CareSouth
RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN
2013-2014
OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

CareSouth's vision is to create a positive future for children, young people, families, individuals and communities, providing opportunities in which people can enhance their quality of life. We seek to ensure that our vision is inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities and to promote reconciliation through our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organizations everyday.

OUR BUSINESS

CareSouth is a not for profit organisation offering support and care to children, young people, individuals, families and communities. We work closely with government and non-government organisations in our region including informal relationships with many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. We have over 350 staff and carers and are able to help people across the Illawarra, South Coast, Southern Tablelands and Western NSW. We currently have 3 identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander positions and a total of 4 Aboriginal staff within our organization. We seek to grow the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

OUR RAP

As an employer and service provider to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples we have a responsibility to honour their past through our active commitment to Reconciliation. We understand the importance of reconciling the past and moving forward in an authentic way by actively participating and taking advice from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and our staff.

CareSouth’s RAP Working Group commenced in late 2012 as recommended by the organisation’s existing Cultural Consultative Group (CCG). The Working Group started with two Aboriginal staff members and a member of the senior management team. Over the past months this group has grown to 4 Aboriginal staff members, one non-Aboriginal staff member and a member of the senior management team. Through a series of meetings and using the RAP Toolkit CareSouth’s RAP has begun to take shape and is detailed within this document.
RELATIONSHIPS

CARESOUTH has a community focus. We engage with our communities to support the work we do with families of all backgrounds and the communities in which they live. We have strong ties with our local business communities and we participate with the broader sector and peak bodies to support our work and priorities. As many of these groups represent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples it is imperative that we are involved in consultation on a regular and consistent way and then implement our learnings in the workplace.

In order to provide culturally appropriate care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people in Out of Home Care and connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families who we work with in the Brighter Futures program for example, we need to foster and maintain close and meaningful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agencies and communities and increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in our organisation.

ACTION

The RAP Working Group (RWG) continues to actively monitor RAP development, including implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting.

1. Build relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and communities in our local area and business through participation in National Reconciliation Week and Sorry Day

2. Build partnerships and/or projects with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professionals, organisations or communities that are mutually beneficial.

3. Managers and staff to increase their professional networks and relationships with Aboriginal workers and organizations and explore opportunities for collaboration.

4. Maintain long-term existing relationships with local agencies including Aboriginal Medical Services in Shoalhaven and Illawarra, and Noogalook in Berkeley.

5. Staff to seek opportunities to participate in committees and forums that support the needs of the Aboriginal people and communities we work with - to be benchmarked and tracked through monthly reporting.

RESPONSIBILITY | TIMELINE | TARGET
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CEO | Sept 2013 | • RWG along with the CEO to oversee the formal launch event of the RAP.
CEO | June 2014 | • RWG will meet monthly to monitor and report bi-monthly to CCG on RAP implementation.
Manager Community Relations | May 2014 | • Include National Reconciliation Week into the CareSouth Events Calendar for 2014.
Manager Community Relations | May 2014 | • Identify ways to participate fully by sponsoring, partnering and participating in local activities in each location.
Manager Community Relations | 27 May – 3 June 2013 | • Celebrate with our local communities in each location through participation in identified activities.
Regional Manager (Illawarra & Western) Program Manager (South Coast) | May 2014 | • Managers and staff to increase their professional networks and relationships with Aboriginal workers and organizations and explore opportunities for collaboration.
Regional Manager (Illawarra & Western) Program Manager (South Coast) | May 2014 | • Maintain long-term existing relationships with local agencies including Aboriginal Medical Services in Shoalhaven and Illawarra, and Noogalook in Berkeley.
Regional Manager (Illawarra & Western) Program Manager (South Coast) | 27 May – 3 June 2013 | • Staff to seek opportunities to participate in committees and forums that support the needs of the Aboriginal people and communities we work with - to be benchmarked and tracked through monthly reporting.
One of CareSouth’s key values is respect. We respect the rights of all people by treating them justly and with due consideration. We encourage their participation, honouring diversity by welcoming the contribution of all people within our community. We do not discriminate against any group or individual and strive to build positive relationships based on respectful and open communication. Through everyday practices of our staff we can demonstrate our respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their culture.

1. Commit to practice Acknowledgement of Country to engage employees in understanding shared meaning behind the ceremony.

   - **Responsibility:** Policy Coordinator
   - **Timeline:** July 2013
   - **Target:**
     - Development, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document for CareSouth in consultation with Cultural Consultative Group.
     - All staff and managers to conduct an Acknowledgement of Country where appropriate at meetings and events.

   - **Responsibility:** Regional Manager (Illawarra & Western)
   - **Timeline:** June 2014
   - **Target:** The Policy Reference Group, Cultural Consultative Group and IT Manager to develop and implement a statement on all staff’s email signatures to acknowledge traditional owners.

2. Commit to practice Welcome to Country to ensure there is shared meaning behind the ceremonies.

   - **Responsibility:** Policy Coordinator
   - **Timeline:** July 2013
   - **Target:**
     - Development, implement and communicate a protocol document for CareSouth in consultation with Cultural Consultative Group.

   - **Responsibility:** CEO
   - **Timeline:** June 2014
   - **Target:** Identify major events where a Welcome to Country from a Traditional owner will be included e.g. 21st Anniversary Event.

3. CareSouth to engage employees in cultural learning to increase understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

   - **Responsibility:** Policy Coordinator
   - **Timeline:** Dec 2013
   - **Target:** RAP Working group to develop organizational policy about working in a culturally supportive way with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

   - **Responsibility:** Manager, Community Relations
   - **Timeline:** Dec 2013
   - **Target:** Consultation to take place with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peak bodies, local agencies and Cultural Consultative Group to increase cultural appropriateness of website, publicity and marketing.

   - **Responsibility:** Human Resources Manager
   - **Timeline:** June 2014
   - **Target:** Develop and pilot a cultural awareness training strategy with Senior Managers, Supervisors and Cultural Consultative Group.

4. Support CareSouth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to participate in NAIDOC week celebrations.

   - **Responsibility:** Aboriginal Team Leader, Brighter Futures
   - **Timeline:** 7 – 14 July 2013
   - **Target:**
     - CareSouth Community Relations team is consulted to ensure NAIDOC participation occurs across all sites.
     - CareSouth will sponsor a market stall at one community event offering activities and information about our services.
     - All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff will be encouraged and supported to participate in the celebration of their cultural heritage.
OPPORTUNITIES

CARESOUTH is committed to understanding the needs of all members of the communities within which we work. In order for us to understand how we can better support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, we must work in collaboration with these communities. Through gaining knowledge and understanding we are able to assist our current employees better in their professional development, attract other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to our organization and create opportunities to work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organizations.

ACTION

1. Investigate employment and professional development opportunities for CareSouth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

   • Establish baseline data of number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff through email sent to all staff inviting them to identify to HR so that growth can be measured.
   • Change employment forms to capture numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.
   • Investigate increasing the number of identified positions within CareSouth.
   • CareSouth to investigate partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment agencies with a view to attracting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.
   • CareSouth to develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment strategy including exploring employment, retention, professional development and trainee opportunities for CareSouth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.

   RESPONSIBILITY | TIMELINE | TARGET
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   Human Resources Manager | June 2013 | • Establish baseline data of number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff through email sent to all staff inviting them to identify to HR so that growth can be measured.
   Human Resources Manager | June 2013 | • Change employment forms to capture numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.
   Human Resources Manager | Dec 2013 | • Investigate increasing the number of identified positions within CareSouth.
   Human Resources Manager | Dec 2013 | • CareSouth to investigate partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment agencies with a view to attracting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.
   Human Resources Manager | June 2014 | • CareSouth to develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment strategy including exploring employment, retention, professional development and trainee opportunities for CareSouth Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.

2. Investigate opportunities to increase supplier diversity within CareSouth

   • Investigate developing at least one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander business.

   RESPONSIBILITY | TIMELINE | TARGET
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   Aboriginal Team Leader, Brighter Futures | June 2014 | • Investigate developing at least one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander business.
### Tracking Progress and Reporting

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| 1 Monitor progress of RAP | CEO | Nov 2013 | • RAP progress as part of 2012/2013 Annual Report.  
• CEO to report developments to board at monthly board meetings.  
• Complete and submit the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia annually |
| 2 Annual staff surveys which include targeted questions relating to the RAP and how such has been implemented across the broader organisation | Human Resources Manager | June 2014 | • Questionnaire to be emailed to all staff seeking clarity and feedback regarding the implementation of the RAP across the organization, through all program streams |
| 3 Annual review of the RAP by the CCG to ensure targets are being met, and the document remains current and fluid | CEO | June 2014 | • An annual review of the RAP will be undertaken by the CCG and CEO to ensure all aspects of the RAP are implemented and on target to ensure consistent progress occurs across the organization. |
| 4 CareSouth RAP Refresh | CEO | June 2014 | • CEO to ensure that RWG consults and develops next year’s RAP. |
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