

Draft Reconciliation Statement of Intent

1. Message from the Chief Executive

Northeast Health Wangaratta is privileged to provide care on Bpangerang Country and recognises the strong and enduring connections of Yorta Yorta Peoples across our region. Our approach to reconciliation is grounded in listening to local Aboriginal voices and building genuine partnerships that reflect the unique needs, strengths and aspirations of our communities.

As a major regional health service, Northeast Health Wangaratta recognises the important role we play in supporting improved health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait people and communities.

We acknowledge that health systems have not always been culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait people. This has contributed to ongoing inequities in health outcomes and experiences of care.

Our commitment is to ensure that our health services are culturally safe, respectful and responsive. We will do this by strengthening partnerships with Aboriginal organisations and communities, supporting culturally safe care, and contributing to reconciliation through meaningful action.

This Reconciliation Statement of Intent outlines how we will focus our efforts to make a positive and lasting contribution to reconciliation.

2. Our Commitment to Reconciliation

Reconciliation is about building respectful relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples and addressing the inequalities that continue to impact Aboriginal communities.

For Northeast Health Wangaratta, reconciliation means ensuring that Aboriginal patients and families feel safe, respected and supported when accessing our services. We recognise the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people and communities to lead decisions that impact their health and wellbeing and are committed to supporting self-determination through genuine partnership and shared decision making.

It also means recognising the leadership of Aboriginal organisations and communities in improving Aboriginal health and working in partnership to achieve shared outcomes.

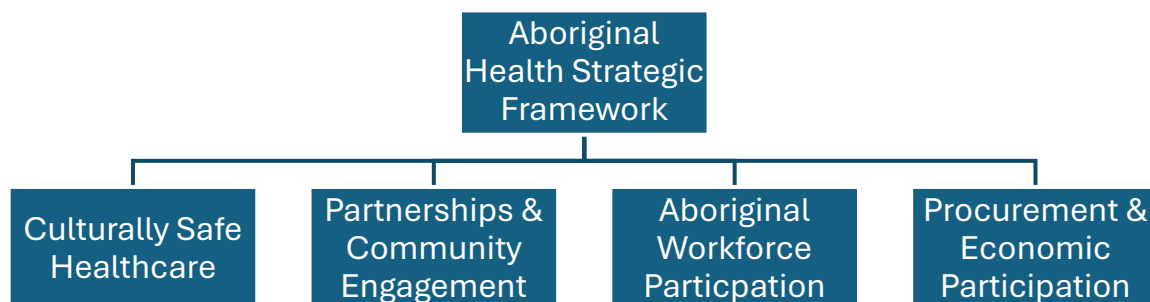
This Statement of Intent outlines the areas where NHW will focus its efforts to contribute meaningfully to reconciliation.

The Reconciliation Statement of Intent outlines NHW's commitment to reconciliation. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategic Framework provides the strategic direction, priorities and accountability measures through which these commitments will be achieved.

Our approach aligns with the principles of the Reconciliation Action Plan framework while ensuring that our commitments reflect the areas where NHW can have the greatest impact.

3. Our Reconciliation Pillars

NHW's reconciliation commitments are organised across four pillars that align with the principles of the Reconciliation Action Plan framework. These pillars guide how NHW will contribute to reconciliation through our services, partnerships and organisational practices.



Pillar 1. Culturally Safe Healthcare

Providing culturally safe healthcare is central to improving Aboriginal health outcomes.

NHW is committed to creating healthcare environments where Aboriginal patients and families feel respected, supported and safe.

Culturally safe healthcare requires staff to understand the impact of history, culture and community on health and to provide care that respects the identity and experiences of Aboriginal people.

Our Commitments

NHW will strengthen culturally safe care by:

- implementing the NHW Cultural Safety Framework and playbook
- delivering cultural safety education across the workforce
- strengthening the role of Aboriginal Liaison Officers as part of the clinical team
- embedding cultural safety into policies, procedures and patient care practices
- improving visibility and recognition of Aboriginal culture within our services

Pillar 2. Partnerships and Community Engagement

Strong partnerships with Aboriginal organisations and communities are essential to improving Aboriginal health outcomes.

NHW recognises the leadership role of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) and values the expertise and knowledge within Aboriginal communities.

Our role is to work in partnership, share knowledge and support regional collaboration.

Our Commitments

NHW will strengthen relationships by:

- building respectful partnerships with Aboriginal organisations and communities
- collaborating with regional health services and Aboriginal health organisations
- supporting regional initiatives that improve Aboriginal health outcomes
- ensuring Aboriginal voices inform service planning, improvement and decisions that affect Aboriginal health outcomes.

Pillar 3. Aboriginal Workforce Participation

Increasing Aboriginal participation in the health workforce contributes to culturally safe care and strengthens services for Aboriginal patients.

NHW is committed to creating an inclusive workplace where Aboriginal staff feel respected, supported and valued.

Our Commitments

NHW will seek to:

- encourage Aboriginal employment opportunities where possible
- support culturally safe workplaces for Aboriginal staff
- provide professional development opportunities
- recognise and respect cultural knowledge and contributions

NHW recognises that increasing Aboriginal workforce participation requires ongoing commitment and collaboration with education and community partners.

Pillar 4. Procurement and Economic Participation

Supporting Aboriginal businesses contributes to economic participation and community development.

NHW will seek opportunities to engage Aboriginal businesses where possible, particularly within non-clinical procurement areas.

Our Commitments

NHW will explore opportunities to engage Aboriginal suppliers in areas such as:

- facilities services
- cleaning and environmental services
- office supplies and consumables
- furniture and equipment
- cultural training and consulting services

Leadership and Accountability

Reconciliation requires sustained leadership and organisational commitment.

NHW will embed reconciliation and cultural safety within our leadership and governance processes.

Our commitments are evidenced and supported through the Aboriginal Health Strategic Framework and the NHW Cultural Safety Framework

NHW will continue to review and strengthen these commitments over time.

Working Together

Improving Aboriginal health outcomes requires collaboration across the health system and with Aboriginal communities.

NHW is committed to working alongside Aboriginal organisations, communities and regional partners to create a health service that is culturally safe, inclusive and responsive.

Looking Ahead

Through this Reconciliation Statement of Intent, Northeast Health Wangaratta commits to strengthening culturally safe healthcare, building respectful partnerships and contributing to improved Aboriginal health outcomes across our region.

We recognise that reconciliation is an ongoing journey and remain committed to listening, learning and working in partnership with Aboriginal communities.