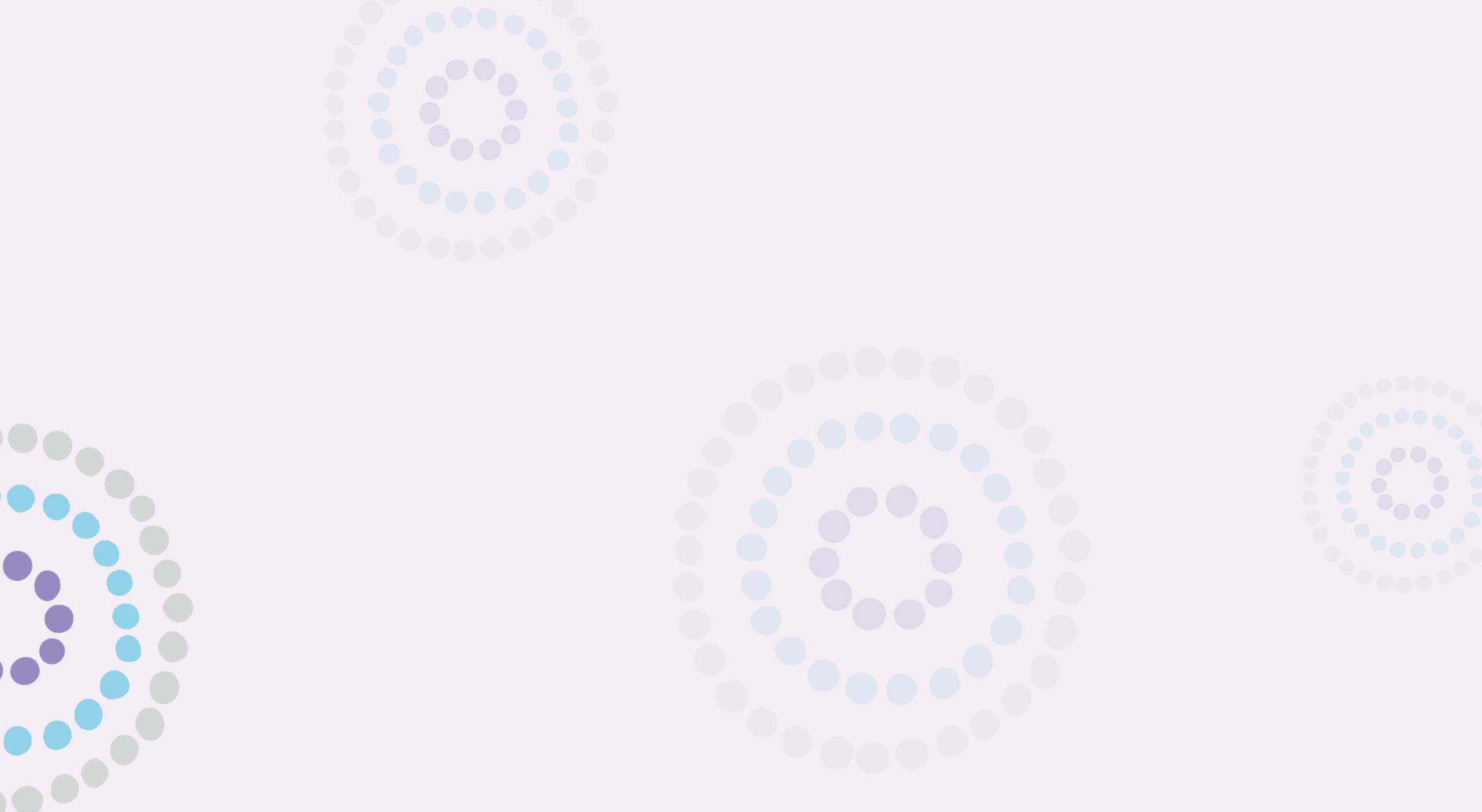
OLDFASHIONED  
LIVING  
CONSCIOUS  
CULTURE  
KORORABANA

Foundation  
People









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