



Centacare
Catholic Family Services

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

2015 - 2017



Reconciliation
ACTION PLAN
INNOVATE RAP





RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN 2015 - 2017

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“Ngarrindjeri fresh water food source”

Painted by Ngarrindjeri artists
and Centacare workers Rosslyn
Richards, Natasha Sumner,
Lyn Lovegrove Niemz and
participants of the Family
Relationships Services Australia
Conference, Adelaide 2014

Painting representing Ngarrindjeri fresh
water food source, River Murray, Coorong







Dale P. West
Director

Welcome to the Centacare Reconciliation Action Plan

We are pleased to reaffirm our commitment to a reconciled Australia with this RAP.

Through this plan, we all will walk together in solidarity as we negotiate and embrace the principles of reconciliation.

We believe this is a personal and value-based experience of all Australians, as we move towards respect for the land, culture, heritage, and each other.

At Centacare, our spiritual underpinnings - informed by Catholic Social Teaching principles - ensure our own practices model the values of reconciliation.

We celebrate our cultural diversity as well as our differences, in order to broaden our understanding of the lived reality of all.

I fully support Centacare's Aboriginal staff. Their cultural safety is highlighted through their membership of the Aboriginal Leadership Committee and guided by our Aboriginal Worker Support Policy.

All Centacare staff are responsible for cultural safety, and display this commitment through engaging in our Aboriginal Cultural Training and cultural supervision.

We hope this RAP leaves a lasting imprint on our organisation.



John Lochowiak
Aboriginal Services Manager

Message from Aboriginal Services Manager

I am honoured to have helped prepare this RAP for Centacare Catholic Family Services.

As an organisation, we are working hard to create a bright future founded on diversity and mutual respect. The nation's enduring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture is at the heart of this commitment. Centacare's RAP is about accepting our cultural differences and standing as one. By relating to one another through our similarities and talking openly about our differences, we learn to embrace and celebrate our diversity.

Our vision for reconciliation is lived through our words, beliefs and actions.





Our vision for Reconciliation

Centacare's spiritual underpinnings, informed by Catholic Social Teaching Principles, ensure that our own practices model the values of reconciliation which have informed our Reconciliation Action plan. Centacare believes that reconciliation should be a personal and value-based experience of all Australians, in the light of shared respect for the lands, cultures, heritage, languages and communities.

We believe, acknowledge and respect the wisdom and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, and the pathways and opportunities they create through their leadership to true reconciliation.

Through respectful relationships in creating opportunities for improving the cultural, emotional and spiritual well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, we believe Australia as a nation is enriched.





Our Business

Centacare Catholic Family Services is a Catholic community services organisation delivering a range of services across the Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide.

We are a not-for-profit organisation with a strong focus on social justice.

Centacare strives to support people in our community who have been marginalised and who are experiencing hardships and challenges in their lives.

This support is provided regardless of race, economic circumstance, sexual orientation, religious belief or cultural background.

Our service provision is guided by our vision for a community where people can experience the opportunity to reach their full potential.

We provide relevant, authentic and effective services to enhance the quality of life of our clients, and enable them to participate fully in the community.

Our work encompasses a range of sectors including disability, family, youth and children, health and wellbeing, employment, education and training, homelessness and domestic violence.

Our services are located in metropolitan and rural areas.

Centacare is a nationally accredited organisation assessed against the Quality Improvement Council (QIC) Australian Health and Community Service Core Standards and the Community Services Standards.

Quality is embedded in the culture of Centacare and is integrated into the operations and working life of the organisation, resulting in the provision of a consistently high standard of quality and effective client centred services.

Centacare employs over 500 staff. An Aboriginal Leadership Committee made up of Aboriginal workers, operates as an advisory, information and support body to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and management within Centacare.

Centacare's Manager of Aboriginal Services chairs this committee.





Our Reconciliation Action Plan

Centacare's journey towards reconciliation began with the establishment of the Aboriginal Leadership Committee and the appointment of an Aboriginal Services Manager.

The Committee brought together Aboriginal workers from across the organisation to act as an advisory, information, and support body to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers and Centacare management.

The Committee aims to promote effective collaboration between management, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers and community to ensure decisions are well informed, respectful and sensitive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols and issues. The Committee's first task was the development of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy, supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the workplace.

The aim of this policy is to demonstrate best practice around how to fully support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers both structurally, systemically and through increased cultural competence of management and staff within Centacare.

A reconciliation statement was subsequently prepared, with workers across the organisation involved in the process through workshops and training sessions.

The Centacare Reconciliation Statement was officially launched in 2008. Advice was then sought from Reconciliation Australia on developing our Reconciliation Action Plan.

The Plan brings together strategies to achieve Centacare's vision for quality outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and aims to enrich both Centacare and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities by working collaboratively with the Aboriginal Leadership Committee, consulting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and ensuring that all workers participate in the journey towards reconciliation.

The Reconciliation Action Plan is championed by Centacare's Assistant Director and Manager of Aboriginal Services.

The Reconciliation Action Plan is a shared responsibility across the organisation.

The key working groups involved in establishing and developing the plan are the Aboriginal Leadership Committee, Director/Directors Office, Human Resources and Systems Improvement to ensure quality implementation in the development and review of policies and procedures.







Relationships

Centacare understands the importance of working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to reach mutually beneficial outcomes in the services we deliver. Centacare is committed to building a relationship of trust by working collaboratively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to ensure that services are delivered in a culturally appropriate way where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can feel safe in accessing our services.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
Continue a Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group made up of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers and non-Aboriginal workers to monitor RAP development and progress	Aboriginal Services Manager	February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RAP Working Group meets at least twice annually to monitor and report on RAP implementation. RAP progress is documented and published on <i>What's New</i> on the Centacare Portal
Embed and enshrine the principles of reconciliation in the culture of Centacare	Assistant Director	February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centacare's Reconciliation Statement is widely distributed and displayed at sites and offices Process towards reconciliation evidenced in policies, procedures, strategic plan, and annual report
Build relationships and trust with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to enhance awareness about Centacare services	Managers, Program Managers	February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying and making contact with relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations Continual support of the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry also known as the Otherway Centre Continual involvement with local and National Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council Assistant Director Sponsorship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander/ Centacare involvement in community events Attending Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community forum meetings and establishing community profile with community leaders or Elders
Establish links with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations to keep abreast of emerging issues, and explore opportunities to expand or enhance Centacare services	Executive Managers, Program Managers	February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance at conferences, forums and workshops on issues of health, homelessness, leadership and service delivery Community Elders consulted through the Aboriginal Leadership Committee on issues of importance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
Promote a culture of consultation and involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the strategic direction, policies and practices of Centacare	Executive Managers, Program Managers	February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with Aboriginal Leadership Committee occurs when developing and implementing any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policy • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander worker included on an interview panel where Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander job applicant is interviewed • Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander workers assist in tender writing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific programs • Manager Aboriginal Services supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers in all HR situations
Aboriginal Leadership Committee continues to act as an advisory and information forum on culturally appropriate and respectful approaches around care and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait workers and clients	Assistant Director	December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of four Aboriginal Leadership Committee meetings per year are held and actions reported to Executive Management meetings • Managers and workers consult with Aboriginal Services Manager in dealing with issues involving Aboriginal or Torres Strait workers or clients
Promote the reconciliation message and encourage all Centacare workers to contribute to the reconciliation process	Executive Managers	February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workers participate in events such as National Reconciliation Week, Sorry Day, Harmony Day • Anniversary of National Apology Day is observed by taking part in official events • Events highlighting reconciliation are held to engage workers in conversations around reconciliation including at least one event in National Reconciliation Week • Host an annual event to celebrate National Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council week and invite staff and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Members to come together. This event will be reported as a story on 'What's New' on our Centacare Portal.



Respect

Centacare recognizes the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' connection to land, culture and community, and strives to embed a culture of understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols in its approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers and service delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
Achieve across the organisation, an awareness and acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and past injustices, to promote tolerance and understanding amongst workers, and to disseminate this to the wider community that Centacare reaches	Directors, Executive Managers	February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All workers undergo compulsory Aboriginal Cultural Awareness training Reconciliation Statements are displayed in all sites Smoking Ceremonies and Aboriginal performing artists included in official openings and celebrations on Traditional Lands
Acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Traditional Custodians of the lands and foster respect of heritage, customs and traditions amongst all Centacare workers	Aboriginal Services Manager, Assistant Director	February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protocols document on Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country is developed and implemented Cultural Awareness Protocols are observed and practiced across the organisation Welcome to Country or Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners precedes meetings and events as per the developed protocol Welcome to Country is performed at all General Staff Meetings Statement of recognition included on all email messages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Map of Country and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags displayed at all sites
Celebrate historical and cultural events that are important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples so that workers have broader knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' histories, cultures and issues	Executive Managers	December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion and involvement in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community events including NAIDOC Week Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers have approval for Friday of annual National Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council Week to be taken as an additional leave with full pay to attend events Sponsorship is provided to the National Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council Week Planning Committee. Visual media such as artworks, maps, flags are displayed throughout the organisation's sites
Respect and value the skills, knowledge, wisdom, experiences, and diversity of cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers within the organisation	Directors, Executive Managers, Program Managers	February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisational policies reviewed periodically for cultural appropriateness Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers consulted in all tender submissions that contain an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander component
Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers to work within a culturally respected framework which allows for cultural and community expectations, including sorry business	Executive Managers	February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Centacare Aboriginal Policy provides for time to be used outside of the work role to accommodate cultural, community and family expectations and events Sorry business is respected with bereavement leave written into the Centacare Aboriginal Policy
Work to ensure that the working environment is free from all forms of racism, whether intended or unintended, that any issues of experienced racism are addressed, and that all workers are treated with dignity, courtesy and respect	Assistant Director	February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In consultation with workers, a policy for addressing racism is developed and implemented



Opportunities

Centacare believes service delivery that has been informed by consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities will encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to access our services, and contribute to improving their health and welfare.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
Participate in community and government initiatives towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health equality to contribute to 'Closing The Gap' in life expectancy between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples	Executive Managers, Program Managers	February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active participation in community and government initiatives that work towards improving health and life expectancy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples Participation in events aimed at highlighting the issue of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health such as National Close The Gap Day
Encourage and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment, and foster opportunities for professional development	Executive Managers	February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment strategies reviewed to ensure they are culturally inclusive and provide equal opportunity Aboriginal representative is included in selection process for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers encouraged to seek and undertake professional development courses, and to apply for positions within the organisation to advance their careers Work experience opportunities are made available where appropriate for secondary and TAFE Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students The Centacare Aboriginal Policy is reviewed periodically to ensure content is relevant and effective in guiding the organisation's approach to recruitment, retention, and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers
Assist and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers to live the balance well between being members of their families and communities and Centacare workers members	Directors, Executive Managers, Managers	February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal cultural protocols are documented providing guidance for workers in developing respectful relations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait colleagues and clients. Aboriginal Leadership Committee is routinely consulted in the development of new policies and reviews of policies to ensure unique needs of Aboriginal people are considered Regular communication occurs with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers on matters and events impacting on them Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers have cultural clinical supervision with Aboriginal Services Manager
Consider supplier diversity to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses when undertaking procurement of goods and services	Executive Managers, Program Managers	February 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness of using and engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses for service provision Review procurement policies barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses so they are able to be addressed. Explore how Centacare's existing policies and procedures may prohibit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses in tendering for the supply of goods and services to Centacare Aboriginal artists' works are procured for display at sites Aboriginal performers are contracted to provide traditional ceremonies at special events Aboriginal catering services used at special events

Tracking progress and reporting

Centacare’s commitment to our Reconciliation Action Plan will be monitored through regular reviews to ensure accountability and relevance

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
Develop and launch RAP	Assistant Director, Manager of Aboriginal Services, Aboriginal Leadership Committee	March 2016	RAP sent to Reconciliation Australia and launched on Centacare website
Monitor progress of RAP actions	Assistant Director, Manger of Aboriginal Services, Aboriginal Leadership Committee	March 2016 December 2016	Progress reported to Director and Executive Team bi-annually
Report progress of RAP actions	Assistant Director	December 2016	Centacare Annual Report will include progress report on RAP actions
Review and update RAP	Assistant Director, Manger of Aboriginal Services, Aboriginal Leadership Committee	June 2016 December 2016 September annually	Updated RAP published on website and sent to Reconciliation Australia biennially RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire is completed and submitted to Reconciliation Australia annually.





Centacare

Reconciliation Statement

Centacare acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples past, present and future as the traditional custodians of the land and recognises the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to self-determination. Their spiritual relationship with the land and their cultural knowledge, languages and customs are passed down through generations and continue to be important today. Centacare acknowledges the past policies and practices of the Australian Government to remove all visible signs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditions and customs. Centacare further acknowledges there have been Church based policies and practices that have resulted in subsequent injustices, disempowerment of and disadvantage to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Centacare embraces the Government's official statement of apology to Australia's Stolen Generations. In line with the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Statement, the leadership of Centacare is committed to meeting the challenge of enshrining the spirit of reconciliation across the organisation by:

- Providing services which recognise the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Working proactively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples towards bridging the gap by striving for positive health and well being outcomes.
- Providing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness training for all staff to encourage respect and challenge attitudes in order to achieve positive service outcomes for Aboriginal peoples and communities.
- Providing a culturally safe and respectful framework so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff can fulfil their personal aspirations, and respond to their family and cultural obligations.
- Increasing the employment rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Centacare.
- Acknowledging the leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within the organisation through valuing, respecting and acting upon the wisdom and knowledge they bring to the organisation.
- Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to advocate and strive for equity and justice for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Centacare will continue to walk in partnership with all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.


Dale West
Director


John Lochowiak
Manager for Aboriginal Services

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