



REFLECT

Reconciliation Action Plan

**Mental Health Australia Reflect
Reconciliation Action Plan
for January 2018 - June 2019**

Melinda Brown
Untitled, 2015
Oil on Canvas

This painting represents the complexities experienced by people who have a mental illness. The small flower in the center of each circle represents the individual surrounded by a circle of love and support made up of family, community and support organisations.

The various tracks between the circles represent the linking of support to the wider community, and the larger yellow dots represent the healing track which supports the healing process. The different patches of coloured dots in the background indicate the many challenges which face people affected by mental illness.

The flannel flower is described as being "furnished with rays" and represents hope, and the flower's ability to survive in difficult environments represents the resilience for those who suffer from mental illnesses.

Biography

Melinda Brown is an Ngunnawal woman who now resides in the Northern Rivers, NSW, Bundjalung Nation. Mel has a Masters of Indigenous Studies – Healing and Trauma, and has spent the past 14 years as a Counsellor, Cultural Trainer, Artist and published Author. Mel's passion is educating people in relation to improving services to Aboriginal communities and understanding the complexity of issues which affect Aboriginal Peoples.



**RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN**
REFLECT

Our business

Mental Health Australia is the peak, national non-government organisation representing and promoting the interests of the Australian mental health sector. Our vision is mentally healthy people, mentally healthy communities. Mental Health Australia's members include national organisations representing consumers, carers, special needs groups, clinical service providers, public and private mental health service providers, researchers and state/territory community mental health peak bodies as well as organisations with a particular interest in mental health. There are currently 60 voting members of Mental Health Australia and 40 non-voting members, who meet twice yearly to collaborate with other key sector organisations at our Members Policy Forums.

Mental Health Australia aims to promote mentally healthy communities, educate Australians on mental health issues, influence mental health reform so that government policies address all contemporary mental health issues, conduct research on mental health issues, and carry out regular consultation to represent the best interests of our members, partners and the community. Mental Health Australia also manages several key projects, including the National Register of Mental Health Consumers and Carers and World Mental Health Day as well as auspicing the National Mental Health Consumer & Carer Forum.

As at June 30 Mental Health Australia employed 14 people, none identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

Mental Health Australia is committed to reconciliation in Australia. We believe that together we can achieve a reconciled, just and equitable country.

Our commitment to developing our first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan was confirmed on 9 October 2013, when Mental Health Australia's Board endorsed and signed a 'Statement of Commitment to Develop a Reconciliation Action Plan'. Our Reflect (RAP) was built into our organisations' Strategic Plan (2014-16) and informed internal and external policies and strategies. A Working Group was established in October 2013 which guided the development of our (RAP). The Working Group continues to champion the (RAP) internally, and consists of 4 Mental Health Australia staff members, including a member of the executive.

In 2015, Mental Health Australia implemented actions against its first (RAP). The first (RAP) outlined our approach to create meaningful relationships, enhance respect and promote sustainable opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians within our organisation and beyond. Key outcomes from this (RAP) included:

- the development of Mental Health Australia's protocol for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country in consultation with the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
- Mental Health Australia CEO Frank Quinlan attending the Garma Festival and promoting his learnings from this event to the broader mental health sector
- maintaining and building upon our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations in the mental health sector
- investing in a local Aboriginal artwork to display in the office and promote awareness
- internal educational activities such as screening the National Apology for National Reconciliation Week.

As a result of our first (RAP), Mental Health Australia's staff awareness of issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and specific actions we can take to enhance reconciliation in Australia has grown. This second Reflect (RAP) outlines our approach to continue to build on the foundations established under our first Reflect (RAP). In developing this second (RAP), Mental Health Australia has committed to actions, which move us beyond building foundations and into actualising some of our commitments. Reflecting this commitment, we have incorporated some actions from the 'Innovate (RAP)' template into our new Reflect (RAP).

Through this second (RAP), Mental Health Australia will continue to build relationships both internally and externally, and raise awareness with stakeholders to ensure there is shared understanding and ownership of the principles of reconciliation. This (RAP) will guide Mental Health Australia to identify key partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and build on existing relationships and activities, such as:

- continued consultation with Reconciliation Australia
- inclusion of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander representative as a member of our (RAP) Working Group
- attendance at key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events
- strengthening relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders to better include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in our comments on government policy
- ensuring outputs from our project work are culturally accessible
- encouraging our members to be incorporated into the (RAP) process.

Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. (RAP) Working Group actively monitors (RAP) development and implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander representative to be included in the (RAP) Working Group membership. Meet twice annually to monitor and report on (RAP) implementation. Liaise with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultant and/or an organisation to provide advice/guidance regarding specific (RAP) Working Group activities. Provide advice to staff and the Mental Health Australia Board on progress against the (RAP) deliverables. 	<p>Jan 2018</p> <p>Jan & Jun each year</p> <p>Reviewed Jan & Jun each year</p> <p>Monthly staff meetings and regular Board meetings</p>	Deputy CEO
2. Participate in and celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage staff to attend a NRW event. 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. 	<p>May – Jun each year</p> <p>May – Jun each year</p> <p>May – Jun each year</p>	Director, External Relations
3. Develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations to support positive outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations within our sphere of influence that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey. Ensure Mental Health Australia communications plans incorporate the commitment to working with relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. 	<p>Jun 2018</p> <p>Reviewed Jan & Jun each year</p>	Director, External Relations
4. Raise internal and external awareness of our (RAP) to promote reconciliation across our business and sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness amongst all staff across the organisation about our (RAP) commitments, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> uploading the (RAP) to MHA's Website sending regular email updates to all staff on (RAP) progress including (RAP) progress as a standing agenda item for all staff meetings. Engage and inform key internal stakeholders of their responsibilities within our (RAP). 	<p>Reviewed Jan & Jun each year</p> <p>Jan 2018</p>	CEO and Deputy CEO

Tracking and Progress

Action	Targets	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Build support for the (RAP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define resource needs for (RAP) development and implementation. Define systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on (RAP) activities. Report to staff on (RAP) activity implementation progress at Mental Health Australia monthly staff meetings. 	<p>Jan 2018</p> <p>Jan 2018</p> <p>Monthly</p>	Deputy CEO
2. Report (RAP) achievements, challenges and learnings to Reconciliation Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the (RAP) Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia annually. Investigate participating in the (RAP) Barometer. 	<p>Sep each year</p> <p>Jun 2019</p>	Deputy CEO
3. Review and Refresh (RAP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new (RAP) based on learnings, challenges and achievements. Submit a new draft (RAP) to Reconciliation Australia for formal review and endorsement. 	<p>Jan 2019</p> <p>Mar 2019</p>	Deputy CEO

Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Engage employees in cultural learning opportunities to increase understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capture data and measure our staff's current level of knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievement. 	Jun 2018	Deputy CEO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore further ongoing cultural learning needs with employees in all areas of our business and consider various ways cultural learning can be provided (online, face to face workshops or cultural immersion). 	Jan 2019	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement targeted cultural awareness training, (which builds on that already undertaken in 2016) in consultation with Mental Health Australia staff and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultants. Promote opportunities for (RAP) Working Group Members, HR staff and key leadership staff to engage in further cultural education and training. 	Jun 2019 Reviewed Jan & Jun each year	
2. Participate in and celebrate NAIDOC Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness and share information amongst staff of the meaning of NAIDOC Week which includes information about the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. 	Jul each year	Director, External Relations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting community events in our local area. 	Jul each year	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure our Working Group participates in an external NAIDOC Week event. 	Jul each year	
3. Engage employees in understanding the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols, such as Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country, to ensure there is a shared meaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore who the Traditional Owners are of the lands and waters in our local area. 	Jun 2018	Director, External Relations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a list of key contacts for organising a Welcome to Country and maintaining respectful partnerships. 	Jan 2019	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement and communicate Mental Health Australia's protocol for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country. 	Reviewed Jan & Jun each year	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite a Traditional Owner to provide a Welcome to Country at significant events, including Mental Health Australia Members Policy Forums. 	Reviewed Jan & Jun each year	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of important internal and external meetings. 	Reviewed Jan & Jul each year	

Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Investigate methods to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate strategies to make Mental Health Australia an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. 	Jun 2019	Deputy CEO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate opportunities to encourage the broader mental health sector to consider policies and procedures for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and development. 	Jun 2019	
2. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update procurement policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers for procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses. 	Reviewed Jan & Jun each year	Deputy CEO
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage staff to include a quote from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander owned organisation when seeking quotes to engage providers to deliver services for Mental Health Australia. 	Reviewed Jan & Jun each year	