



RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

May 2017 – April 2019





ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

AMSANT acknowledges the work of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation during the Decade of Reconciliation, 1991-2000, in leading the development of a culture of reconciliation in Australia and laying the foundations for the long journey ahead to a truly reconciled nation.

This period demonstrated the need for a bipartisan, formal national reconciliation process that is supported and equipped to address the 'unfinished business' of reconciliation, including appropriate recognition of the sovereignty of First Nations peoples.

We pledge our Reconciliation Action Plan as a practical contribution to achieving AMSANT's vision for reconciliation and to developing the future leaders who will be needed to take the journey to reconciliation forward.

Bridge Walk - Sydney, May 2000



Aboriginal Medical Service Alliance of the Northern Territory (AMSANT)

Reconciliation Action Plan for the years May 2017 – April 2019

OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

AMSANT embraces the underlying principles of a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) namely respect, relationships and opportunities. AMSANT's vision through reconciliation is to provide better health comes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within their communities and build respect for their diverse cultures in Australia and internationally. AMSANT aims to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within its organisation and in the broader community, and to strengthen its relationships with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organisations. AMSANT's RAP process includes ongoing identification of opportunities for reconciliation and taking action on these. AMSANT is committed to the ongoing review and evolution of its RAP, embedding it within all activities of the organisation.

A WORD FROM OUR CEO

I am delighted to present to you the Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory (AMSANT) Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) May 2017 - April 2019. The plan sets out a pathway to improve relationships between AMSANT staff, including AMSANT's Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service members, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the communities that our members are located across the Northern Territory.

AMSANT's RAP is an important tool to guide us in our day-to-day work with our mainstream partners and stakeholders. RAP frameworks are based on three key areas:

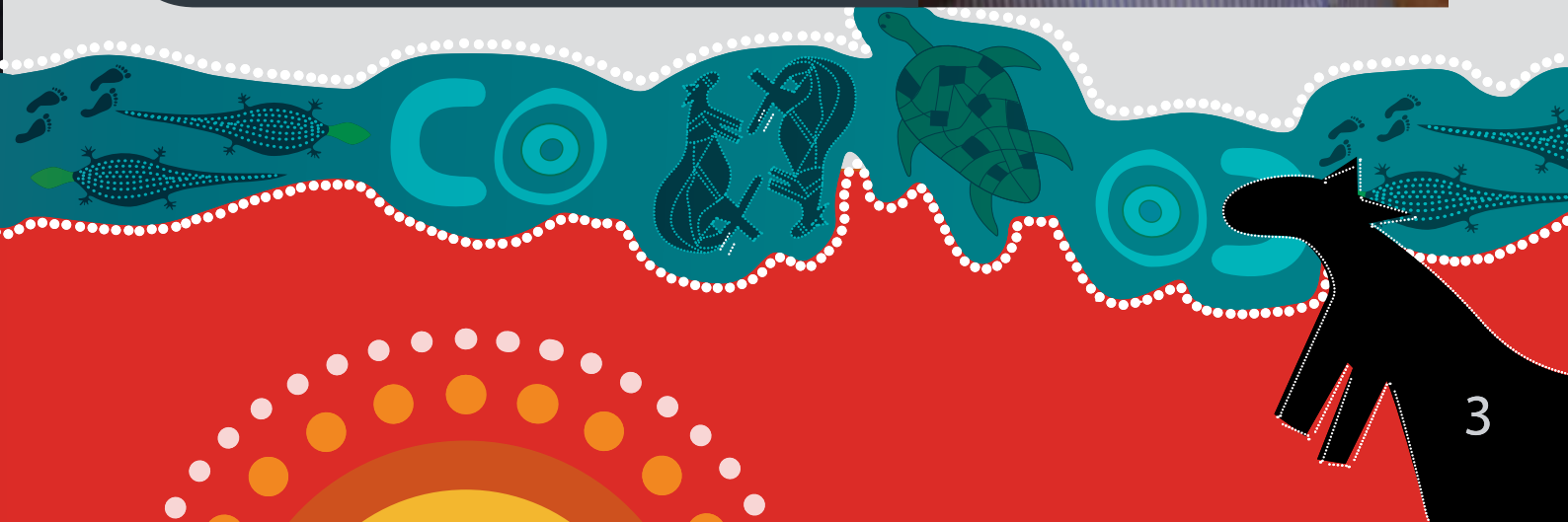
RELATIONSHIPS, RESPECT AND OPPORTUNITIES

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the AMSANT RAP Working Group (RWG) for leading the development of the plan, and to thank Reconciliation Australia for working with the Committee.

This document is a testament of AMSANT's reconciliation achievements to date and a written commitment to continued reconciliation action and initiatives for the future.

John Paterson

Chief Executive Officer
AMSANT



OUR RAP JOURNEY

In 2014 AMSANT's CEO (John Paterson) and the Senior Management Team identified the need to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan and make a commitment to consider reconciliation in all aspects of our business. A RAP working group made up from Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff members including Leeanne Pena (NTGPE/AMSANT Project Liaison Officer), Frank Campbell (Indigenous Health Project Officer), Muki Muir (Operational Services Officer), Sonia Lewfatt (Executive Assistant to the CEO), Aimon Riyana (APONT/AGMP Project Support Officer) and Patrick Johnson (Leadership Project Officer). The CEO and the Senior Management Team will continue to undertake a Statement of Commitment to work with and be guided by the RAP working group (RWG).

The main objective of our RAP is to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture is fundamental to our workplace, program development, design and delivery. The RAP provides real actions that have a positive impact on and achieve measurable outcomes for the people and communities we work with, and particularly AMSANT's member services, to ensure the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are heard throughout our organisation.

As our first RAP, we will develop an Indigenous Employment Strategy and investigate opportunities within the organisation to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment. We will focus on building reciprocal cultural awareness, increasing capacity by utilising AMSANT's core business skills and further

developing our relationships with our member services and stakeholders.

OUR BUSINESS

The Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance NT (AMSANT) is the peak body for Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services in the Northern Territory and advocates for equality in health, focusing on supporting the provision of high quality comprehensive primary health care services for Aboriginal communities. AMSANT promotes and supports the development of Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services and has 26 member services across the Northern Territory.

AMSANT's primary objective and vision is to "alleviate the sickness, suffering and disadvantage of, and to promote the health and well-being of Aboriginal people of the NT". AMSANT's core business is to strengthen health leadership among member organisations, build effective relationships that improve Aboriginal health, advocate for equality, enhance member relationships, increase AMSANT funding, enhance internal capacity to deliver on strategic objectives, and grow the community controlled sector.

AMSANT offices are located in Darwin and Alice Springs, however the geographic reach of AMSANT is within the Northern Territory and through its 26 member services. AMSANT employs a total of 48 people, of which 22 are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.



AMSANT Staff - Darwin, 2014

AMSANT Leadership Program



The AMSANT Leadership program is building the capacity of tomorrow's leaders today, through the development of skills, networking and confidence, and the promotion of cultural security in the workplace. The program is built on principles of respect, inclusiveness, diversity and ownership. The program promotes two-way learning, and seeks to empower participants to become leaders in the Aboriginal community controlled health sector.

Since 2006, AMSANT has advocated for the need to provide opportunities to its staff and member services to build leadership specifically within our sector. In November 2006, AMSANT commenced its first Annual Leadership Workshop in Alice Springs and has since held six more annual workshops in Kakadu, Banatjarl, Ross River, South Alligator, Mount Bundy and Alice Springs. As well as the annual workshops, the leadership program has continued to provide ongoing support to leadership participants to build opportunities through networking, professional development and other potential opportunities.





Photo Courtesy of NTGPE

COMMUNITY CULTURAL MENTORING PROGRAM PILOT GALIWINKU, ELCHO ISLAND NT

AMSANT and the Northern Territory General Practice Education (NTGPE) were partners in initiating the Community Cultural Mentoring Program to improve the health of Indigenous people in the Northern Territory by:

- Assisting GP registrars and junior doctors to better understand and value the culture of the Indigenous communities in which they work
- Contribute to the education of GPRs and junior doctors in the area of Indigenous health
- Training and support of cultural mentors so that they can assist GPRs to achieve these aims
- Provide personal experience and motivation to work in Indigenous health long term
- Assist GPRs and junior doctors to understand community protocols that apply to workers in Indigenous health.

The Community Cultural Mentoring Program has had a ground-up approach which incorporates consultation with key stakeholders and Traditional Owners where the work takes place by working with the senior cultural authorities, and their knowledge and vision for their people. This way of working is participatory, reciprocal, rigorous, satisfying, generative, transformative and inspiring.

GPR ONLINE RESOURCE

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners and doctors working across the Northern Territory have found that many health professionals have limited understanding of the differences between Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services and mainstream general practice. Many new health professionals, including GP Registrars, are initially unsure of how Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHS) operate, the exact role of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Health Practitioner (ATSIHP) and how cultural and community knowledge can impact on consultation-related issues such as patient disclosure.

These factors as well as cultural and language barriers can contribute to misunderstandings, conflict and feelings of frustration for Registrars, ATSIHPs and patients. These findings resulted from a series of interviews conducted by GP Registrar Dr Tunncliffe during her work with AMSANT in a dual GPR training post with Danila Dilba. Dr Tunncliffe's research indicates that GP Registrars and other health professionals would benefit from more awareness-building resources that address these knowledge gaps.

As a result of this research, AMSANT and the Northern Territory General Practice Education recently partnered, initiated and completed development of the GPR online resource, and launched it at the 'AMSANT Our Health Our Way' conference in 2014. The resource is an interactive web-based induction tool called Working Well, which features stories, videos, focus questions and advice from ATSIHPs and doctors working in Aboriginal Health.



AMSANT and NTGPE Staff - Alice Springs, November 2014

RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships are an integral part of our business of advocacy and support to our member services, other relevant stakeholders and Government.

FOCUS AREA: Building and maintaining relationships with Aboriginal people, communities, organisations and stakeholders			
ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE
RAP Working Group (RWG) RAP Working Group actively monitors RAP development, including implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting.	AMSANT/NTGPE Project Liaison Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RWG to oversee the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP. Establish a Terms of Reference for the RWG. Meet quarterly to monitor and report on the RAP implementation, and to plan activities and ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are represented on the RWG group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May 2017 July 2017 February, May, August and November (annually)
Promote RAP Raise internal and external awareness of our RAP to promote reconciliation across our business and sector	CEO, SMT, Corporate, RWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formally launch our RAP at an AMSANT event. Develop and implement a strategy to communicate our RAP to all internal and external stakeholders. Promote reconciliation through ongoing active engagement with all stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May 2017 July 2017 Reviewed at quarterly RWG meeting
Celebrate National Reconciliation Week Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and other employees to build relationships.	RWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RWG to organise at least one internal event each year and support an external NRW event. RWG to organise and register at least one event per year inviting a broader group of AMSANT's stakeholders, members, Chair and board. Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 27 May – 3 June (annually) 27 May – 3 June (annually) 27 May – 3 June (annually)
Building Relationships Develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations to support positive outcomes	CEO, SMT, Corporate, RWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with APO NT to develop guiding principles for future engagement. Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> October 2017 March 2018

RESPECT

AMSANT's core objective is based on respect for member services and their communities as a peak body.

FOCUS AREA: Increase cultural awareness to all staff within AMSANT			
ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE
<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols</p> <p>Create a greater awareness and understanding around the meaning of Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country ceremonies to ensure AMSANT staff experience the shared meaning and are engaged in the understanding of protocols of any functions they attended.</p>	<p>CEO, SMT, Corporate Administration Staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify at least one significant event annually for which a Welcome to Country from a Traditional Owner will be included. In line with AMSANT Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country policy, staff will deliver an Acknowledgement of Country as part of standard business meeting protocols and invite Traditional Owners to perform a Welcome to Country at official events and maintain a contact list. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed at quarterly RWG meeting January, April, August 2017
<p>Celebrate NAIDOC Week and other events.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to engage with their culture and community through NAIDOC Week events</p>	<p>CEO, SMT, Corporate, RWG</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC or other days of significance. Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to participate in local NAIDOC Week events. Maintain and promote a calendar of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events to ensure recognition and celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is continuous throughout the year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> June 2017 2-9 July 2017, July 2018 Reviewed at quarterly RWG meeting
<p>Cultural awareness, training and development for staff</p> <p>Engage employees in cultural learning to increase understanding and appreciation of different cultural backgrounds in order to lay the foundation for other RAP actions to be achieved.</p>	<p>CEO, SMT, Corporate Administration Staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate different types of cultural awareness training available and develop a pilot cultural awareness training strategy for AMSANT. Provide opportunities for RWG members, RAP Champions, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in cultural training delivered by Traditional Owners and consultants. Identify the cultural learning needs of employees in all areas of AMSANT's business. Provide Cultural sharing sessions that promote a Culturally safe forum for staff to feel comfortable asking questions that they might not otherwise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> March 2018 January, April and July (annually) January, April and July (annually) Reviewed at quarterly RWG meeting

OPPORTUNITIES

Through focus on respect and improving relations, AMSANT will provide opportunities for reconciliation.

FOCUS AREA: Increase Aboriginal employment and engagement with Aboriginal businesses			
ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE
<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment</p> <p>Develop an Indigenous Employment Strategy and investigate opportunities within the organisation to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment opportunities.</p>	SMT, Corporate HR, WALC unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review HR procedures and policies to ensure barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees are able to be addressed. Engage with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on employment strategies, including professional development. Advertise all vacancies in Indigenous media and collect information on current Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff for future employment. Support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at community and family responsibilities such as Sorry Business. Review opportunities for work experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school students and university students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> June 2017 November 2017 Reviewed at quarterly RWG meeting Reviewed at quarterly RWG meeting October 2018
<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity</p> <p>Investigate opportunities to increase supplier diversity within your organisation.</p>	CEO, SMT, Corporate, RWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a plan to publicly promote business opportunities available. Develop and communicate to staff a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses that can be used to procure goods and services. Review and reform procurement strategy, policy and processes so that supplier diversity principles can be incorporated into procurement strategy. Engage with local Aboriginal businesses for catering, other supplies and services. Establish Aboriginal commercial relationships particularly with consultants. Investigate Supply Nation membership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed at quarterly RWG meeting June 2017 June 2018 Reviewed at quarterly RWG meeting Reviewed at quarterly RWG meeting November 2017

OPPORTUNITIES

Through focus on respect and improving relations, AMSANT will provide opportunities for reconciliation.

FOCUS AREA: Leadership to engage non-Aboriginal NGOs in building the capacity of Aboriginal controlled organisations in service delivery.

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE
<p>APO NT NGO Partnership Principles AMSANT, as a member of the Aboriginal Peak Organisations NT alliance, helped develop and works to promote the APO NT Partnership Principles which seek to engage non-Aboriginal organisations in building the capacity of Aboriginal controlled organisations in service delivery.</p>	<p>SMT / RAP Manager / APO NT Coordinator</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and advocate the APO NT Partnership Principles to non-Aboriginal organisations with the aim to increase the number of non-Aboriginal organisations endorsing the Principles. • Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organisations to be brought together to promote the principles, build mutually respectful relationships and identify opportunities to work together in partnership. • Support non-Aboriginal organisations to provide capacity building assistance and support to Aboriginal organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed at quarterly RWG meeting • December (annually) • Reviewed at quarterly RWG meeting

ABORIGINAL PEAK ORGANISATIONS NT

AMSANT is a member of the Aboriginal Peak Organisations NT (APO NT) alliance, which also includes the Northern and Central Land Councils, the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency and the Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service. APO NT provides Aboriginal leadership in engaging government and non-Aboriginal organisations in understanding and appropriately responding to the issues affecting Aboriginal people in the NT, including through evidence based policy and increasing opportunities for Aboriginal control. AMSANT auspices the APO NT secretariat which is supported by funds sought from government and philanthropic sources, as well as in-kind support from APO NT members.

One of APO NT's projects is to engage non-Aboriginal organisations in helping to support and increase the capacity of Aboriginal controlled organisations to take a greater role in providing services for, and leading the development of, their communities. The APO NT Partnership Principles were developed in consultation with non-Aboriginal organisations and have been endorsed by 21 non-Aboriginal NGOs. A Steering Committee comprising AMSANT and other APO NT and non-Aboriginal partners works to promote and operationalise the Principles.



APONT NGO Forum - Darwin, June 2015



TRACKING, PROGRESS AND REPORTING

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE
Report on AMSANT's challenges and learnings to Reconciliation Australia and AMSANT board.	SMT, AMSANT / NTGPE Project Liaison Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia annually. Report to be provided to AMSANT's board on a quarterly basis to monitor RAP targets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> September (annually) March, June, September, December (annually)
Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings internally and externally	RWG Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> October (annually)
Review, refresh, and update RAP	RWG Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with RA to update/ renewing AMSANT's RAP based on challenges and achievements and send draft to RA for formal feedback and endorsement. The RWG to meet regularly to discuss progress and guide AMSANT through the RAP journey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> November 2018 - April 2019 February, May, August, November (annually)



For further enquiries regarding AMSANT's
Reconciliation Action Plan, please contact:-

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www.amsant.org.au