



ACI NSW Agency
for Clinical
Innovation

Aboriginal Employment Strategy

2016-2018

Front cover image: 'Woven Ways'

'Woven Ways' begins with a deep yellow background representative of a starting point and visual Acknowledgement of Country. Textures and stylised imagery reference the Rock platforms found all over North Sydney. Its warm golden hues pay homage to The Cammeraygal people and The Garigal people, the traditional owners of Northern Sydney and their descendants; while the black provides contrast and represents the catalyst for change.

Large fluid spaces of stained colour lined by blue - grey and white weave across the canvas panels. The white outline defining a space; representing the organisation and outlying service provision. This space develops deeper purple hues only when overlapping the blue grey hues of the space representing the cultural landscape of Indigenous Australia.

These transitions of colour represent the collaboration, reciprocity and cultural understanding needed to achieve significant progress. The overlap of these spaces also representing the end goal, the cultural safety and genuine commitment needed, to bridge and close the gap between these two spaces.

Stylised designs of animals and traditional tools are scattered across each of the panels. They mimic the same transition of colour and visual metaphor when passing through the large overlapping spaces. Their various designs representing the diversity of Australia's Aboriginal Culture.

Encircling the whole image are winding goanna tracks, a visual metaphor for the journey and the many ways it winds before reaching its end. Coloured gold, they represent the strength gained through genuine partnerships and commitment.

When viewed as a whole 'Woven Ways' is an artwork that responds visually to themes of collaboration, cultural safety and the metaphorical challenges and solutions that must be negotiated to achieve positive health outcomes for all parties involved.

'Woven Ways' was created by Aboriginal Artist, Jessica Birk, in collaboration with ACI staff who contributed to the vision and creation of the artwork.

Jessica Birk is a proud descendant of the Yaegl people of the Northern Rivers of NSW. Jessica was born and grew up within Northern Sydney and harbours a deep love and respect for this this land. Jessica's visual storytelling defines her colourful and layered artworks. These works explore themes of place and belonging, cultural identity and landscape.

Introduction

The ACI is committed to workforce diversity, increasing the representation of Aboriginal employees at the ACI through appropriate recruitment and retention and strategies, providing career development opportunities and ensuring that we become an organisation which demonstrates a high level of cultural competence within our staff and the work we do.

Key Priorities for this Strategy

This strategy focuses on four key priorities:

1. **Attract** Aboriginal staff
2. **Retain** Aboriginal staff
3. Support career **development** and **progression**
4. Improve **cultural competency** in the workplace

Development of this strategy has involved consultation with:

- Aboriginal staff at ACI,
- ACI Executive,
- ACI Cultural Competence and Safety Working Party,
- Aboriginal Workforce Unit, NSW Ministry of Health, and
- National Centre for Cultural Competence (NCCC).

Key Priority 1: Attract Aboriginal staff

ACI is committed to attracting Aboriginal staff to our workplace across a wider range of positions. Many Aboriginal staff want to work in roles that provide services to Aboriginal people and communities. However ACI recognises that Aboriginal health workers want opportunities to contribute in other roles that don't specifically work in Aboriginal communities.

Through the use of additional advertising strategies detailed in NSW Health's online resource *Stepping Up*¹ and our working relationships in the local Aboriginal community, ACI will seek to maximise applications from Aboriginal people and attract suitable candidates to a range of roles at ACI. Referrals from Aboriginal staff and the community are an important source of talent, and when pursued, can assist in building trust and empowerment².

Outcome:

- Increase Aboriginal staff representation across a wider range³ of positions at ACI, using recruitment practices that are appropriate for Aboriginal people

Key Priority 2: Retain Aboriginal staff

ACI is committed to retaining Aboriginal staff in our workplace. Possible drivers and barriers to retention identified during initial consultation included: level of cultural competence within the workplace, level of cultural safety in being surrounded by other Aboriginal staff, career progression and flexibility to accommodate family and community responsibilities. A better understanding of the drivers and barriers to retention of Aboriginal staff in our workplace is needed in order to devise strategies that specifically address the issues.

¹ NSW Health Stepping Up - <http://hire.steppingup.health.nsw.gov.au/promoting-jobs-aboriginal-applicants/>

² NSW Health Stepping Up - <http://hire.steppingup.health.nsw.gov.au/promoting-jobs-aboriginal-applicants/>

³ NSW Public Sector Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2014-2017 – Sector Wide Strategy 1, Key Performance Indicator

Cultural safety and peer support at ACI is encouraged through participation in Aboriginal staff networks and attendance at events to facilitate Aboriginal staff networks, hosted by NSW Health and the NSW public sector.

Outcome:

- Develop effective responses to issues that impact the retention of Aboriginal staff at ACI

Key Priority 3: Support Career Development and Progression

The ACI is committed to providing learning and development opportunities to support the continuing professional development of its Aboriginal staff. Staff are encouraged to identify and complete learning and development opportunities that will enhance performance in their current role, and develop capabilities for professional growth and career opportunities through the Professional Development Framework.

Aboriginal staff are under-represented in senior management and executive roles across the public sector⁴. ACI can help to build leadership capability in the Aboriginal health workforce by continuing to support and encourage our current and future Aboriginal workforce managers and leaders to participate in leadership and development programs offered by the NSW public sector, and by improving pathways into these roles.

Outcome:

- Support Aboriginal staff to develop their capabilities and build leadership capacity

Key Priority 4: Improve Cultural Competency in the Workplace

Providing a culturally safe workplace is seen as a key driver and barrier to retention of Aboriginal staff. ACI incorporates Aboriginal cultural practise and protocols in official meetings and events, displays the Aboriginal flag, acknowledges and promotes key Aboriginal community events (for example: NAIDOC Week).

ACI is making progress to improve the cultural competence of our workplace and all staff through a series of initiatives, in partnership with the National Centre for Cultural Competence, including the introduction of cultural facilitators.

Outcome:

- A workplace that understands and respects Aboriginal cultures, and celebrates and values cultural differences

⁴ NSW Public Sector Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2014-2017, page 1

Aboriginal Employment Strategy: Priorities, Outcomes and Actions

Key Priority 1: Attract Aboriginal staff				
Outcome: Increase Aboriginal staff representation across a wider range of positions, using recruitment practices that are appropriate for Aboriginal people				
Strategy	Actions	Responsibility	KPI / Target	Timeline
a) Attract and recruit Aboriginal applicants to a wider range of jobs	Explore opportunities to establish Aboriginal Identified and Targeted roles in other areas outside the Chronic Care for Aboriginal People (CCAP) team: 1.1 Review positions in portfolios across the organisation to ascertain positions that may be targeted.	Directors PCCS and CS, Manager Strategic HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional two (2) identified roles are filled in PCCS & CPDI (in addition to 2 positions in CCAP) bringing the total to four 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of positions that may be Identified and Targeted completed by end of 2016 Reach KPI by end of 2018
	1.2 Before any vacant role is advertised, the recruiting manager should consider whether a vacant position may be an Aboriginal Targeted position.	Portfolio Directors, recruiting managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of six (6) targeted roles are filled across portfolios, including senior leadership roles, subject to vacancies Total number of ten (10) Aboriginal staff (7.7% of 130 staff) 	
b) Seek opportunities for trainees to be involved with, and gain work experience at ACI	1.3 Employ Indigenous Management Interns (1 st or 2 nd year) placed through the Health Management Internship Program (HMIP) organised by ACHSM (Australasian College of Health Service Management).	Portfolio Directors with Manager, Strategic HR	Offer one (1) Indigenous Management Intern placement through the Health Management Internship Program (HMIP) annually	Interviews to commence Sept 2016 for one Intern to commence in Jan 2017
c) Incorporate identified good practices in recruiting Aboriginal	Position description (PD): 1.4 Review the process for writing or reviewing a PD to ensure the language used is appropriate ⁵ 1.5 Embed statement about cultural competence in the 'About ACI' section of the PD template.	Corporate Services and HealthShare	Complete the process for reviewing position descriptions to ensure the language is culturally safe	By end of 2017

⁵ NSW Health *Communicating Positively – A guide to appropriate Aboriginal terminology*

people into ACI recruitment processes as detailed in the <i>Stepping Up</i> resource	<p>Job advertisement:</p> <p>1.6 Outline NSW Health’s commitment to workforce diversity and increasing the Aboriginal health workforce in the job advertisement – “<i>NSW Health is committed to achieving a diverse workforce and strongly encourages applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people</i>”⁶.</p> <p>1.7 Provide details of an Aboriginal staff member as a contact person in job advertisements for targeted roles, in addition to the recruiting manager, where possible.</p>	HR and Administration Manager with HealthShare	100% of job advertisements outline ACI’s commitment to workforce diversity	By end of Sept 2016
	<p>Composition of selection panel:</p> <p>1.8 For Aboriginal Identified and Targeted positions the selection panel must be appropriately represented and include at least one Aboriginal person.</p> <p>1.9 For positions that Aboriginal applicants apply for, an Aboriginal person should be considered for inclusion on the panel as the independent.</p> <p>1.10 Consider including an Aboriginal person as a panel member on every selection panel.</p>	Recruiting manager and Panel convenor	100% of Identified and Targeted positions include at least one Aboriginal person on the selection panel	By end of 2016
d) Maximise applications from Aboriginal people to ensure we attract suitable candidates	<p>1.11 Recruiting managers to consider the use of advertising and recruitment strategies to encourage Aboriginal candidates to apply for Identified or Targeted positions, as detailed in the <i>Stepping Up</i> resource. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notifying the NSW Public Service Commission of future vacant positions to be shared with the Aboriginal Workforce Network , • Advertising in Aboriginal newspapers, • Community and network-based dispersal of job advertisements and notifications, such as the Koori Grapevine⁷, • Referrals from Aboriginal staff within health and the broader public sector, as well as the local Aboriginal community. 	HR and Administration Manager and recruiting managers	Additional advertising and recruitment strategies to be considered for 100% of Identified and Targeted roles	By end of 2016

Key Priority 2: Retain Aboriginal staff

Outcome: Develop effective responses to issues that impact the retention of Aboriginal staff at ACI

⁶ NSW Health Stepping Up: Effective job advertisement

⁷ NSW Health Stepping Up: Promoting jobs to Aboriginal applicants

Strategy	Actions	Responsibility	KPI / Target	Timeline
a) Explore and respond to issues affecting retention in our workplace	2.1 Monitor Aboriginal staff retention and gather data to identify issues and better understand the key drivers and barriers, through ongoing consultant with staff and conducting exit interviews.	Manager, Strategic HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare a bi-annual report to the Executive to identify issues to improve retention of Aboriginal staff at ACI 18 months average retention 	Bi-annual reporting to June and Dec to commence end of 2016
b) Promote a culturally supported Aboriginal workforce	2.2 Explore opportunities for Aboriginal staff to have a mentor and/or network support external to the ACI.	Manager, Strategic HR	Make a recommendation to the Executive regarding an external mentor program for Aboriginal staff at ACI	By mid-2017

Key Priority 3: Support Career Development and Progression

Outcome: Support Aboriginal staff to develop their capabilities and build leadership capacity

Strategy	Actions	Responsibility	KPI / Target	Timeline
a) Build leadership capacity in our Aboriginal workforce	3.1 Explore opportunities and make recommendations to develop capability of ACI Aboriginal staff and improve pathways into senior roles by encouraging and providing development opportunities including secondments, acting in higher grade roles and mentoring.	Manager, Strategic HR	Make a recommendation to the Executive regarding how ACI might improve pathways into senior roles for Aboriginal staff	By end of 2016
	3.2 Explore opportunities and make recommendations to encourage Aboriginal representation at Executive level to support career development and progression into senior roles, which may include ACI Aboriginal staff attending Executive meetings where relevant to their professional development goals.		Make a recommendation to the Executive regarding Aboriginal representation at Executive level	By end of 2017
b) Build executive leadership skills	3.3 Establish an Executive Advisory Group ⁸ to the ACI Executive, initially comprised of 2-3 senior Aboriginal leaders from the Directors and Managers of Aboriginal Health Group, to discuss corporate planning and budgetary issues.		As per the <i>ACI Cultural Competence Implementation Plan</i>	As per the <i>ACI Cultural Competence Implementation Plan</i>
c) Support career pathways for Aboriginal people within	3.4 Build capability and capacity in the LHDs and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHS) through an inter-agency secondment at the ACI, under a scholarship arrangement. One full-time staff member from a LHD will be	Portfolio Directors and Manager, Strategic HR	Develop an annual program to second a full time staff member from an LHD to the ACI for 10 months, with a	By end of 2018

⁸ ACI Cultural Competency Implementation Plan

NSW Health	seconded to the ACI for 10 months, with a scholarship to backfill their substantive position. 3.5 Explore opportunities for a reverse secondment.		scholarship to backfill their substantive position	
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Key Priority 4: Improve Cultural Competency in the Workplace

Outcome: A workplace that understands and respects Aboriginal cultures, and celebrates and values cultural differences

Strategy	Actions	Responsibility	KPI / Target	Timeline
Build the cultural competency of all staff	4.1 Ensure staff complete Respecting the Difference Aboriginal cultural training – both the eLearning module and face-to-face training ⁹ within 6 months of start date, where appointed to roles of more than 3 months.	Portfolio Directors	90% of all required staff completed both the eLearning and face-to-face Respecting the Difference training	Within 6 months of start date
	4.2 Explore ways in which ACI can measure improvement in cultural competence.	Director SPC and Manager, Strategic HR	Make a recommendation to the Executive regarding ways in which ACI can measure improvement in cultural competence	By mid-2017
	4.2 Consider and review current processes to embed cultural competence as a core feature of recruitment, induction, professional development and training strategies.	Corporate Services and Manager, Strategic HR	Make a recommendation to the Executive regarding embedding cultural competence as a core feature of recruitment, induction, professional development and training strategies.	By end of 2018

⁹ Policy Directive 2011_069 Respecting the Difference: An Aboriginal Cultural Training Framework for NSW Health

Glossary of Terms and Definitions

Term	Definition
Aboriginal	Aboriginal, when used in this document, is inclusive of the terms Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and/or Indigenous peoples ¹⁰ .
Aboriginal Identified position	An Identified position is one where Aboriginality is a genuine occupational qualification. Typically, such roles work directly with Aboriginal people and are involved in developing, and/or delivering services and programs which have an impact on Aboriginal people and/or involve dealing with Aboriginal communities ¹¹ .
Aboriginal staff networks	Networks include <i>Managers of Workforce development Network (NSW Health)</i> , <i>Aboriginal Workforce Network (NSW PSC)</i> and <i>ACI Cultural Competence Working Group</i>
Aboriginal Targeted position	A targeted position is a 'mainstream' position which is filled using advertising and recruitment strategies that maximise applications from Aboriginal people. Aboriginal cultural knowledge is not an essential occupational qualification for targeted positions and therefore is not a compulsory requirement of the applicant ¹² . As priority is given to a suitable candidate who is Aboriginal, applicants will need to provide information to corroborate their Aboriginality ¹³ .
Stepping Up	<i>Stepping Up</i> (www.stepsup.health.nsw.gov.au) is an online resource developed by NSW Health that provides managers with practical guidance in employing and supporting Aboriginal staff.

¹⁰ NSW Health *Good Health – Great Jobs* Aboriginal Workforce Strategic Framework 2016-2020

¹¹ PD2015_026 Recruitment and Selection of Staff to the NSW Health Service – Appendix 1.6

¹² PD2015_026 Recruitment and Selection of Staff to the NSW Health Service – Appendix 1.6

¹³ NSW Health Stepping Up: Promoting jobs to Aboriginal applicants