



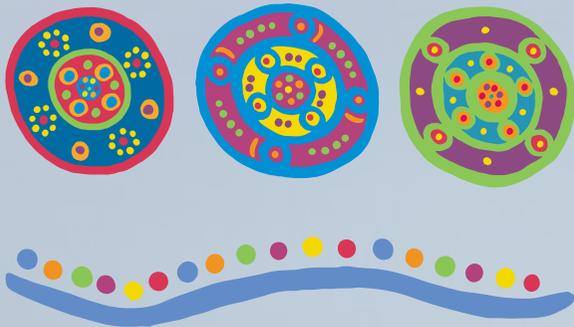
Ronald McDonald
House Charities®
North Australia



Innovate

Reconciliation Action Plan

August 2022 - August 2024





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Acknowledgement of Country

Ronald McDonald House Charities North Australia acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live, learn and work.

We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past, present and emerging, and recognise their strengths, contributions, knowledge and right to determine their own future.

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Our Motif

Our motif was designed by Linda Oliver, a local Indigenous artist in the Townsville region. Linda is Waanyi woman from her grandmother Irene Hookey. The Waanyi Nation is located on the Northern Territory and Queensland border, inland of the Gulf of Carpentaria. Linda is also a Kuku-yalangi woman located in Cape York Peninsula, through her grandfather Stephen Oliver.

Linda's work reflects her knowledge of her beliefs and traditions, presented in a contemporary format. Her work is part of a movement that promotes and preserves Aboriginal Cultures as it evolves into the modern day.



*"I have helped create a **warm and welcoming** environment for families from all cultures and backgrounds. Symbolising and representing the **journeys** our families face, in colours that represent **where our families come from** – the reef, the rainforest and the outback."*

- Linda Oliver, Artist

Message from our Board Chair and CEO

Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) North Australia is committed to improving the health and well-being of seriously ill children and their families through our practical care programs. Integral to this commitment is ensuring the Charity provides a respectful and inclusive environment where all families feel welcome, safe and supported.

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of this Land, recognising their cultures, families, communities and connections to Country. We understand the importance of reconciliation and ensuring that the histories and traditions of the world's oldest living cultures are valued and respected.

While we have much to be proud of in our reconciliation journey thus far, we know that there is always more to be done. The development of our second Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2022-2024 marks the next step in our reconciliation journey, detailing our continued commitment to the key

pillars of reconciliation - relationships, respect, opportunities and governance. This Innovate RAP is our Board and Management's affirmation of our focus on developing and strengthening relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, engaging staff and stakeholders in reconciliation, and developing and piloting innovative strategies to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our thanks to the Working Group members for their dedication and passion in developing this RAP. We are proud to demonstrate our commitment to reconciliation across all aspects of our organisation, understanding that the contributions that each of our staff, volunteers, families and external stakeholders make, all play a significant role in the journey to reconciliation.

*We look forward to sharing our **progress** and the positive impact our genuine commitment to **reconciliation** will continue to bring to **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.***



Matthew Mason
Board Chair,
RMHC North Australia



Tamara South
Chief Executive Officer,
RMHC North Australia

Message from Reconciliation Australia CEO

Reconciliation Australia commends Ronald McDonald House Charities North Australia on the formal endorsement of its second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

With over 2.3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. Ronald McDonald House Charities North Australia continues to be part of a strong network of more than 1,100 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and transformed it into action.

The four RAP types - Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate - allow RAP partners to continuously strengthen reconciliation commitments and constantly strive to apply learnings in new ways.

An Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey. It is a time to build the strong foundations and relationships that ensure sustainable, thoughtful, and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

An integral part of building these foundations is reflecting on and cataloguing the successes and challenges of previous RAPs. Learnings gained through effort and innovation are invaluable resources that Ronald McDonald House Charities North Australia will continuously draw upon to create RAP commitments rooted in experience and maturity.

These learnings extend to Ronald McDonald House Charities North Australia using the lens of reconciliation to better understand its core business, sphere of influence, and diverse community of staff and stakeholders.

The RAP program's emphasis on relationships, respect, and opportunities gives organisations a framework from which to foster connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples rooted in mutual collaboration and trust.

This Innovate RAP is an opportunity for Ronald McDonald House Charities North Australia to strengthen these relationships, gain crucial experience, and nurture connections that will become the lifeblood of its future RAP commitments. By enabling and empowering staff to contribute to this process, Ronald McDonald House Charities North Australia will ensure shared and cooperative success in the long-term.

Gaining experience and reflecting on pertinent learnings will ensure the sustainability of Ronald McDonald House Charities North Australia's future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, providing meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Ronald McDonald House Charities North Australia on your second Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.



Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

About RMHC North Australia

Our *mission* is to improve the health and well-being of seriously ill children and their families through practical care programs.

Our *vision* is that all seriously ill children can live their healthiest lives.

Ronald McDonald House Charities North Australia employs 14 staff. Currently our organisation has no known staff that identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. We have over 150 active volunteers, of which 5 identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. We work closely with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group to ensure that we provide a culturally safe environment across our Programs to all of our families, corporate partners, visitors, community groups, donors and our Hospital and Health Service partners.

Almost a *quarter of families* who use our care programs identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

Within our North Australia region, many Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander residents live in rural and remote areas, facing challenging hardships in accessing health screening and treatment. Distance to services and associated costs, along with cultural fear of medical conditions and treatments, are common barriers to accessing health services.

We are actively working to promote and establish equity between non-Indigenous Australians and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We aim to do so by improving access to health services for early detection and treatment of health conditions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across our programs. We remove barriers to both access and treatment through practical and psycho-social support services, such as providing accommodation, alleviating costs, ensuring extended family support and creating culturally safe environments.



Our Vision for Reconciliation

Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) North Australia's vision for reconciliation is that the diversity and richness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are respected and celebrated. A vision where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experience true equity and fairness in relation to health, education and well-being.

Cultural inclusion is naturally embedded into our daily operations. We have a particular focus on welcoming families and children and reinforcing that through mutual respect, children, young people and their families feel culturally and spiritually safe, included and welcome. We acknowledge the importance of the National Closing the Gap framework and support initiatives that improve health and education of First Australians. We are actively working to Close the Gap by improving access to health services for early detection and treatment of health conditions for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families across our programs. We remove barriers through practical and multifaceted support services, such as providing accommodation and transport, alleviating costs, ensuring extended family support and creating culturally safe environments.

RMHC North Australia acknowledges that genuine reconciliation will be built on long term relationships that are truly respectful. We are extremely proud of the diverse backgrounds from which our families come from and will continue to build upon our relationships with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, to grow our cultural inclusion practices and bring our vision for reconciliation to life.





Our Partnerships

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group

The Ronald McDonald House Charities North Australia Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group was established in 2016 to ensure that the Charity operates in a culturally sensitive manner and in accordance with our Cultural Diversity Policy.

The main functions of the Advisory Group are to:

- **assess** and **advise** on the quality of program service delivery, particularly in relation to the cultural safety of guests accessing our programs
- **report** and **recommend** actions to the Charity Board
- **monitor** and **implement** recommendations into our daily operations and actions relating to the Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

The members of the Advisory Group include:

- Kallum Cotterell
Owner – KRTC Contracting
- Narelle Draper
Indigenous Liaison Officer – Townsville University Hospital
- Trevor Prior
Cultural Practice Coordinator – Townsville University Hospital
- Randal Ross
Manager Cultural & Community Relations – North and West Remote Health

The Advisory Group has been vital in providing guidance to the Charity and has helped us to formulate, promote and drive progress towards our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan.

We are very grateful for their commitment and support in maintaining strong governance and cultural inclusion across our five practical care programs.



Our Reconciliation Journey

Our first Reconciliation Action Plan was launched in 2019 – the first step in our reconciliation journey and while it has assisted us as an organisation to affirm our commitment to the practice of reconciliation, there is more that we are able to contribute to advance it. During our first Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan we worked closely with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group to:

- Create and display Acknowledgement of Country Plaques throughout our Programs
- Establish a Cultural Protocols document to increase staff and volunteer understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols at the Charity; and
- Continue to provide all staff and volunteers with access to Cultural Awareness Training

We have experienced some challenges with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, for example, being able to actively recruit for members to join our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group. It has also been challenging to celebrate and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander days of significance, however we were still able to hold COVID-safe events and meet virtually to ensure our continued commitment to reconciliation.

We have experienced success through our reconciliation journey, receiving awards that have highlighted our ongoing priority to reconciliation. These include:

- The RMHC Australia 'Champion' award for creating a Welcome Video which includes culturally sensitive content such as footage from our House smoking ceremony, an Acknowledgement to Country and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander presenters
- The 2021 Queensland Reconciliation Awards winner in the Health and Wellbeing category for our initiative, Closing the Gap and cultural inclusion.

Whilst our journey to reconciliation is just beginning, we are committed to ensuring Health Equity is achieved by improving access to health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families across our programs.



Our Reconciliation Action Plan

This RAP will build upon the progress RMHC North Australia has already made and will reinforce our commitment to reconciliation. Through its development, we have reflected on and acknowledged our learnings, challenges and achievements throughout our reconciliation journey.

Ronald McDonald House Charities North Australia is developing our RAP to:

- Ensure we are working closely with our Hospital Partners to help improve access to health services for early detection and treatment of health conditions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across our programs
- Remove barriers to both access and treatment through practical and multifaceted support services
- Ensure that we are creating a culturally safe environment for all of the families who utilise our programs

In order to move forward with our initiatives, RMHC North Australia will be:

- Committed to demonstrating respectful practices that acknowledge ongoing custodianship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples over land and waters, and value the rich cultural heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Connected with people and organisations that recognise the links between the Australian landscape and the ancient cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Courageous to recognise and respect the importance of local and traditional knowledge when working within local contexts





RAP Working Group

We have 8 RAP Working Group Members, 3 of whom identify as Aboriginal and 1 who identifies as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

- Brooke Barbagallo
Operations & Facilities Manager
RMHC North Australia
- Kallum Cotterell
Owner
KRTC Contracting
- Narelle Draper
Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officer
Townsville University Hospital
- Sarah Jones
Community Engagement Manager
RMHC North Australia
- Trevor Prior
Cultural Practice Program Coordinator
Townsville University Hospital
- Randal Ross
Manager Cultural & Community Relations
North and West Remote Health
- Tamara South
Chief Executive Officer
RMHC North Australia
- Emma Thomson
Executive Coordinator
RMHC North Australia

Our RAP Champion is Ronald McDonald House Charities North Australia's Chief Executive Officer, Tamara South.

Relationships

Continuing to build strong relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians is important to us and our core activities. Partnerships based on trust and mutual respect are a way for RMHC North Australia to walk forward, towards genuine reconciliation.

Action	Deliverable	Responsibility	Timeline
Raise internal and external awareness about reconciliation across our sphere of influence, including staff and our supporters	Communicate our Reconciliation Action Plan to internal stakeholders	Executive Coordinator	August 2022
	Present Reconciliation Action Plan to all staff annually	People & Culture Manager	August 2022, August 2023
	Highlight achievements from the Reconciliation Action Plan in our internal communications	Communications & Marketing Coordinator	July 2023, July 2024
	Introduce all new RMHC North Australia staff to the RAP and provide the opportunity to join the Reconciliation Working Group	People & Culture Manager	August 2022, August 2023
	Continue to identify RMHC NA's external stakeholders that we can engage in reconciliation	Community Engagement Manager	September 2022
	Communicate our Reconciliation Action Plan to external stakeholders	Community Engagement Manager	September 2022
	Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes	Community Engagement Manager	July 2023, July 2024
	Collaborate with Reconciliation Australia and other like-minded organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation	Operations and Facilities Manager	July 2023, July 2024
	Implement strategies to engage our staff in reconciliation	People & Culture Manager	July 2023, July 2024

Action	Deliverable	Responsibility	Timeline
Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations	Identify additional ways to partner with Indigenous Hospital Liaison Unit (IHLU) at Townsville Hospital and Health Service	Operations and Facilities Manager	September 2022
	Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement	Chief Executive Officer	October 2022
	Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations	Chief Executive Officer	October 2022
Build relationships through increased participation in National Reconciliation Week (NRW) annually	Organise two internal NRW events each year	Executive Coordinator	May 2023, May 2024
	Register all NRW events via Reconciliation Australia's NRW website	Executive Coordinator	May 2023, May 2024
	Support all staff to participate in external events to recognise and celebrate NRW	Chief Executive Officer	May 2023, May 2024
	Ensure 100% of staff members participate in at least one event during NRW	People & Culture Manager	May 2023, May 2024
	Encourage staff and senior leaders to participate in external events to recognise and celebrate NRW	People & Culture Manager	May 2023, May 2024
	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff	Executive Coordinator	May 2023, May 2024
Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies	Continue to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our internal First Nations policies	People & Culture Manager	October 2022
	Continue to educate staff including senior leaders on the detrimental effects of racism in our organisation	People & Culture Manager	Review May 2023
	Review, implement and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation	People & Culture Manager	Review May 2023
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs	People & Culture Manager	Review May 2023

Respect

Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights are important to us and our core activities. This respect is shown in how we talk to and with others and demonstrated through our genuine desire to welcome people of all cultures to interact with us.

Action	Deliverable	Responsibility	Timeline
Promote respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols	In consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group, use our social media assets as a platform to promote respect for, and understanding of, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures and achievements	Communications & Marketing Coordinator	July 2023
	Continue to increase staff and volunteer understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols	People & Culture Manager	July 2023, July 2024
	Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year	Chief Executive Officer	July 2023, July 2024
	Promote Cultural Protocols document internally	Executive Coordinator	July 2023
	Confirm with Land Council every 12 months of Traditional Owner groups	Executive Coordinator	July 2023, July 2024
	Display an Acknowledgement of Country plaque in all RMHC North Australia locations	Operations & Facilities Manager	October 2022
	Ensure staff lanyards displaying Acknowledgement of Country wording are reviewed and updated annually	Executive Coordinator	July 2023, July 2024

Action	Deliverable	Responsibility	Timeline
Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning	Review and evaluate cultural learning needs within our organisation	People & Culture Manager	October 2022
	Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors on the development and implementation of a cultural learning strategy	Chief Executive Officer	February 2023
	Develop, implement and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our staff and volunteers	People & Culture Manager	March 2023
	Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, and key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning	Chief Executive Officer	July 2023, July 2024
	All staff to undertake Cultural Awareness Training	People & Culture Manager	July 2023, July 2024
	Promote and encourage Cultural Awareness training for all volunteers and track attendance	People & Culture Manager	July 2023, July 2024
Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week	RMHC NA Management team and the RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event	Chief Executive Officer	July 2023, July 2024
	Promote and encourage participation in at least two NAIDOC week events to all staff	Executive Coordinator	June 2023, June 2024
	Strengthen the commitment to celebrating NAIDOC week for all staff of the organisation	Chief Executive Officer	July 2023, July 2024
	Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week	People & Culture Manager	June 2023

Opportunities

Opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and communities are important to our organisation and our core activities. We recognise that conscious planning is often required, to ensure we maximise the offering of various opportunities that external people and organisation might have to interact with us.

Action	Deliverable	Responsibility	Timeline
Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development	Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to ensure there are no barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and future applicants participating in our workplace	People & Culture Manager	July 2023, July 2024
	Identify communication channels and advertising to support promotion of paid and volunteer positions to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	People & Culture Manager	July 2023, July 2024
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff/stakeholders to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy	People & Culture Manager	July 2023, July 2024
	Refine our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy	People & Culture Manager	July 2023, July 2024
	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities	People & Culture Manager	July 2023, July 2024
Develop and sustain an environment consistent with Charity Safeguarding Children and Young People cultures to align with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations	Ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural celebrations held by the Charity are child friendly and that First Nations children's diverse needs are considered and respected to ensure equity is upheld	Executive Coordinator	October 2022, October 2023
	Ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural celebrations held by the Charity are well promoted and encourage all families to attend	Executive Coordinator	October 2022, October 2023

Action	Deliverable	Responsibility	Timeline
	Incorporate more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art into our gardens and family spaces	Operations & Facilities Manager	October 2022, October 2023
Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes	Develop, communicate and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy	Business Manager	October 2023
	Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses	Business Manager	October 2023
	Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff	Business Manager	October 2023
	Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses	Business Manager	October 2023
Continue to improve health and wellbeing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through our support services	Work closely with our Hospital Partners to identify barriers to both access and treatment within our support services	Chief Executive Officer	July 2023, July 2024
	Consult with First Nations Stakeholders on how we can address barriers to access and treatment within our support services	Chief Executive Officer	July 2023, July 2024
	Continue to regularly assess and consult on the cultural safety within our support service environments	Chief Executive Officer	July 2023, July 2024
	Continue to strengthen relationships with our Hospital Partners to continue to improve access to health services for early detection and treatment of health conditions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across our programs	Chief Executive Officer	July 2023, July 2024

Governance

Ensuring best practice and procedures for all families, staff and volunteers is important to us and forms part of our core activities. Good corporate governance underpins sustainable business operations, allowing the Charity to deliver its mission into the future.

Action	Deliverable	Responsibility	Timeline
Ensure Reconciliation Action Plan remains a live and current document	Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new Reconciliation Action Plan, based on learnings, challenges and achievements	Executive Coordinator	February 2024
	Add review of Annual Plan to AG and Charity Board agenda annually	Executive Coordinator	December 2022, December 2023
	Send draft Reconciliation Action Plan to Reconciliation Australia for formal feedback	Communications & Marketing Coordinator	March 2024
Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP	RWG to meet at least four times per year to monitor and report on Reconciliation Action Plan implementation	Executive Coordinator	August, November 2022; February, May, August, November 2023; February, May 2024
	Review and update our Terms of Reference for the RWG	Executive Coordinator	September 2022, September 2023
	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the Reconciliation Working Group	Chief Executive Officer	July 2023, July 2024
Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally	Contact Reconciliation Australia to ensure that our primary and secondary contacts are up-to-date to ensure we are receiving important correspondence	Executive Coordinator	July 2023, July 2024
	Follow up with Reconciliation Australia if we have not yet received our unique reporting link to participate in the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire	Executive Coordinator	August 2022, August 2023

Action	Deliverable	Responsibility	Timeline
	Provide a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia to help inform the development of our next RAP	Executive Coordinator	August 2023, August 2024
	Complete and submit the Reconciliation Action Plan Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia	Executive Coordinator	September 2022, September 2023
	Publicly report our Reconciliation Action Plan achievements, challenges and learnings	Communications & Marketing Coordinator	May 2022, May 2023
	RWG to review Reconciliation Action Plan progress annually and present a report to Charity Board	Chief Executive Officer	December 2022, December 2023
	RWG annual RAP infographic made available on our website and distributed/shared in our internal and external communications	Communications & Marketing Coordinator	May 2023, May 2024
Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments	Define resource needs for RAP implementation	Chief Executive Officer	September 2022
	Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments	Chief Executive Officer	September 2022, September 2023
	Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments	Executive Coordinator	September 2022
	Maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management	Chief Executive Officer	August 2022, August 2023



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For more information on our
Reconciliation Action Plan, please contact:

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