

# Standing strong with community in reconciliation



## Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians

cohealth acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our offices stand – the Boon Wurrung, Wurundjeri and Wathaurung people of the Kulin Nation – and pays respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge the Stolen Generations and the historical and ongoing impact of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We also recognise the resilience, strength and pride of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' living culture is the oldest continuing culture in the world, and we acknowledge that the lands and waterways are a place of age-old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal.

## Acknowledgement of Artist

The artwork used throughout this publication is *Wellness Dreaming*, by Ngardarb Francine Riches.



# cohealth 2020-2023 Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan

**cohealth's vision for reconciliation is where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have social, health and wellbeing equity, achieved through an understanding of our shared history, deep listening, ongoing learning and reflection.**

We developed our Reconciliation Action Plan through consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, clients, consumers, Traditional Owners, partner agencies and staff. Thank you to all who contributed.

## Our reconciliation commitments

### Learning

- All new staff will learn about cohealth's strong commitment to reconciliation when they start at cohealth
- At least 80% of our staff will attend cultural awareness training
- We will offer staff learning opportunities throughout the year, including during National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC week and Close the Gap day
- We will learn about respectful communication and cultural protocols
- We will engage in an organisational truth-telling process

### Listening

- We will hear the voices of our community and be guided by their knowledge
- We will strengthen our partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations

### Improving service delivery

- We will use trauma-informed and culturally safe ways of working
- We will offer community members more opportunities for cultural connection

### Improving access

- We will ensure better access to our services
- We will provide an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander GP clinic in the Western suburbs

### Improving employment opportunities

- We will improve recruitment processes to be more accessible for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- We will ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are supported through cultural supervision and staff support networks
- We will ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff have access to professional development opportunities and are encouraged to advance their careers

### Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses

- We will increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses we support and where we obtain goods/ services from

### Advocating

- We will continue to support Uluru Statement from the Heart
- We will support advocacy campaigns of Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations
- We recognise January 26th is a day of sorrow and not celebration
- We will use our voices to advocate for change



# Our reconciliation journey

**2014 - 2016**  
First cohealth Innovate  
Reconciliation Action Plan



**2016 - 2018**  
cohealth Stretch  
Reconciliation Action Plan

**2019**  
Support for Uluru  
Statement from the Heart

**2020 - 2023**  
cohealth Stretch  
Reconciliation Action Plan



2014

2015

2016

2017

2018

2019

2020

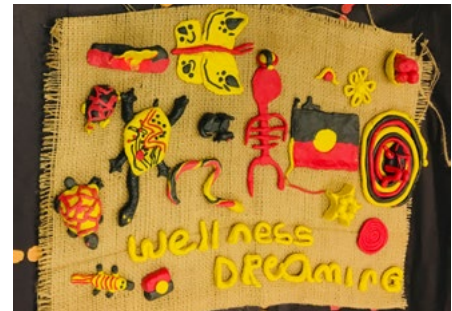
2021

2022

2023

**2015**

Wellness Dreaming training  
program commenced



Commencement of cohealth's  
Reconciliation Collaborative  
(Staff Working Group)

**2018**

NAIDOC Week: Yarn Bombing &  
Because of Her, We Can! Project



Balit Narrum (Aboriginal and  
Torres Strait Islander staff working  
group) formed

**2020**

Recruitment of First  
Nations Board Director,  
Lorraine Parsons



## Our Services

**cohealth mission:** Improve health and wellbeing for all and tackle inequality, in partnership with people and the communities they live in.

**cohealth values:** *Inquiry and Innovation, Respect, Courage, Social Equity, Trust*



**cohealth** is a large community health organisation based in the north and western suburbs of Melbourne. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing has always been a priority at cohealth. We are passionate about closing the health gap that exists between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous people, and are committed to providing culturally safe and accessible services.

### We provide a range of health and wellbeing services, such as:

- Medical & nursing
- Dental
- Allied health
- Mental health & counselling
- Alcohol and other drugs
- Homelessness
- Family violence
- Children and family support
- Victim assistance program
- Healthy ageing



### cohealth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Team

We engage and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to manage their health care needs, provide care coordination services and improve access to health services. The team offers:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Nurses
- Paediatric and multi-disciplinary clinic for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out of home care (Braybrook)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Support and Engagement workers
- Planned Activity Groups (Laverton)
- Billabong BBQ (Collingwood): Community connect over a healthy meal and have access to free services in a comfortable environment
- Foodshare (Braybrook): Provides a healthy meal, groceries and an opportunity to connect with community and health and wellbeing services

To have a yarn with someone from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health team, email: [Aboriginal&TSIHealth@cohealth.org.au](mailto:Aboriginal&TSIHealth@cohealth.org.au) or call:

**Braybrook:** 9448 5507

**Fitzroy:** 9448 5531



**To find out about other cohealth services visit [cohealth.org.au](http://cohealth.org.au)**