



Reflect

Reconciliation Action Plan

September 2025
to
September 2026



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

REFLECT

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ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE SHOULD BE AWARE THAT THIS GUIDE CONTAINS IMAGES OF DECEASED PERSONS.



Acknowledgement of Country

We stand on the shoulders of 1,600 generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We acknowledge and pay respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia, who are the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters and of the oldest continuous

living culture on Earth. We pay respects to Elders past and present. We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples must have a genuine say in the design and delivery of services that affect them for better life outcomes to be achieved. We commit to ongoing partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities in implementing and monitoring this Reconciliation Action Plan.



Dementia Australia's Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan 2025-2026 is endorsed by Reconciliation Australia.

Statement of commitment

Dementia Australia is committed to building cultural capability by listening to, learning from, and engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our commitment includes:

+ **Listening and Learning:** Actively seeking to understand and value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' voices.

+ **Leadership:** Leading with respect, humility, and inclusivity within our organisation and partnerships.

+ **Advocacy:** Using our influence to advocate for the rights and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living with dementia.

+ **Partnerships:** Building respectful, collaborative relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

+ **Continuous Improvement:** Continuously reflecting and adapting to ensure our actions support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' wellbeing.

We are dedicated to fostering positive, lasting change and deepening our cultural understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' and communities' lived experiences.

Meaningful action

Foreword by the CEO of Dementia Australia

As Chief Executive Officer of Dementia Australia, I am proud to present our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) – a meaningful and essential commitment to strengthening our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This RAP reflects not only our organisational values, but also as CEO my personal commitment to embedding reconciliation into our culture, priorities, and daily practice. I am dedicated to advancing equity, dignity, and culturally safe care. I will continue to prioritise listening and learning from the lived experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In my role, I am continually inspired by the strength and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities – and by the power, strength and resilience of culture, Country, and connection across generations.

Through our Reflect RAP, we will ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, and contributions

are acknowledged, respected, and celebrated.

With our RAP, Dementia Australia reaffirms its commitment to making reconciliation a core part of our culture, systems, and every aspect of our work. We have aligned our actions with our Purpose, Strategic Priorities and Enablers, and I will actively lead and monitor our progress to ensure together, we meet our commitments and honour the diverse needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia.

Importantly, I acknowledge this work cannot be done in isolation. True reconciliation must be built on trust, truth-telling, and shared responsibility within our organisation. Reconciliation challenges us to reflect on our past, act

with integrity in the present, and use what we learn to help shape a more inclusive future. Dementia Australia is committed to measurable, meaningful action – and to walking alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities as an ally, advocate, and learner.

Together, we can create a future where every person – regardless of their background or diagnosis – is welcomed, seen, heard, and supported in ways that honour their story and their culture.

Professor Tanya Buchanan

Chief Executive Officer
Dementia Australia



Laying the foundations

Statement from the CEO of Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia welcomes Dementia Australia to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

Dementia Australia joins a network of more than 3,000 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. The program's potential for impact is greater than ever, with close to 3 million people now working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

The four RAP types – Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate – allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. This Reflect RAP will lay the foundations, priming the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives, for the most effective outcomes.

These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.

It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

This Reflect RAP enables Dementia Australia to deepen its understanding of its sphere of influence and the

unique contribution it can make to lead progress across the five dimensions. Getting these first steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Dementia Australia, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.

Karen Mundine

Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia



About the artist and artwork

Nikita Ridgeway, Bundjalung/Biripi Artist

“Sharing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture as spoken by my ancestors through our dreaming.”



Bundjalung/Biripi Artist Nikita Ridgeway believes that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art is about sharing ancestral stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their continuing connection to country and dreaming.

Through her Sydney based creative design agency, Boss Lady Design and

Communications (BLDAC), Nikita creates digital artwork designs that relay stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’s connection to country, each other, their history, and the future.

“Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and artwork is beautiful and collaborative. Through my ancestors, I understand that telling stories through my art and creating cultural awareness helps build a strong united country in understanding, which leads to strong people and strong communities. Let us work together to care for our beautiful country and people.”

Titled *“Empowering Equality through Community, Inclusion & Culture,”* the artwork embodies values such as inclusion, respect, cultural safety, and reconciliation. Central to the piece is a symbolic brain

representing the individual’s dementia journey, surrounded by elements like ‘U’ shapes for loved ones, hands for life force, and a Dhari for Torres Strait Islander identity. The broader artwork integrates the shape of Australia, symbolising national support networks and diverse communities. It highlights the collective strength of individuals, families, service providers, and First Nations communities working together to create accessible, culturally safe dementia support. The piece visually tells a story of unity, empowerment, and cultural identity through traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art styles. Artwork was developed in collaboration with Boss Lady Design and Communication (BLDAC), following consultation with First Nations representatives, staff, and those with lived experience.



About us

Dementia Australia is the national peak body supporting people living with dementia, their families and carers.

Our national footprint:

Western Australia, Perth: Whadjuk people of the Nyoongar nation

Northern Territory, Winnellie: Larrakia people

South Australia, Glenside: Kurna people

Victoria, Parkville: Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung peoples

Victoria, Ballarat: Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung peoples

Victoria, Bendigo: Dja Dja Wurrung and the Taungurung people, both part of the Kulin Nation

Victoria, Geelong: Wadawurrung people

Tasmania, Battery Point: Muwinina people

Tasmania, Launceston: Leterrermairrener (or Litarimirina) people and the Panina people

Tasmania, Devonport: Palawa/Pakana peoples

Australian Capital Territory, Griffith: Wiradjuri people

New South Wales, North Ryde: Wallumedegal people, a clan of the Darug Nation

New South Wales, Blacktown: Dharug (also Darug) people

New South Wales, Batemans Bay: Walbunja people, a clan of the Yuin nation

New South Wales, Bega: Yuin-Monaro Nations

New South Wales, Moss Vale: Gundungurra and Dharawal people, Ngurra land

New South Wales, Newcastle: Awabakal and Worimi peoples

New South Wales, Port Macquarie: Birpai people (also spelled Biripi, Birrbay)

Queensland, Milton: Turrbal people

Queensland, Cairns: Gimuy Walubara Yidinji people

Queensland, Mudgeeraba: Kombumerri people, a clan of the larger Yugambah Nation

In 2025, around 433,300 Australians are living with dementia, with an estimated 29,000 people with younger onset dementia. An estimated 1.7 million Australians are involved in providing care. Dementia is the second leading cause of death in Australia and will soon become the leading cause, yet it remains a challenging and often misunderstood condition.

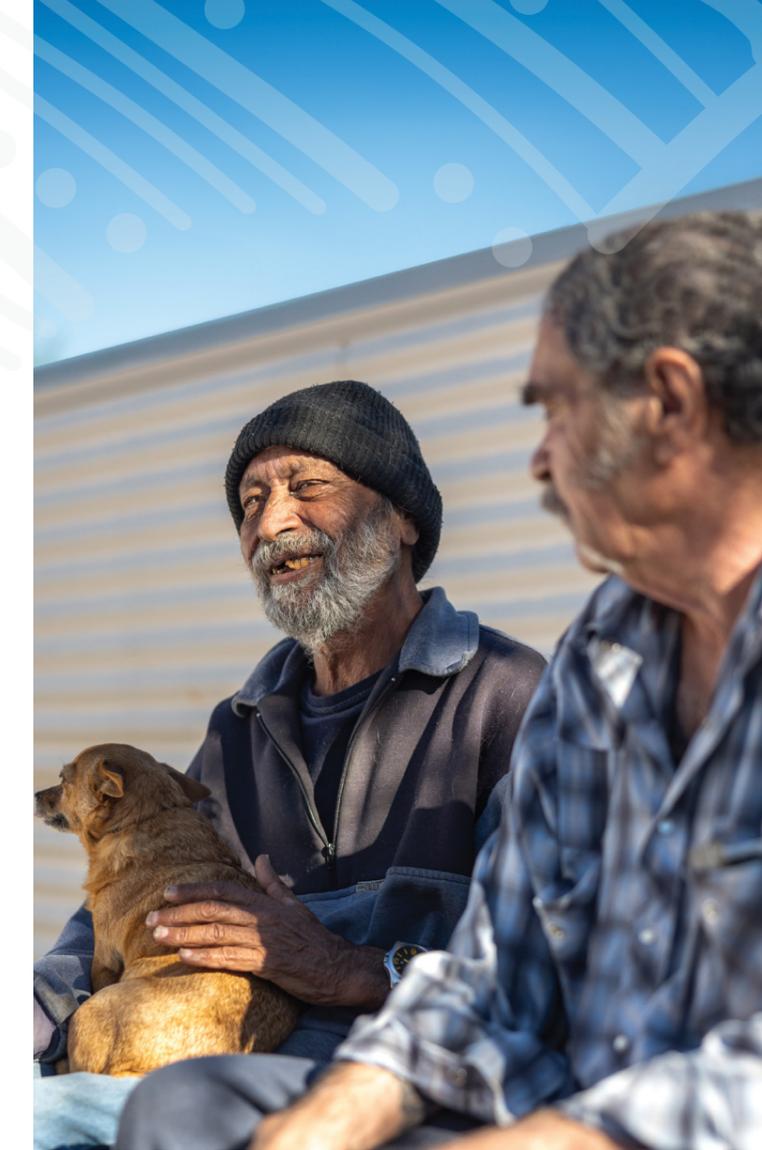
Research has found that dementia prevalence rates in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are about 3-5 times higher than rates for Australia overall. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities may also have an increased prevalence of some risk factors for dementia including head injury, stroke, diabetes, high blood pressure, renal disease, cardiovascular disease, obesity, hearing loss, childhood stress and trauma, and lower socioeconomic status.

Dementia Australia responds to this challenge with trusted information, education and support services.

- + **We advocate to government and in the community for positive change.**
- + **We support vital research and health workers providing essential care.**
- + **We equip communities with tools and knowledge to make our society more dementia-friendly.**
- + **We involve people impacted by dementia in our work, to respect and reflect the diverse range of dementia experiences across Australia.**
- + **We amplify the voices of people impacted by dementia, to empower their self-advocacy and reduce stigma in the community.**
- + **We are here to support people impacted by dementia, and to enable them to live as well as possible.**
- + **We remain committed to fostering an inclusive and culturally safe environment within our workforce and initiatives.** In 2025, our workforce consists of more than 600 people

with 8 identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; within our Dementia Advocates Program we have 16 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advocates nationally, one of these Advocates is a member of the Dementia Australia Advisory Committee. Under the guidance of our Board and CEO, we have a newly established Supportive Care and Clinical Governance Committee, and have appointed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on this subcommittee.

RIGHT: RAYMOND FERGUSON AND SHAUN MCERVALE ARE DEMENTIA AUSTRALIA CLIENTS IN MPARNTWE (ALICE SPRINGS)



OUR RECONCILIATION PURPOSE

At Dementia Australia, we envision a future where every individual affected by dementia experiences care that is culturally informed and responsive, community-driven, and grounded in dignity and respect.

We recognise and celebrate the rich diversity of cultures, histories, and identities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. We are committed to enhancing the cultural capability of our workforce, stakeholders and fostering reconciliation alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities as we embark on this important journey.

OUR VALUES

Dementia Australia's five core values form the acronym ALICE: Authentic, Living Experience, Inclusive, Collaborative, and Empowering.

These values are shaped by the voices of people impacted by dementia and are deliberately expressed in active and instructional language. This intentionality ensures that the values remain front of mind and embedded in the work of those who uphold them—our staff, volunteers, executive team, and board.

The ALICE values are integrated into our daily operations and culture. They serve as guiding principles that underpin our commitment to delivering the actions outlined in our Reflect RAP.

WHY IS DEMENTIA AUSTRALIA DEVELOPING A REFLECT RAP?

Through the implementation of our RAP, we are committed to integrating reconciliation as a core operational imperative, embedding the dimensions of reconciliation across all functions, policies and practices of our organisation.

- + **Race Relations** - Positive two-way relationships built on trust and respect exist between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Australians throughout society.
- + **Equality and Equity** - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples participate equally in a range of life opportunities and the unique rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are recognised and upheld.
- + **Institutional Integrity** - The active support of reconciliation by the nation's political, business and community structures.
- + **Unity** - An Australian society that values and recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritage as a proud part of a shared national identity.
- + **Historical Acceptance** - All Australians understand and accept the wrongs of

the past and their impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Australia makes amends for past policies and practices and ensures these wrongs are never repeated.

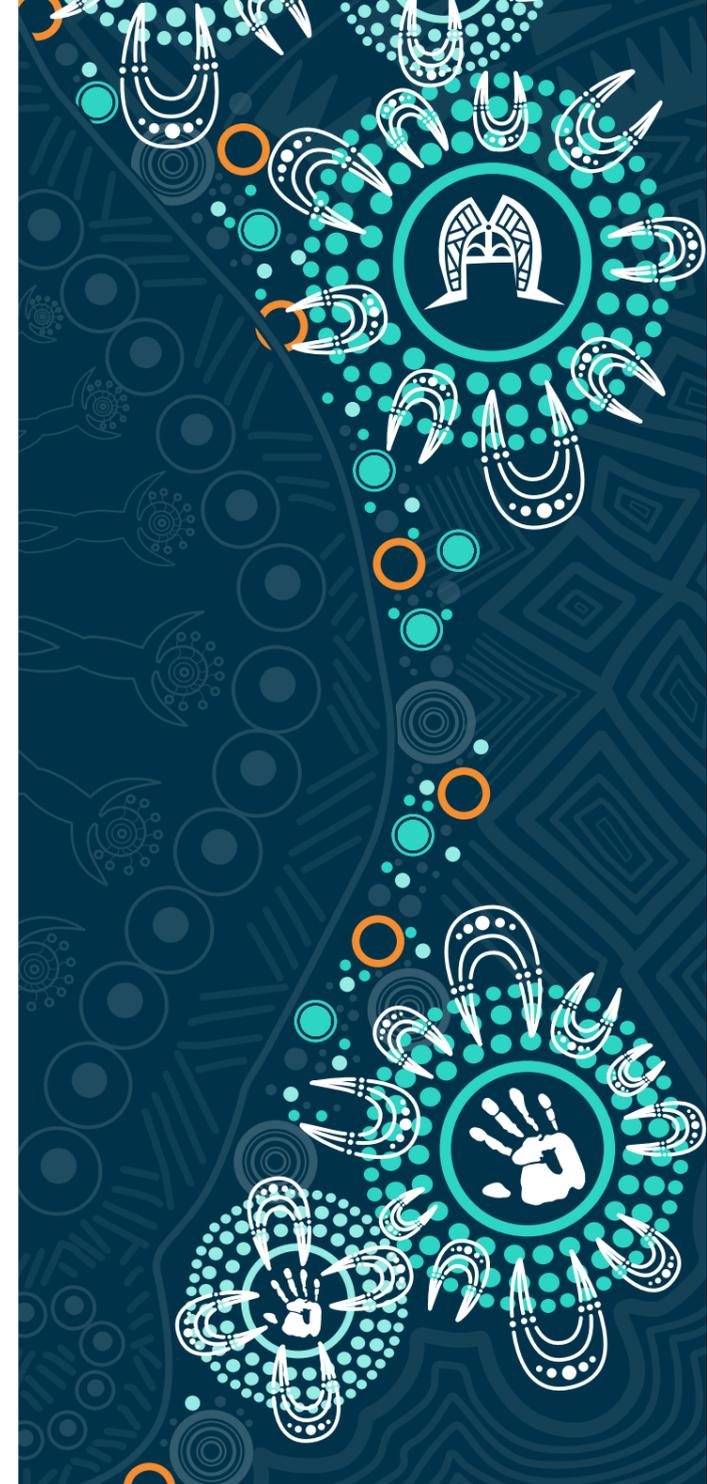
These key dimensions of reconciliation in Australia are mirroring Dementia Australia's commitment to building a society defined by justice, fairness, and equity. The dimensions will shape the strategic direction of our Reflect RAP and drive the development of practical initiatives that embed reconciliation into our systems, culture, and leadership. Our journey will be one of continuous evolution led by accountability, transparent and robust communication, measured by action, and driven by the communities we are connected with and serve.

Our commitment is not a symbolic one – it is a leadership expectation, visible and embedded daily in the way we work, the way we lead, and the way we hold

ourselves accountable. As a national peak body, we take this responsibility seriously, and our commitment to reconciliation will be evident in our actions, decisions, and impact across the communities we serve.

Our RAP is aligned with our 2025-2028 Strategic Plan, as well as our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy, ensuring that we better support and empower our clients, consumers, advocates, communities, staff and volunteers.

This plan will play a key role in shaping our organisation and enable us to provide culturally informed advocacy, support, research, training and services nationally. We will embody the principles of reconciliation in every interaction with our clients, consumers, advocates, communities and workforce.





Priority 1

Reduce stigma and discrimination



Priority 2

Promote brain health



Priority 3

Empower and support people impacted by all forms of dementia



Priority 4

Upskill the dementia care workforce



Enabler 1

Our people, culture and values



Enabler 2

Our sustainability



Enabler 4

Our research, evidence and thought leadership

As the national peak body, we will advance our understanding of the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples by expanding our partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, external groups and government bodies. We will use these partnerships and frameworks including the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aged Care Framework 2025-2035 and the National Dementia Action Plan 2024-2034 (Department of Health and Aged Care) to inform how we raise awareness, educate and grow our understanding of the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families and communities living with dementia.

It is essential that our staff reflect the diverse communities we serve. We will continue to explore opportunities to enhance and build capabilities within

our workforce, with a strong focus on providing a culturally safe and supportive environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

We continue to build our knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, lived experiences, and contemporary realities to ensure our work is grounded in truth, respect, and meaningful action. We are committed to leading with empathy, knowledge, and action. Through targeted cultural learning, all Dementia Australia team members will strengthen their understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' histories, experiences, and aspirations. We will deepen our relationships with communities by listening first, learning continually, and working in genuine partnership to achieve sustainable outcomes.

REFLECT RAP GOVERNANCE

Our workforce holds unique knowledge and valuable experience, and through our national Expressions of Interest, we've established Reconciliation Working Groups (RWG) to ensure our RAP drives meaningful and lasting change.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people contribute to both RAP working groups, offering cultural and strategic leadership that guides our RAP implementation and upholds cultural integrity in all aspects of our work.

RAP Governance Reporting Mechanism

Dementia Australia will implement a structured governance and reporting framework to ensure effective implementation, transparency, and alignment of our Reflect RAP with organisational priorities.

The RAP is governed by two groups:

- + **The Strategic Enabler Group (SEG)** provides strategic direction, allocates resources, and ensures integration of RAP deliverables across the organisation.
- + **The Community Activator Group (CAG)** drives staff engagement, event coordination, with relevant members engaged in relationship-building with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The SEG will meet monthly and submit quarterly progress reports to the Executive Leadership Team, outlining achievements, risks, and resource requirements. A six-monthly summary report will be provided to the Dementia

Australia Board, offering high-level insights into RAP impact and alignment with strategic outcomes.

The CAG meets every six weeks and reports into the SEG, ensuring operational activities remain aligned with the RAP's broader strategic intent. Increased meeting frequency will occur around key events including but not limited to National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week.

Escalation pathways are in place via the RAP Lead to the RAP and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Steering Committee, ensuring governance rigour and responsiveness. Community insights and staff feedback will be actively shared to inform ongoing improvement and uphold cultural integrity in implementation.

Strategic Enabler Working Group Members

Support Worker, Judith Kay
Family and Community Coordinator,
Miriam Cleary
Dementia Support Specialist, Judy Sutton
Consumer Engagement Coordinator
Research, Courtney Kirkwood
Marketing Specialist, Jasvit Singh
Internal Communications Manager,
Rachael Layton
General Manager Client Services,
Nikki Gilbertson
General Manager Monitoring Evaluation
and Development, Nigel McPaul
External Representation – Nganya,
Dixie Crawford

We acknowledge the support and input from the Dementia Australia Advisory Committee:

Ann Pietsch (Chair) – SA
Dennis Frost (Vice Chair) – NSW
Juanita Hughes – QLD
Natalie Ive – VIC
Gwenda Darling – NSW
Nell Hawe – NSW
Lil Mirtl – TAS
Patrick Dare – QLD
Anthony Pollock – SA

Community Activation Group Members

Dementia Support Specialist, Jenny
Adams
Dementia Support Specialist, Kelly Nugent
Dementia Support Specialist,
Jodi Frankland
Dementia Support Specialist,
May Vrazofski
Dementia Counsellor, Louise Day
Dementia Counsellor, Melanie Mitchell
Volunteer Coordinator, Jacqueline Elliott
Facilitator, Merisa Holland
Family Engagement Counsellor,
Maria Springer
Team Leader National Dementia Helpline,
Catherine Morton
Helpline Advisor, Jeremy Shing
General Manager Consumer Engagement,
Sally Lambourne
External Representation – Nganya,
Dixie Crawford

RAP & DEI Steering Committee Members

Executive Sponsor, Anneliese Coghlan –
Executive Director People and Culture
Chief Executive Officer, Tanya Buchanan
Chief Operating Officer, Anthony Boffa
Executive Director Awareness and
Growth, Kimberley Roberts
Executive Director Services, Advocacy
and Research, Kaele Stokes
Director Client Services, Barbra Williams
Chief Information Officer, Daniel Johnson
General Manager Consumer
Engagement, Sally Lambourne
General Manager Quality and Business
Services, Therese Armstrong
General Manager Finance, Rebecca
Berryman
General Manager Communications,
Sarah Price
General Manager Policy and Advocacy,
Kylie Miskovski
General Manager People and Culture
Operations, Michelle Cahill
Diversity Equity and Inclusion Manager,
Sylvia Yeo
Organisational Development Manager,
Sam Teefy (RAP Lead)



OPPOSITE: DEMENTIA ADVOCATE JACK CROMBIE,
A YANKUNYTJATJARA MAN FROM ANANGU
PITJANTJATJARA YANKUNYTJATJARA (APY) IN
REMOTE NORTH-EAST OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

OUR ENGAGEMENT WITH ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMUNITIES

Dementia Australia Research Foundation (DARF)

DARF relies on financial support from generous individuals and organisations committed to investment in dementia research; offered annually through the Dementia Research Grants Program, we fund research involving Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander peoples and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

- + The study funded most recently by DARF was by Antonia Clarke, Neurologist completing her cognitive fellowship at Box Hill Hospital in Melbourne alongside her work as a Neurophysiologist in metropolitan and regional Victoria and the Northern Territory. The project title was “Community, Country, and Cognition: Yarning to understand Place-based brain ageing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples”.

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ageing and Aged Care Council

Dementia Australia is an associate member of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ageing and Aged Care Council.

The Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia First Nation Symposium

Dementia Australia Representation at The Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia First Nation Symposium known as the State-wide Yarning Circle to share information about dementia, introduce Dementia Australia, and highlight the First Nation Partnership Program.

Diversity Small Grants

In 2024, six of the eleven successful grant recipients (grants offering up to \$30,000 per recipient) were organisations working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, initiatives were specifically designed to raise dementia awareness

and provide culturally sensitive support to help these communities better recognise early signs, access resources, and implement effective care strategies:

- + Uneewarra Aboriginal Media Association (SA)
- + Walhallow Local Aboriginal Land Council (NSW)
- + West Australian Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation (WA)
- + Bidgerdii Community Health Service (QLD)
- + Yerrabi Yurwang Child and Family Aboriginal Corporation (ACT)
- + Our Community Shed (NT).

Dementia Australia Brain Hubs

Dementia Australia Brain Hubs are multi-disciplinary community education and information sessions delivered in regional Australian towns. We seek to identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to engage with as part of our Brain Hub activities. Our drop-in sessions increase community awareness

around dementia, our dedicated teams share dementia resources, 24:7 Helpline contact details and step people through how to access our website resources, presentations on EDIE Training and include information regarding Dementia Friendly Communities.

First Nations NDSP Partnerships

First Nations NDSP Partnerships for First Nations organisations to fund a part-time Dementia Link Worker or undertake Dementia awareness activities. Our partnerships have included:

- + Mununjali Housing and Development Company (Jymbilung House) (QLD) - Yugambah Country
- + HealthWISE (NSW) - Kamilaroi/ Gomeroi Country
- + Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation (NT)
- + No. 34 Aboriginal Health Service (TAS)
- + South West Aboriginal Medical Service (WA)
- + Nalderun (VIC)
- + Pika Wiya Aboriginal Health Service (SA)



L TO R: CHELSEA WILLIAMSON, PANGULA MANNAMURNA (MOUNT GAMBIER), EMMA TAHURI, PRINCIPAL LEAD, ELDER POPULATION HEALTH, AHCSA, AND JASMINE GUEST, ABORIGINAL FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES (AFSS) AT THE ABORIGINAL HEALTH COUNCIL OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA.



CYRIL DIXON (UNCLE CD) COORDINATOR/MANAGER FROM KURA YERLO AND OUR DEMENTIA LINK WORKER SUPPORTING DEMENTIA AUSTRALIA AT THE SONDER CLOSING THE GAP EXPO IN 2024 AT THE WAYVILLE SHOWGROUNDS ADELAIDE.



EUNICE ASTON FROM MURRAY BRIDGE (REGIONAL SOUTH AUSTRALIA) IS A DEMENTIA LINK WORKER AT THE MOORUNDI ABORIGINAL HEALTH EXPO AND FUN RUN HELD AT STURT RESERVE, SA.



PORT LINCOLN ABORIGINAL HEALTH SERVICE MEN'S SHED WITH GUEST SPEAKER, DEMENTIA AUSTRALIA A YARN ABOUT MEMORY, BRAIN HEALTH, DEMENTIA, AND DEMENTIA AUSTRALIA'S SERVICES.

Family and Community outreach programs

Family and Community outreach programs within the Northern Territory, designed to build trust and relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities

Dementia Australia Dementia Advocates

Building awareness and education through internal and external channels by sharing stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Dementia Australia Dementia Advocates via Advocacy in Action, the website, social media and via our media releases (which are shared semi-regularly on National TalkBlack)

In 2024 Dementia Australia launched **Hold the Moment Podcast**, which allows us to share a diverse range of lived experiences and stories across a large national and international platform.

- + Season 1 is full of real stories about life after a dementia diagnosis. Audiences meet people living with dementia and hear how they manage issues such as telling others about a diagnosis and getting their affairs in order.

- + Season 2 was released in May 2025, shared the knowledge and experiences of carers. In Episode 4 we celebrate Miriam, a proud Aboriginal woman from the Northern Territory and who currently holds a position within Dementia Australia as a Family and Community Coordinator. Miriam brings a combination of lived and professional experience to her role, having cared for her late mother who lived with dementia, and now using that experience to support others navigating similar journeys. Born in Darwin, Miriam has lived and worked across remote, rural, and urban communities throughout the NT. With over 30 years of experience working alongside Aboriginal families, communities, and organisations, she is deeply committed to building strong, respectful, and culturally safe relationships. Miriam is passionate about elevating the voices and stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Dementia Advocates. A former Dementia Australia Dementia Advocate herself; Miriam brings authenticity, empathy, and a deep cultural understanding – amplifying voices, strengthening connections, and leading change in community-led dementia support.

Strengthening Connections

Strengthening Connections is a Dementia Australia Advisory Committee initiated project delivered in Katherine, Northern Territory. DAAC member Kevyn Morris took time to yarn with Community members. He shared his experience of the early signs of dementia and his diagnosis and the importance of the Indigenous voice. Kevyn and members of the Consumer Engagement and Dementia Friendly Communities teams also set up a pop-up stall in Katherine and spoke to other community members who stopped by to yarn and pick up Dementia Australia merchandise.

RIGHT: (L-R) EMIL ALMAZAN, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR, DEMENTIA AUSTRALIA, JACKIE HAYES, NATIONAL MANAGER DEMENTIA ADVOCATES PROGRAM, DEMENTIA AUSTRALIA, KEVYN MORRIS, ADVOCATE AND FORMER DEMENTIA AUSTRALIA ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER AND SPEAKING WITH MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY IN KATHERINE, NORTHERN TERRITORY AS PART OF THE STRENGTHENING CONNECTIONS PROJECT.



Deliverables

RELATIONSHIPS

At Dementia Australia, relationships are the foundation of meaningful reconciliation. We recognise that reconciliation cannot progress without strong, respectful, and sustained relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, and organisations.

As the national peak body for dementia, we are uniquely positioned to engage with and learn from diverse communities across Australia and we understand the importance of doing so with integrity, accountability, and care.

This section of our RAP outlines actions that will help us initiate, build, and strengthen two-way partnerships that are grounded in trust, transparency, and shared benefit. Our focus is on creating structures and practices that allow for genuine collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders not as a one-time engagement, but as a continual, evolving relationship. These relationships will guide how we co-design services,

embed cultural safety, and amplify the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples impacted by dementia.

Our commitment is clear: we are not pursuing performative partnerships or symbolic gestures. We are embedding reconciliation into our core business through consistent, values-driven actions. By aligning with national frameworks and First Nations-led priorities, we are creating the conditions for partnerships that are reciprocal, culturally sound, and responsive to community needs.

Through this RAP, we will formalise internal governance and external engagement processes, participate actively in reconciliation events such

as National Reconciliation Week, and broaden our understanding of what it means to walk alongside First Nations communities in a spirit of mutual respect. Our relationships work will be led by our Strategic Enabler and Community Activation Working Groups, ensuring cultural and strategic oversight is embedded in our reconciliation efforts.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	+ Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within Australia and our sphere of influence.	September 2026	Executive Director Services, Advocacy and Research
	+ Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	September 2026	Executive Director Growth and Awareness
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	+ Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2026	Organisational Development Manager
	+ RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May - 3 June 2026	Organisational Development Manager
	+ Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May - 3 June 2026	Executive Director People and Culture
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	+ Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.	September 2025	Communications Manager
	+ Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	March 2026	Executive Director Services, Advocacy and Research
	+ Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	March 2026	Organisational Development Manager
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	+ Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	March 2026	Diversity Equity and Inclusion Manager
	+ Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	March 2026	General Manager People and Culture Operations

Deliverables

RESPECT

Respect is central to the way Dementia Australia operates and interacts with communities. As we embark on our reconciliation journey, we commit to deepening organisational understanding of the diverse histories, cultures, and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This work is not just about recognition, it's about re-setting cultural norms within our systems, workforce, and service delivery to honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples knowledges and lived experience.

This section of our Reflect RAP outlines key actions to build cultural awareness, embed protocols, and strengthen organisational respect in ways that are tangible, consistent, and measured. Respect at Dementia Australia is not limited to events or statements, it is demonstrated in our behaviour, systems, and service models. It means acknowledging and addressing the legacy of racism and systemic exclusion

that many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to experience, particularly in health and aged care systems.

Cultural learning will be a key enabler in this journey. We will develop and implement a cultural learning strategy that supports our staff, leaders and volunteers to build knowledge, empathy, and cultural responsiveness. Through learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being, and doing, our people will be better equipped to provide care that is safe, respectful and effective.

We will also ensure cultural protocols are understood and meaningfully applied

across all touchpoints of our work. Our engagement with events like NAIDOC Week will move beyond awareness-raising to active participation and community connection.

By embedding respect into our daily practice and organisational rhythm, we move closer to a future where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, carers, advocates and communities feel seen, valued, and safe within all aspects of our work.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning	+ Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	December 2025	Organisational Development Manager
	+ Develop a cultural learning strategy for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	December 2025	Organisational Development Manager
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	+ Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's area of influence.	December 2025	Executive Director Awareness and Growth
	+ Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	December 2025	Communications Manager
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	+ Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	June 2026	Communications Manager
	+ Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	June 2026	Organisational Development Manager
	+ RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July 2026	Organisational Development Manager

Deliverables

OPPORTUNITIES

Creating and enabling opportunities is a critical pillar of our reconciliation work at Dementia Australia.

This includes increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation across our workforce, improving access to culturally safe services, and building economic inclusion through supplier engagement.

Our focus is not just on addressing underrepresentation but on removing structural barriers and creating pathways that lead to long-term, sustainable outcomes.

This section of the RAP identifies targeted actions that will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to thrive within our organisation and across the broader dementia support ecosystem. We acknowledge the systemic inequities that exist within employment, procurement, and healthcare, and we are committed to using our position as a national leader to actively shift these dynamics.

Our employment strategy will explore recruitment, retention, and career development initiatives specifically tailored for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates. We understand that a culturally safe workplace is foundational to attracting and retaining First Nations staff. This includes ensuring that workplace systems are trauma-informed, inclusive, and respectful of cultural obligations and identities.

Equally, we recognise that economic participation through procurement is a powerful driver of equity. We will develop procurement policies and practices that prioritise engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-owned businesses, particularly those aligned with community health, research, and education.

Beyond our internal practices, we will also continue to fund, support, and elevate

community-led initiatives through grant-making, partnership development, and storytelling platforms. These opportunities will align with our purpose and the broader goals of the National Dementia Action Plan and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aged Care Framework.

Opportunity is not a single initiative, it is the cumulative impact of equitable systems, inclusive policies, and deliberate investment in people and partnerships. Through this RAP, we commit to creating space, visibility, and tangible pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to participate fully and meaningfully in the work we do and the future we shape.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	+ Develop a strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment and employment within our organisation.	May 2026	General Manager People and Culture Operations
	+ Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	June 2026	Organisational Development Manager
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	+ Develop a strategy and policy for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	January 2026	Chief Operating Officer
	+ Investigate Supply Nation membership.	April 2026	Chief Operating Officer

Deliverables

GOVERNANCE

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	+ Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation.	September 2025	Organisational Development Manager
	+ Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	September 2025	Organisational Development Manager
	+ Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	September 2025	Organisational Development Manager
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	+ Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	September 2025	Organisational Development Manager
	+ Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	July 2026	Chief Executive Officer
	+ Appoint a senior leader to champion our RAP internally.	September 2025	Executive Director People and Culture
	+ Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	December 2025	General Manager Monitoring Evaluation and Development

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	+ Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence.	June annually	Organisational Development Manager
	+ Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey.	1 August annually	Organisational Development Manager
	+ Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September annually	Organisational Development Manager
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	+ Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	May 2026	Organisational Development Manager



NATIONAL DEMENTIA HELPLINE

1800 100 500

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For language assistance, call the Australian Government's Translating and Interpreting Service on **131 450** (within Australia) or **+613 9268 8332** (outside Australia).

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