

**Working Together**  
**Walking Together**  
**Making the Change Together**

Aboriginal Reconciliation Plan 2024-28



## Acknowledgement of Country

Richmond Wellbeing acknowledges that we stand on Nyoongar country. Richmond Wellbeing pays respect to the Elders past and present who are the Traditional Custodians of this land, acknowledging them as the holders of deep wisdom and culture.

## Acknowledgement of Lived Experience

We acknowledge the individual and collective expertise of those with living or lived experience of mental health, and alcohol and other drug challenges. We recognise the vital contribution and the courage of those who share this unique perspective, and thank them for helping us to learn and grow together to achieve better outcomes for all.

We pay tribute and thanks to our service users and their advocates who have walked this journey. We also pay tribute and thanks to the service users and advocates whose courage and actions make it possible for us to have a positive impact today.

## Acknowledgement of Artist

We acknowledge and thank 15 year old Nyoongar artist, Lekisha Eades for allowing us the use of her artwork throughout this Reconciliation Action Plan.

See page 7 and 8 for the artist's story and full artwork.

## A Message From Our Chief Executive Officer

It is now 12 years since Richmond Wellbeing started working with Aboriginal Elders. The McNamara's have been with us for the entirety of this time and the Wilkes for 5 years. It's been an incredible journey of listening and learning from the wisdom of the Elders where we have achieved some important outcomes, but there is still so much more to do. We are committed to continue to listen and learn from the Elders and deepen our knowledge of Aboriginal Culture and ways of working. We are committed to this not only because it will improve the mental health outcomes of Aboriginal people, it will also progress reconciliation in this country and assist in Closing the Gap.

As a specialist mental health provider we see every day the poor mental health outcomes of Aboriginal people and the impact this has on their lives and their communities. We seek to see thriving Aboriginal families and communities and we know that strong minds and strong mental health is a core pillar to this. As a leader in mental health services in WA, we are committed to providing culturally secure and accessible services for Aboriginal people. It is our goal to reduce rates of suicide and mental distress, and in turn, improve the wellbeing of Aboriginal people and their communities.

Richmond Wellbeing are completely committed to the Working Together Walking Together Plan which is endorsed by our Board, and we thank the Elders for their commitment to walking alongside us as teachers, mentors and guides as we make this change together. It is the consistency in this relationship and the long term approach that has enabled us to reach this point and that will see further change in the future.

### Adrian Munro

Chief Executive Officer, Richmond Wellbeing



## A Message From Our Elders

Richmond Wellbeing started working with the Elders almost 12 years ago. If you want to work with Aboriginal people and make a difference in your organisation, this has to be the starting point. In this time, we've seen lots of things move forward at Richmond Wellbeing as we have worked with Adrian and the leaders of Richmond Wellbeing. We still have lots more to achieve and so much more improvement we need to see in the mental health of Aboriginal people. However, we are committed to walk alongside Richmond Wellbeing and their boodiyas to make the difference we all want to see.

This plan is an invitation from the Elders to Richmond Wellbeing. If you want to make a difference, if you want to improve the mental health of our communities, take up this invitation. Work with us, walk with us and we will make the change together. All we ask from you is to commit to the process, for the long term, not just a year or two. Listen to the Elders, reflect on what we say, and practice your value of deeply listening and learning. Always have your boodiyas at the table with us. We love working with all of your staff, but the real work is done boodiya to boodiya. Stay with us when it gets difficult, because work like this will get difficult. We will hold the space when things get uncomfortable, we just need you to stay with us and work through the challenges together.

This work means the world to us and we strive to make the world better for our kids, grand kids and great grand kids. We want to see generational change in this country as we work towards reconciliation and closing the gap. As Aboriginal people, we have been inviting whadjula people in Australia to partner with us for decades. We keep asking for Australians to accept this invitation because we don't want our grand kids to still be extending the same invitation when they are Elders. We want to see real and lasting change in this country.

Please don't lose sight of how important this work is to all of us, it is so meaningful and the stakes are high for our people. We are committed to this plan and we invite you to walk together, work together and make the change together.

**Aunty Sandra Wilkes, Uncle Peter Wilkes, Aunty Irene McNamara and Uncle Albert McNamara**  
Metro Elders, Richmond Wellbeing



Aunty Sandra Wilkes and  
Uncle Peter Wilkes



Aunty Irene McNamara and  
Uncle Albert McNamara



## A Message From Our Aboriginal Cultural Lead

My name is Maudie Sketchley, my mother's mob is from Wilman country, and I was born on Whadjuk Boodja.

My Richmond journey has taken me from the National Psychosocial Support Measures and Commonwealth Psychosocial Supports to the Moorditj Djerpin Wirrin programs over the past 4 years. Last year I was appointed as one of Richmond Wellbeing's Aboriginal Cultural Leads (a new position) and took on the whole role in March 2024. The Aboriginal Cultural Lead role encompasses all issues around Aboriginal consumers and staff, including yarning with Aboriginal staff and consumers regarding their mental and cultural wellbeing.

I believe our Working Together Walking Together plan is concise, simple, and achievable. It addresses the key issues that are needed for true Aboriginal cultural safety in the workplace, including a focus on creating and building a meaningful partnership with the wider community.

While the organisation has progressed greatly in the Aboriginal space, I believe there is more to do and implementing this plan will ensure progress is made and achievements reached. Of essence, is for an Aboriginal person to feel heard and valued rather than being a number or statistic for a KPI.

This Working Together, Walking Together plan will address these challenges and more, and I also look forward to seeing numbers of Aboriginal staff and consumers increase across the whole of Richmond Wellbeing alongside building trust and faith with the grassroots community.

### Maudie Sketchley

If you have any questions about our WTWT plan, please contact me on 0439 530 492 or via email on [Maudie.Sketchley@rw.org.au](mailto:Maudie.Sketchley@rw.org.au).

## Acknowledgement of Artist

“My Name is Lekisha Eades. I am 15 years old I’m a Nyoongar from Perth WA. I am the artist behind this artwork titled “ Embracing Our Spirit “

Embracing Our Spirit acknowledges our ancestral connection and wisdom to the land. Each step is a new stroke on the canvas of life, painting a vibrant picture of self-discovery. The journey, like the artwork, is never straightforward or simple. It’s a winding path, filled with unexpected turns and hidden depths.



**Each footprint, each brushstroke, is a testament to our resilience and adaptability.**

The sand beneath our feet, the canvas under our brush, becomes a testament to our journey. It’s a visual representation of the psychological pathways we traverse, a tangible echo of our internal growth and evolution. The artwork, like the journey, is a testament to the strength of the human spirit and the power of self-discovery.

**This artwork represents the journey of self-discovery, highlighting the mutual respect between us and nature.**

It captures the essence of unity, the intertwining paths we walk, and the wisdom we gain. It’s a tribute to our shared journey, a testament to our resilience, and a celebration of our collective growth.”

**Lekisha Eades**





## Dr. Michael Wright

B.SW (University of WA), M.App.Epi (ANU, Canberra), PhD (Curtin University)

Michael is a Yuat Nyoongar (Aboriginal) man, whose ancestral lands are located just north of Perth in WA. He is employed at Curtin University as a Research Fellow and is currently the lead investigator on two NHMRC funded projects the Looking Forward, Moving Forward Project and Our Story, Our Journey Project. He was the lead investigator on the Looking Forward Project (2011 – 2015) that developed the Debakarn Koorliny Wangkiny-Conditions for Engaging Framework; co-designed with Nyoongar Elders and service providers. The framework has been implemented in mental health and drug and alcohol services in the Perth area and offers a pathway for culturally-safe co-design practice with Aboriginal people.

### Developing Richmond Wellbeing's Reconciliation Action Plan

Dr. Michael Wright's 7 Excellence Criteria offer a unique perspective on achieving and sustaining organisational excellence. By addressing these criteria, organisations can build a strong foundation for sustainable success, ensuring they deliver value to all stakeholders while continuously improving their performance.

Dr. Michael Wright worked with Richmond Wellbeing to develop an innovative approach to deepening the organisation's reconciliation actions, using this excellence framework. Dr. Michael Wright along with our Elders are committed to providing Cultural Governance and continuing to mentor CEO and the team.



Diagram 1 - Action and Reflective Cycles Underpinning the Strategy Development

### Ethical Decision Making 7 Excellence Criteria

The 7 Excellence Criteria for Ethical Decision Making are grounded in a Nyoongar worldview (diagram 2) and reflect collective, kinship knowledge systems underpinned by relational ways of working. For many non-Aboriginal people focusing on being present, deep listening, prioritising and taking the time to connect can be challenging particularly when workplaces emphasise “busy work” and timekeeping as markers of productivity.

### Action and Reflective Cycles Underpinning the Working Together Walking Together Plan and Process

Diagram 1 demonstrates the steps Richmond Wellbeing will be taking to better support Aboriginal staff and consumers. These steps include assessment, planning, implementation, reflection, and refinement. Each step follows the Debakarn Koorliny Wangkiny Framework for cultural appropriateness and ethical decision-making to ensure inclusivity. This ongoing cycle supports the growth through the Strategic Plan, creating a respectful and supportive environment for Aboriginal individuals.



Diagram 2 - Debakarn Koorliny Wangkiny Conditions for Engaging

# 7 Excellence Criteria

Developed by Dr Michael Wright



## Relationships

Privileging relational ways of working through authentic relationships grounded in a Nyoongar and Aboriginal understanding of reciprocity.

Recognising the wisdom of Aboriginal people and their contributions. Ensuring shared goals and demonstrating reciprocity.

## Reciprocity

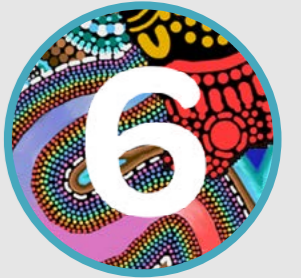


## Aboriginal Governance

Requiring organisations to prioritise meaningful relationships based on shared, reciprocal values with Elders and the community and shared decision-making. Embedding Aboriginal ways of working within the Richmond Wellbeing community – ways of being, knowing and doing.

Recognising and applying cultural governance and leadership through working with Elders, young people, and others to better understand Aboriginal ways of working. Building greater knowledge to assist organisations to be responsive and flexible to local needs. Focusing on workforce.

## Cultural Security



## Accountability and Responsibility

Boodiya to Boodiya – Acknowledging the importance of written accountability through meetings with Elders and Executive. Requiring service providers to listen and respond to the community and be answerable for both their mistakes and achievements.

Respecting the lived experience and status of Elders, their cultural knowledge and their position in kinship and wider community contexts. Recognising cultural leadership of Aboriginal staff and the authority of Elders as well as recognising the standing of Aboriginal staff within the community.

## Cultural Leadership



## Respect and Integrity

Putting Aboriginal people first is central to building and sustaining effective relationships with Elders, young people and their communities. Expressing respect by acknowledging and valuing individual and collective wisdom, protocols and rich heritage. Demonstrating integrity through being genuine and following through on what is said is delivered.

ACL - Aboriginal Cultural Lead  
CEO- Chief Executive Officer  
CFO- Chief Financial Officer  
COO- Chief Operations Officer  
CP&BO- Chief People and Brand Officer  
FY- Financial Year  
GMB&P- General Manager Brand and Partnerships

## Glossary

I&PL- Innovation and Project Lead  
GMsOps- General Managers Operations  
GMQGR- General Manager Quality, Governance and Risk  
M&CO- Marketing and Communications Officer  
MP&C- Manager People and Capability  
P&TW- Policy and Tender Writer

PL- Practice Lead  
SLT- Senior Leadership Team  
SM- Systems Manager  
TP- Talent Partner  
WTWTG- Working Together, Walking Together Group  
Q- Quarter



# Relationships

Privileging relational ways of working through authentic relationships grounded in a Nyoongar and Aboriginal understanding of reciprocity.

What we'll do	Lead by	When	Measures
Work with service operations to increase the number of Aboriginal consumers across all services to reflect the proportion of need in the community.	ACL COO GMsOps	Q2 FY 2025	% Aboriginal consumers
Establish Koomba Moort (Big Family) Community of Practice across Richmond Wellbeing. Grow and develop the influence of this group and support the development and learning for all staff.	ACL	Q1 FY 2025 ongoing	Feedback from attendees
Schedule annual 'On Country' days for Richmond Wellbeing staff, residents, clients and carers to support building connection and appreciation of country and culture.	ACL GMB&P	Annually Q1	Attendance, impact
With guidance from Elders, identify potential Aboriginal partner organisations in the community to extend and deepen relationships.	SLT Elders	Ongoing	# Aboriginal partner organisations
Deliver the bi-annual external "Working Together, Walking Together, Making the Change Together" newsletter for staff and consumers to support building knowledge and awareness.	M&CO ACL	Every 6 months	Readership and engagement







## Reciprocity

Recognising the wisdom of Aboriginal people and their contributions. Ensuring shared goals and demonstrating reciprocity.

What we'll do	Lead by	When	Measures
Procure services and contracts with Aboriginal businesses, track and report contracts and value over time.	CFO COO	Q3 FY 2025	# Business \$ Value
Develop online Aboriginal cultural safety training for all staff to better equip people with the knowledge and skills needed to work in culturally appropriate ways.	ACL MP&C	Q1 FY 2025	# Sessions, Feedback



## Accountability and Responsibility

Boodiya to Boodiya – Acknowledging the importance of written accountability through meetings with Elders and Executive. Requiring service providers to listen and respond to the Community and be answerable for both their mistakes and achievements.

### What we'll do

Collect regular, reliable, and accurate data about Aboriginal engagement across all areas of the WTWT plan to report up to Executive, Board and Elders

- Listen to the experiences of Aboriginal staff at Richmond Wellbeing.
- Reflect the experiences of Richmond Wellbeing consumers and family members.
- Use data to inform future adjustments.

### Lead by

SLT  
SM  
ACL

### When

Q2 FY 2025

### Measures

Data dashboards in place and used to support decision making





## Cultural Leadership

Respecting the lived experience and status of Elders, their cultural knowledge and their position in kinship and wider community contexts. Recognising cultural leadership of Aboriginal staff and the authority of Elders as well as recognising the standing of Aboriginal staff within the community

What we'll do	Lead by	When	Measures
Identify a succession plan for Richmond Wellbeing's Elders and expand the group of Elders Richmond Wellbeing works with.	CEO Elders	Q3 FY 2025	Succession plan in place, reviewed annually
Explore ways of increasing Elders' presence at Richmond Wellbeing sites.	CEO Elders ACL	Q4 FY 2025	# Site visits Succession plan in place



## Aboriginal Governance

Requiring organisations to prioritise meaningful relationships based on shared, reciprocal values with Elders and the community and shared decision-making. Embedding Aboriginal ways of working within the Richmond Wellbeing community – ways of being, knowing and doing.

What we'll do	Lead by	When	Measures
Review and identify areas for improvement for 5 stages of consumer journey through an Aboriginal lens: Panel process > Entry to service > Life span of service > Pre-exit > Post-exit	GMOps PL	Q3 FY 2025	Plan in place, improvements tracked, feedback
Incorporate Aboriginal strengths-based approaches aligned with <a href="#">'UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples'</a> for quality improvement across policies and procedures, frameworks and compliance and assessment and recovery planning with consumers.	PL ACL GMQGR	Q2 FY 2026	Audit of policies and procedures after Q2 FY 2026
Ensure the voice of Aboriginal peoples are heard across all projects, plans, strategies and frameworks.	ACL PL Aboriginal Staff I&PL	Ongoing	Evidence of Aboriginal consultation
Work with Aboriginal Community Controlled organisations to develop an Aboriginal Community of Practice across the community services sector	CEO SLT Elders	Q4 FY 2025	Community of Practice in place





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## Cultural Security

Recognising and applying cultural governance and leadership through working with Elders, young people, and others to better understand Aboriginal ways of working. Building greater knowledge to assist organisations to be responsive and flexible to local needs. Focusing on workforce.

What we'll do	Lead by	When	Measures
Establish targets for the number Aboriginal staff at Richmond Wellbeing which increase year on year.	WTWTG	Q2 FY 2025	Targets in place
Attract, retain, develop and promote Aboriginal staff across all sites, teams and roles.	TP MP&C	Q2 FY 2025	# Aboriginal Staff
Map roles, responsibilities, turnover and pay levels for all Aboriginal staff against the broader staffing group and identify trends.	MP&C	Q2 FY 2025	Data analysed and reported
Establish a formal Aboriginal staff mentoring program.	MP&C	Q1 FY 2025	Mentoring program in place, positive feedback
Review supervision process to ensure Aboriginal cultural awareness / security is included.	PL ACL	Q3 FY 2025	Supervision systems updated, feedback
Introduce a robust, streamlined process for hosting Aboriginal student placements across services to support building skills and knowledge.	ACL	Q2 FY 2025	# Aboriginal Students Feedback
Partner with universities to increase the number of degree qualified Aboriginal staff.	CP&BO GMB&P	Q1 FY 2026	# Degree qualified Aboriginal staff
Create partnerships and networks to promote Richmond Wellbeing as an employer of choice for Aboriginal people.	P&C ACL	Q1 FY 2026	Partnerships and feedback
Identify Richmond Wellbeing sites and workspaces where culturally appropriate visual signage can be improved and implement changes.	ACL M&CO	Every 3 months	Record of changes and improvements



## Respect and Integrity

Putting Aboriginal people first is central to building and sustaining effective relationships with Elders, young people and their communities. Expressing respect by acknowledging and valuing individual and collective wisdom, protocols and rich heritage. Demonstrating integrity through being genuine and following through on what is said is delivered.

What we'll do	Lead by	When	Measures
Establish processes to ensure Aboriginal culture and people are acknowledged and respected in all communications and actions.	GMB&P SLT Elders	Ongoing	Feedback / Observation
Observe and celebrate Aboriginal days of significance – through events, resources, website and KAYA.	GMB&P ACL	Ongoing	Record of events
Ensure that new services, programs and initiatives focus on Aboriginal cultural security and responsiveness in design, quality improvements and evaluations	P&TW I&PL	Ongoing	Notes in service design documentation
Develop and maintain the Advisory Groups pages of Richmond Wellbeing's website, and the Richmond Wellbeing intranet, KAYA, ensuring all material is culturally appropriate.	GMB&P	Ongoing	6 monthly internal audit





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