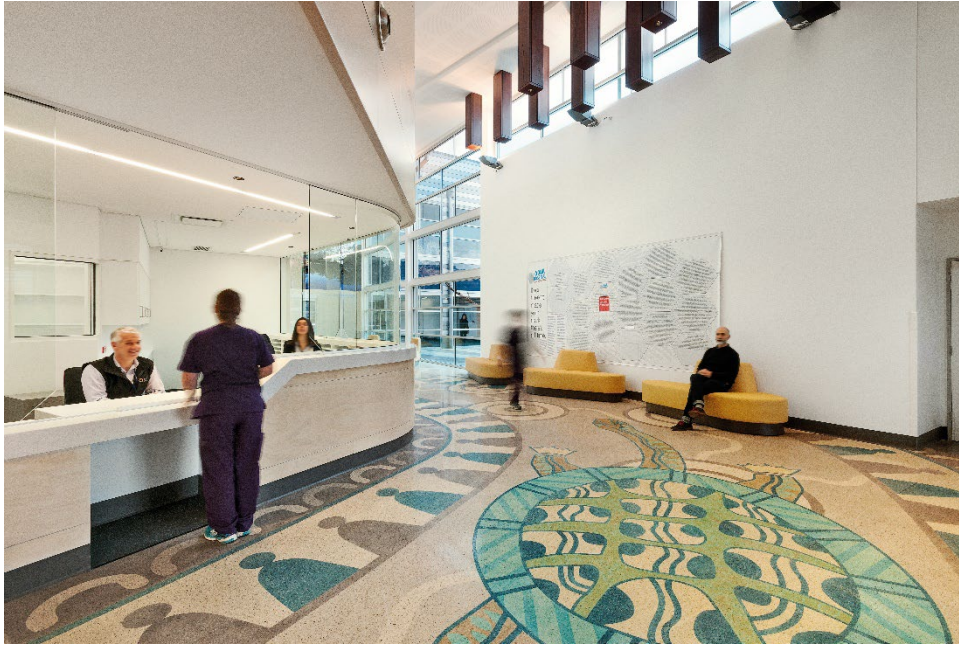




Reconciliation Action Plan



The National Aboriginal Health Strategy' definition of health

...not just the physical well-being of an individual but refers to the social, emotional and cultural well-being of the whole Community in which each individual is able to achieve their full potential as a human being, thereby bringing about the total well-being of their Community. It is a whole-of-life view and includes the cyclical concept of life-death-life.

Health care services should strive to achieve the state where every individual is able to achieve their full potential as a human being and thus bring about the total well-being of their community (National Aboriginal Health Strategy, 1989).

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Yorta Yorta people as the traditional custodians on the land of which we meet.

We pay our respect to their elders past, present and emerging.

We also acknowledge their spiritual connection to country.

1 Message from CEO

Echuca Regional Health (ERH) has developed the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to improve the health of Aboriginal people. This will be achieved through improving the health care that Aboriginal people receive in hospital and in the community. The Reconciliation Action Plan will improve the level of Aboriginal staff employed at Echuca Regional Health.

ERH is committed to the successful realisation of our first RAP. We, as a Health Service, in collaboration with our Board, staff, Volunteers and clinical leaders, will work to improve our services to ultimately achieve better health outcomes for regional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This plan is an important formal statement of our commitment to work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to achieve this.

We are committed to strengthening existing and building new relationships with Aboriginal community members and staff, to seek insight, advice and guidance on the advancement of Reconciliation across the organisation. ERH is committed to applying systemic changes that are culturally responsive to Aboriginal people and culture in order to bring about positive change to achieve Reconciliation. Our vision is for ERH to be a place where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their heritage, cultures and spirituality are valued, respected and celebrated. This ensures access to health services and employment and training opportunities that are culturally safe, free from racism and enriched by a strong living culture, dignity and justice.

ERH acknowledge Aboriginal people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which ERH is built. We strongly support recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia's Constitution and acknowledge as a result of colonisation Aboriginal Australians continue to confront injustices, poor health and wellbeing outcomes and trauma associated with Stolen Generations.

This, our first RAP, establishes a strong foundation for us to build on, and it will strengthen and inform our plans for the future, as we continue to be part of and positively influence the community conversation about Reconciliation. We look forward to continuing to work with our communities, stakeholders and Reconciliation Australia to achieve the goals that are set out in our RAP.

We acknowledge the hard work of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal leaders at ERH past and present who have supported this organisation and developed our history. We would be honoured to have elders from across Echuca and districts to support the ERH RAP as we look to them as leaders who we can turn to for inspiration and guidance. This plan is a collaborative effort that we hope will be informed by valuable insight and advice from a number of Aboriginal people from across our communities.

Finally, our reconciliation vision is one where we walk alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in respectful partnership to achieve equity in life expectancy and to reduce premature death and suffering from preventable illnesses. ERH is working towards closing the Gap in health disparities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

Nick Bush
Chief Executive

1.1.2 Our Reconciliation Journey so far

- Flying the Flag
- Acknowledging Country
- Partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- Aboriginal Representation
- Aboriginal Employment
- Cross-Cultural Training
- Strategic Commitments
- Supporting Indigenous arts
- Celebrating Culture
- Promoting Aboriginal History and Culture
- Dedicated Aboriginal space at Echuca Regional Health: Malka Room
- Service Provision
- Procurement



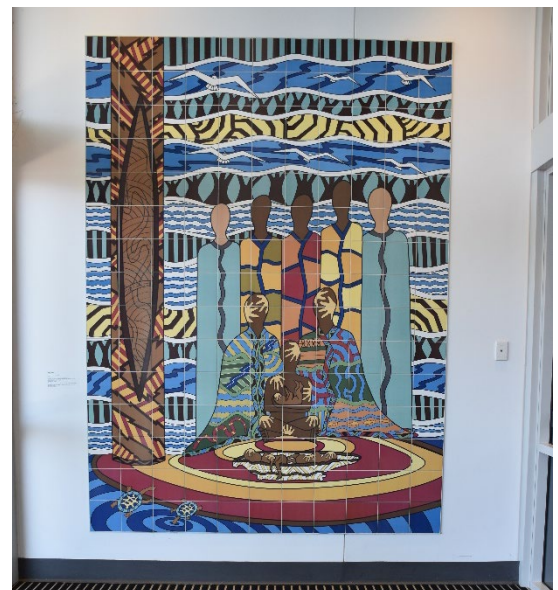
Malka Room



Glanville Village



Glanville Village
Artwork



Main Entrance
Artwork



1.1.3 About Us

ERH is a public health service, governed by an independent board. It is designated as an 'outer regional health service' by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services, providing health care for people living in the Campaspe Shire (Victoria) and Murray River Council (New South Wales) areas. ERH operates in central Echuca, with the following facilities:

- Inpatient units: 26 medical beds including 6 high dependency beds, 18 surgical beds, 8 maternity beds, 24 sub-acute beds
- Same day medical services, 6 renal dialysis chairs, 4 chemotherapy chairs, 4 dental chairs
- Emergency department: operating 9 cubicles, 4 short-stay beds
- Surgery: 3 operating theatres, 5 recovery beds, and a central sterile services department
- Aged care: 60 residential beds including 15 high-care places for people with dementia
- Specialist consulting rooms
- Community health services are co-located on campus, including the Hopwood Centre, Lumeah and Kinsey House.

Awarded the Premier's Medium Health Service of the Year in 2018, ERH employs over 819 staff, the largest employer in Campaspe Shire. In 2018/2019 the health service had an operating budget of \$74 million. Each year it returns in excess of \$44 million to the community in salaries, wages and purchases from local businesses.

The health service has recently undergone a redevelopment, which was funded in 2011 and included a new emergency department and short stay unit, new inpatient units, new perioperative unit, installation of Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) and a new foyer with a café and gift shop. The final stage was opened during 2015 which also included an Indigenous space entitled Malka Room meaning "Shield – to protect and comfort". This welcoming area provides comfort for Aboriginal patients and their families when visiting sick relatives and provides tea and coffee making facilities, seating area, paintings from local Aboriginal artists and a spiritual space garden.

A key focus during the development was the sourcing of Aboriginal art from the local community. An Aboriginal Art Advisory Group was formed to source the artwork which is proudly displayed throughout the hospital. This includes paintings, metal and tile artwork and a welcoming Yorta Yorta turtle symbol at the main front entrance to the hospital.

In 2015 a refurbishment in Glanville Village, Aged Care was undertaken which included an Indigenous space consisting of a kitchen, lounge area and garden for families to gather. This space is also adorned with Aboriginal artwork.

In 2018 ERH entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with each local Aboriginal health service in the Echuca/Moama area being Njernda Aboriginal Corporation and Cummeragunja Housing and Development Aboriginal Corporation. The purpose of the partnership is to demonstrate the commitment to improved health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and to build closer working relationships between the parties.

The \$6 million Cancer and Wellness Centre will provide day medical services including chemotherapy, as well as flexible facilities for individual consultations and group programs to support during and after their cancer treatment. The new centre will also include dialysis services and specialist consulting rooms.

Federal funding has also been committed for a Headspace facility in Echuca to help improve the mental health of our young people.

RELATIONSHIPS				
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility	Outcome
1. Facilitate RAP Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate this report quarterly to the Aboriginal Health Committee to support the implementation of our Reconciliation Action Plan. Communicate progress/actions across stakeholder group 	July 2020 – June 2021	Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This RAP is highlighted to the monthly managers and updated quarterly RAP has been received by the Aboriginal Health Advisory Committee and undergone a check in with Reconciliation Victoria
2. Build internal and external relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate community barbecues in garden. Enable community feedback in the Aboriginal Space through provision of a feedback box. Facilitate key Echuca Regional Health staff to attend Njernda and Viney Morgan women's and men's sessions. Hosting of annual NAIDOC Celebration. 	July 2020 – June 2021	Aboriginal Liaison Officer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAIDOC week celebration was arranged. Morning tea was hosted at the beginning of the week with local Yorta Yorta artist invited. A display of her artwork was exhibited in the Malka room area for the week and acknowledgement of Country was conducted by ALO.
3. Participate in and celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage our staff to visit Reconciliation Australia's website and promote local National Reconciliation Week events they can attend. Host a reconciliation acknowledgement at monthly managers meeting Inform staff, volunteers, patients and visitors about Reconciliation 	July 2020 January 2021	Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ERH has sent out communication to staff to access reconciliation through the PCP who have linked to National Reconciliation Week. Reconciliation acknowledgement will be highlighted at monthly managers meeting July 15. ERH held the Vera Cooper plaque unveiling ERH circulated the PCP information. CEO spoke to this at the October meeting



RELATIONSHIPS

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility	Outcome
	<p>Australia's resources and materials through newsletters, on social media platforms, and within key staff meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Echuca Regional Health to participate in external events to recognise and celebrate National Reconciliation Week. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ERH created a NRW special edition newsletter that was circulated to all staff, it included historical information, launched the new Aboriginal Cultural LMS elearning module, showed a video of local yorta yorta man telling a dreamtime story, provided links to other community groups and events, provided a colouring activity/competition of aboriginal artwork and launched our staff/yorta yorta inclusion badge to be worn as part of uniform. This newsletter was well received and gained great feedback.
<p>4. Raise internal awareness of our RAP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide regular updates on RAP activities through staff newsletter, social media and within the Malka Room. Present to Echuca Regional Health Managers on our RAP commitment to ensure all relevant areas of ERH have an understanding of how their area can contribute to our RAP. Engage the Board and executive in delivery of RAP outcomes, through 6 monthly reports to the Board. 	<p>July 2020 – June 2021</p>	<p>Chief Executive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once initial report received, CEO and Aboriginal Liaison will highlight reconciliation action plan in the newsletter. Presentation to monthly managers on July 15th. Action plan will be reported to the board with Aboriginal Health Advisory Committee minutes.

RESPECT

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility	Outcome
<p>5. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural learning and development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop cultural awareness training plan for staff and volunteers at ERH 2020 -2021, this will be conducted annually. • New staff induction and orientation to include Aboriginal programs, Acknowledgement to Country and Welcome to Country guidelines, Aboriginal engagement information and staff responsibilities around the RAP. • Support front of house staff to “Ask the Question, do you identify?” every patient every time through mentoring and training. 	<p>July 2020- June 2021.</p>	<p>Director of Education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural awareness eLearning developed by a partnership between ERH and RCH, Western Health, Eye and Ear and Monash Health. • Launched the new eLearning for ERH employees at NAIDOC week 2020 and ERH are working with Yorta Yorta community to tailor to local community, and share resource. • Editable version now available for health services to customise to local aboriginal community. • ERH to support local rural partners to customise their own eLearning modules. • New ERH Online Orientation package being developed and includes Welcome to country and information on AHLO, supporting our indigenous community, and “Asking the question”. • New ERH signage has been created to inform and support the asking of all patients the Question.
<p>6. Participate in and celebrate NAIDOC Week</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing member of the Njernda PCP Health Committee. • Raise awareness and share information about the meaning of NAIDOC Week with our staff, volunteers, and patients, which includes information about the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. 	<p>First week in July</p>	<p>Aboriginal Liaison Officer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ERH is a member of the Njernda Committee • NAIDOC week celebration was arranged. Morning tea was hosted at the beginning of the week with local Yorta Yorta artist invited. A display of her artwork was exhibited in the Malka room area for the week and acknowledgement of Country was conducted by ALO.

RESPECT

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility	Outcome
<p>7. Raise internal understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all staff and volunteers are briefed and understand appropriate protocols for engaging with Aboriginal communities and receive appropriate cultural safety information and training to create cultural safety and confidence. • Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness and understanding of the meaning and significance behind Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols (including any local cultural protocols). • Creation of clinical pathways including referrals for support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ERH patients/clients into and out of ERH. 	<p>July 2020</p> <p>July 2020 – June 2021</p>	<p>Chief Executive</p> <p>Chief Executive</p> <p>Executive Director of Community Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff and volunteers are orientated by the Aboriginal Liaison Officer and CEO before commencement of work at ERH. • The Aboriginal Liaison Officer has reviewed and amended the ERH Welcome to Country and all ERH meetings begin with this Welcome to Country. • An internal ERH suite of Aboriginal collateral has been developed to assist in multiple areas across the service, ie. Closing the Gap invoicing, Services Brochure, ALO information, patient file identification.   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and Yorta Yorta all-inclusive badge
<p>8. Celebrate and acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote upcoming events to staff and patients through staff newsletter and other social media platforms and on patient televisions (e.g. NAIDOC week, Reconciliation Week, Sorry Day) as part of this communication and sharing plan. 	<p>July 2020 – June 2021</p>	<p>Chief Executive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All events were highlighted in the staff newsletter, monthly staff briefing and shared with local community run groups and featured in ERH social media.

RESPECT

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility	Outcome
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate annual Welcome to Country for Baby event. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be progressed
<p>9. Include other unique respect actions related to our core business and vision for reconciliation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop ERH to be a culturally welcoming and friendly place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Investigate the establishment of a review process through the committee where any ERH patient resources must pass through an Indigenous led review process to access for health/literacy/cultural safety issues. 	Ongoing	Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Strategies will be developed through staff education and training through the implementation of the Reconciliation Action Plan. The review and approval of new Aboriginal marketing collateral was ratified by the Aboriginal Health Advisory Committee. Reconciliation Action Plan implementation underway

OPPORTUNITIES

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility	Outcome
<p>10. Enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate strategies to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment opportunities within our organisation to support reaching our employment target of 2%. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment pathways (e.g. traineeships or internships). Enhance our ability to attract and recruit Aboriginal people through innovative processes that explore a variety of recruitment and attraction methods. (establish networks and partnerships to make vacancies known through word of 	Ongoing	Executive Director of Human Resources / Director of Education / HR Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ERH have been successful in obtaining funding from DHHS and the Commonwealth to fund traineeships in various areas including Nursing, Administration, Dental, Human Resources and, most recently, Education. The Education Department appointed a trainee in February 2020 into an administration role, and is currently studying a Cert IV in Leadership and Management. ERH is committed to providing ongoing employment opportunities and currently employees 7 ATSI staff. The Barring Djinang employment strategy prepared by the Victorian Public Sector Commission has adopted the Aboriginal employment target of 2% for the Victorian Public

OPPORTUNITIES

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility	Outcome
	<p>mouth with the Aboriginal community, and through Koori media, local networks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate support strategies to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders training as key hospital personal including through strengthening relationships with local training providers, University of Melbourne, La Trobe University, Bendigo TAFE. As well as with VACCHO. (Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation) • Review ERH's current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce plan and present to the Aboriginal Health Advisory Committee annually. • Encourage and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to take up leadership opportunities within ERH. Work with Korrie education support officers to link in with the school. • Volunteer strategy reviewed and updated to include specific measures to attract and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander volunteers. • Strengthen employment pathways into ERH for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in collaboration with universities and TAFE. 			<p>Service. It has a focus on increasing the number of Aboriginal staff in the public sector but also an emphasis on building new or improved opportunities for existing staff. This is the holistic approach taken by ERH in that we currently have staff in administration and nursing who are completing higher education to hold senior positions within ERH who will in turn become leaders and mentors for future junior staff. It is hoped this will help in increasing the number of Aboriginal employees at ERH, currently there are 7 employees known who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Of these seven team members, three are currently undertaking further education with the support of ERH.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ERH re-introduced secondary school work experience programs in 2019 – 2020 in partnership with four local secondary schools. Each week block prioritises 2 places for local indigenous students to work areas/departments of their choice. • The DHHS Indigenous Nursing Cadetship program. Whilst we are yet to have any applicants, we are aware of at least one local indigenous student interested in pursuing a nursing degree in 2021, who will be eligible for a cadetship in 2022. • ERH Education Department currently developing an Indigenous Health Workforce pathway program aimed at secondary School for launch in 2021.

OPPORTUNITIES

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility	Outcome
11. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an understanding of the mutual benefits of procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. 	July 2020 – June 2021	Procurement Services.	
12. Include other unique opportunities actions related to our core business and vision for reconciliation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate support scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students into Universities and TAFE. Increase support and accessibility for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Echuca Regional Health. Identify opportunities and provide information to better assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and their families with accommodation needs during treatment. RAP launched at key event with Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony. 	Ongoing	Executive Director of Human Resources / Director of Education Aboriginal Liaison Officer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applications for funding and scholarship opportunities are regularly undertaken with supports in place for local students to attend at ERH by way of information sessions and work experience to support local students to undertake a career in health.

GOVERNANCE AND TRACKING PROGRESS

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility	Outcome
13. Review and Refresh RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements. Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for review after endorsement of the direction by ERH Board. 	July 2020 – June 2021	Chief Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The initial Reconciliation Action Plan was reviewed by the Aboriginal Health Advisory Committee, the ERH Board and Reconciliation Australia.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement.			
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