

BRHS



2016-2019
Aboriginal Employment Plan





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Artwork front cover:

'Seeds of Hope' mural: Artist Brad Brown

Description: The five panels represent the five Gunaikurnai Clans of the Gippsland Region, the landscape and life in Aboriginal Culture. The artwork is a metaphor for life in general. It's a reflection on creating a culture of faith, family, respect, relationships, life, growth, health, freedom, the next generation, positive choices and hope! The seed is the beginning of the journey of life.

Acknowledgement

Bairnsdale Regional Health Service
acknowledges the Gunaikurnai people
as the traditional owners of the
land on which the health service is located.
We recognise and respect their cultural heritage,
beliefs and relationship with the lands.
We pay our respects to elders both past
and present and thank them
for their contribution to the
health service.



Introduction

Aboriginal people make up more than 3% of the population of the East Gippsland Shire - the local government area served by the Bairnsdale Regional Health Service. The service is located on the traditional lands of the Gunaikurnai people.

The Bairnsdale Regional Health Service client area is home to a number of significant Aboriginal organisations: The Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative, Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust, the Moogji Aboriginal Council and the Lakes Entrance Aboriginal Health Association. The Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation is also located in Bairnsdale.

BRHS is actively working with the community towards improving the care of its Aboriginal patients and residents whilst increasing training and employment opportunities.



Demographics

BRHS has maintained its commitment towards improving Aboriginal health, employment and training outcomes to 'Close the Gap' in disparity with the non-Aboriginal population.

In developing and implementing this Plan BRHS recognizes that, in general, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples face significant disadvantage compared with the non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in the areas of health; education; employment; and income. This recognition is outlined in the Australian Government Closing the Gap strategy which aims to reduce Indigenous disadvantage with respect to life expectancy, child mortality, access to early childhood education, educational achievement and employment outcomes to achieve Indigenous health equality within 25 years (2008 – 2033).

The Plan seeks to create a more equitable and accessible environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to enter the health workforce.

Social and economic benefits, including overall wellbeing, are gained from meaningful training and employment opportunities. These benefits will result in positive influence for the individual employed as well as their family and community.

BRHS acknowledges that the challenges faced by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in gaining skilled and meaningful employment are attributable to significant historical, social, political and economic disadvantage.

Related to employment, education and training, national data indicates that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples face the following challenges in succeeding academically.

- Significantly lower literacy and numeracy levels
- Lower attendance rates at school
- Low student retention rate
- Low rates of Year 12 completion

These gaps are evident from the first year of schooling and remain apparent throughout the schooling years.

In East Gippsland Shire there is a higher proportion of East Gippsland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people leaving school at an early level (Year 10 or less) than the broader East Gippsland population (2011 data).

Although steadily improving, Year 12 completion rates in 2011 for East Gippsland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples remain low at 16% compared to:

- 32% of the overall East Gippsland population and
- 28% of the overall Victorian Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander population.

2.5% of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population has completed a Bachelor degree level or higher, compared with 10% in the overall East Gippsland population (2011).



To address these disparities, BRHS is actively working with schools to increase educational aspiration in students towards completing Year 12 and considering a career in health. This work is achieved through BRHS' participation in Careers Days, expos and information sessions; traineeship pathways; work experience opportunities; VCAL and VET in School placements; as well as vocational and university student placements and programs.

National data indicates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have:

- Lower rates of employment
- Higher likelihood of occupying lower-skilled positions.

Aboriginal people are generally less likely to gain desirable and skilled employment when compared with non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, students and job seekers.

2011 data reveals an overall unemployment rate of 16% for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the East Gippsland Shire, compared to 6% unemployment in the overall population. A lower proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were in the labour force in 2011: 44%; compared with the total population in East Gippsland Shire: 52%.

Workforce Analysis and Collection Application (WACA) reports indicate that BRHS' youth employment is below average; 14% of our total workforce is aged 30 years or under compared with 18% employment at comparable health services. The introduction of employment and training initiatives, as well as student engagement activities as a part of the Aboriginal Employment Plan, seek to have a concurrent benefit of increasing youth employment at BRHS through providing appropriate training pathways and career progression.

The BRHS Traineeship Program has had a number of significant successes. Seven trainees have successfully achieved on-the-job training and study to complete Certificate III, IV or Diploma levels relevant to their role. Three of our previous trainees are now enrolled, or studying, at a Bachelor level.

Our overall rates of job applications and appointments from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community for mainstream positions have increased. Aboriginal people are now employed in a variety of entry-level and highly skilled roles throughout the hospital.

Aboriginal Employment Plan Objectives

BRHS' Aboriginal Employment Plan 2012-2015 achieved a number of significant accomplishments of goals - of which our organisation and Aboriginal employees, past and present, are justifiably proud. BRHS aims to continue its Aboriginal employment programs in 2016 - 2019 improving cultural awareness plus fostering youth employment.

BRHS aims to build on the achievements to date so that public health is seen as a viable and attractive work option for the local Aboriginal community. One key objective of the Plan is to increase the employment participation of Aboriginal people from our current rate average of 2% of the total workforce to 4% by 2019. This target is based on head count and not full-time equivalent (EFT).

Previous Aboriginal Employment Plan Achievements – 2012-2015

The primary objective of the BRHS Aboriginal Employment Plan 2012-2015 was to increase the level of employment participation of Aboriginal people to 1% of the total workforce. This target was set by the state government through the Victorian Public Sector Aboriginal Employment Plan Karreeta Yirramboi as well as the Victorian Department of Health Koolin Balit: Aboriginal Health Strategy and associated initiatives.

The second objective was to increase knowledge and cultural awareness of the staff at BRHS to allow for greater participation between the health service and the local Aboriginal community.

These objectives have been met and the following achievements had been reached by the conclusion of the Aboriginal Employment Plan 2012-2015:

- Exceeded the 1% Aboriginal employment target with an average of 2% throughout 2012-2015
- Established a successful and sustainable Aboriginal Traineeship Program (partially funded through the Koolin Balit Workforce Development Grants).
- Supported 14 Aboriginal traineeships since 2013 in Allied Health Assistance, Dental Assistance, Administration, Enrolled Nursing and Personal Care Attendance.
- Successful completion of 7 Aboriginal traineeships with the attainment of industry-recognised health qualification and substantial on-the-job training and work experience.
- Successful trainee transition into the workforce. Of the 7 traineeships completed: 6 of the trainees transitioned to employment at BRHS in their chosen fields and one trainee returned to find employment interstate. As at July 2016 4 trainees remain BRHS employees; one trainee is working at the local Aboriginal Cooperative health service; and one trainee is working in a New South Wales health service. A further 4 individuals, whilst not completing their traineeships, did gain valuable work experience and life skills.
- Increased number of job applications received from the Aboriginal community for general BRHS vacancies from .7% of all applications in 2013 to 1.8% of applicants in 2014 and 1.7% in 2015.
- Feedback from the training participants that BRHS has improved its profile in the local Aboriginal community as an employer of choice.
- Improved cultural safety across BRHS with a range of improvements in relation to building aesthetics, staff training, more culturally-appropriate service delivery systems and processes. These improvements align closely with the goals of the Aboriginal Employment Plan 2012-2015 and were primarily facilitated through the 'Lighthouse Project' – Improving Acute Coronary Syndrome outcomes for Aboriginal patients.
- Regular media articles showcasing the achievements and events relating to Aboriginal health and employment via the BRHS website and in external media such as press releases.
- Establishment of an Aboriginal Resource group with delegates from across the health service who meet monthly to promote opportunities and initiatives which champion Aboriginal health, employment and cultural awareness.

Continuing Our Work – Goals & Initiatives 2016-2019

Recruitment and Retention

- Increase level of Aboriginal Employment at BRHS from the current average rate of 2% to 4% by 2019 (24 – 32 Aboriginal employees). This target may be subject to change, pending the Karreeta Yirramboi Aboriginal Employment target for all Victorian public health services: expected to be released in late 2016.
- Engage with prospective job and training candidates in the local Aboriginal community, including via job network providers, employment programs and key health organisations, to foster more employment and training opportunities at BRHS.
- Establish core recurrent funding via BRHS budgeting process to maintain the BRHS Aboriginal Traineeship Program
- Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples employment applications to BRHS for mainstream (non-specified positions) as an indication of improved profile of BRHS as an employer of choice. Target of 3 – 4% of job applications being from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community by 2019 which is in proportion with our population demographic.
- Monitor and report on the number of Aboriginal staff employed across all levels of the organisation.
- Further explore options for external funding and schemes to support cadetships, graduate and intern programs for Aboriginal candidates.

Professional Development and Training

- Build supervisor and mentor resource training at BRHS including options for past participants of the trainee program and Aboriginal Resource Group members to be trained.
- Monitor and liaise with current trained mentors and supervisors to identify potential program development and improvement.
- Fully develop and embed Cultural Awareness training across BRHS.

Career and Succession Planning

- Support career development and training opportunities of our current Aboriginal workforce by actively disseminating information and promoting scholarships, cadet, intern and graduate program opportunities.

Community and Educational Partnerships

- Develop effective communication channels with key educational stakeholders: including Secondary Schools, Registered Training Organisations and Universities to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples students are made aware of employment and training opportunities.
- Participate in conferences, workshops, stakeholder meetings and consortiums relevant to Aboriginal training and employment. Supporting our Aboriginal employees and trainees to represent BRHS and their community at conferences and workshops relating to Aboriginal employment, health and training whilst maintaining service delivery.
- Develop materials promoting the Aboriginal Employment strategies at BRHS for 2016-2019 with key community and educational stakeholders as well as the general public.
- Act as a resource to assist other agencies in the region who wish to focus on increasing their Aboriginal workforce through sharing BRHS experiences and learnings.

Strategy & Implementation

Recruitment and Retention

Deliverables	Achievements to date:	Actions
Increase level of Aboriginal Employment at BRHS to 4% by 2019.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of Aboriginal employees exceeded 1% target by 2015, current average is 2% Aboriginal employment. Aboriginal Employment forms an integral part of the BRHS Workforce Capability & Culture Strategy. BRHS awarded "Employer of the Year" for its Aboriginal traineeship program in 2014 - Wurreeker Award - Public Sector Employer Award 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing employment opportunities to be developed and promoted appropriately within the local Aboriginal Community Increase options and pathway opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples students including work experience, traineeships, student placements, cadetship and graduate opportunities
Engage with prospective job and training candidates in the local Aboriginal community to foster more employment and training opportunities at BRHS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WCC department has taken a lead role and developed resource knowledge in the collection and distribution of Aboriginal Employment and Training Initiatives and Opportunities. A WCC representative on the BRHS Aboriginal Resource Group has proven to be a valuable information link reducing the risk of duplication and strengthening areas which crossover between Aboriginal employment and other BRHS Aboriginal initiatives. For e.g. cultural awareness programs; improving environments to be more culturally appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information including vacancies relayed in local news media, online job sites as well as directly via flyers and information to local job network providers, employment programs and key health organisations including local ACCHOs.
Establish core recurrent funding via BRHS budgeting process to maintain the BRHS Aboriginal Traineeship Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A separate cost centre was established in 2012 for Aboriginal traineeship initiatives and to fund the salary of a dedicated tutor. The following funding streams have been used to provide additional funds to further the traineeship program: It should be noted, however, that due to restrictions and limitations on funding they may not always be available and are rarely adequate to cover all costs associated. Koolin Balit, Victorian Department of Health Aboriginal Workforce Training Grants Federal Apprenticeship funding Latrobe City Council Indigenous Employment Program support Youth Employment Scheme Job Active Wage subsidies Ad hoc Scholarship Programs Cadetships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed dedicated BRHS budget and BRHS allocated funding for Aboriginal Traineeships to ensure program sustainability. Proposed budget and BRHS allocated funding for fixed-term positions offered for up to 12 months post-qualification for successful trainees to consolidate skills and gain work experience at BRHS prior to applying for ongoing roles
Continue Traineeship Program to increase Aboriginal and Youth Employment at BRHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BRHS has utilised a number of state and federal funding schemes to support our current traineeships however they do not adequately cover the costs and not all trainees are eligible for some of the funding schemes. Departments are identified which may provide traineeship or apprenticeship opportunities Work areas are considered carefully for a suitable, prepared and supportive environment for traineeships Staff are identified to mentor, train and tutor trainees Traineeship opportunities at BRHS are actively marketed through school, training and job service provider network. More certainty in funding would allow for better planning, application and coordination each year with any ad hoc external funding received seen as a bonus to offset some expenses and provide more opportunity to offer additional cultural training and professional development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forecast number of trainees or apprentices to be engaged over period of plan, detailing if identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples positions, school based or open. School based traineeships (SBT) – provide access to pathways for youth interested in gaining a trade or skill whilst remaining engaged at school and TAFE Further develop relationship with training providers to ensure quality and consistent training delivery and outcomes Apply for funding to continue paid tutor position for Aboriginal trainees

Deliverables	Achievements to date:	Actions
<p>Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples job applications to BRHS to 3-4% for mainstream (non-specified positions)</p> <p>Monitor and report on the number of Aboriginal staff employed across all levels of the organisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples job applications have increased for both traineeships and mainstream positions over the past 3 years There has been a 142% increase in the number of applications from Aboriginal people for BRHS roles from 2013 to 2015. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people engagement including job applications and employment outcomes are monitored by the Workforce Capability & Culture Department. Data is collected on Job applications using the Springboard Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people report Feedback received that the profile of BRHS as a potential employer has improved in the local Aboriginal community Recruitment processes have been reviewed to ensure simplified application processes and support for potential applicants from the WCC department Interview panels for Aboriginal Traineeship and Aboriginal Health or Employment related positions include an Aboriginal person wherever possible. Traineeship advertising and position descriptions are written appropriately and clearly to convey the job role and application process. Interview questions for traineeships are structured in a way to engage in conversation. Literacy and numeracy testing is incorporated into the recruitment process for shortlisting interviewed applicants Feedback provided to interviewed candidates with practical tips for improvement Workforce Capability & Culture Department provides guidance and support to applicants for entry level or certificate level positions at BRHS: encouraging more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants for mainstream positions. Workforce Capability and Culture collects data: monitoring Aboriginal job applications and employment outcomes as required for reporting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target of 3 – 4% of all job applications being from the Aboriginal community, in proportion to our local population. Workforce Capability and Culture to establish reporting schedule to ensure regularity of monitoring of Aboriginal job applications and employment outcomes including for benchmarking purposes Workforce Capability and Culture to develop form to capture key identifiers including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples status for job applications received by post or email
<p>Further explore options for external funding and schemes to support cadetships, graduate and intern programs for Aboriginal candidates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workforce Capability and Culture department has developed a good knowledge of the funding and support opportunities available to Aboriginal employees and trainees for cadetships, graduate and intern programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look further into funded cadetships at BRHS to provide practical work placements for Aboriginal University students whilst providing an award wage. Develop the capacity and preparedness of the BRHS host work area for a Cadetship including clinical educators, leaders, mentors and preceptors to be able to provide an appropriate level of clinical and cultural support. Ensure accessibility and attractiveness of BRHS graduate and intern programs to Aboriginal candidates in Medicine, Nursing and Allied Health.
<p>Monitor and Assess Aboriginal Employment Plan Outcomes</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include as a regular agenda item for Operational Executive Committee Timely provision of reports to the Department of Health and Human Services Victoria on progress and outcomes, as required. Timely provision of financial acquittals to funding bodies, as required.

Strategy & Implementation

Professional Development and Training

Deliverables	Achievements to date:	Actions
Build supervisor and mentor capacity at BRHS for and by Aboriginal employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitable and appropriately trained/experienced mentors are identified and partnered with new trainees and apprentices for duration of traineeship • Cultural awareness and mentor training has been provided to selected BRHS staff as part of traineeship preparation. • Aboriginal Resource Group currently has two members who were former trainees. • One former trainee has nominated to be a mentor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore funding and training opportunities for developing a BRHS mentor program, including resources, to ensure sustainability. • Provide evaluation and assessment framework for mentoring programs • Include mentor program as a quality initiative in VHIMS Riskman to ensure continual improvement and monitoring • Ensure ongoing Aboriginal employees, including past trainees, are informed of the existence and purpose of the Aboriginal Resource Group and the process to submit expression to join if interested. • Ensure ongoing Aboriginal employees, including past trainees, are provided with opportunity to mentor new staff including new trainees in their work area.
Fully develop and embed a Cultural Awareness training program across BRHS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Awareness training recorded in Workforce Development System for employees – includes workshops and conferences as well as short courses • Koori Hospital Liaison Officer (KHLO) provides introduction to service, ACCHOs and cultural awareness as well as Aboriginal health status in Victoria at Organisational Orientation Program • KHLO provides specific Cultural Awareness Training to new Aboriginal Trainees as a part of their induction program. • Aboriginal Trainees are provided with a custom induction package upon confirmation of employment • Aboriginal Trainees are required to attend the Organisational Orientation program as new employees at BRHS • Aboriginal Health Page on staff intranet provides links to Cultural Awareness materials and current Aboriginal Health initiatives • Workforce Capability and Culture Strategy 2014-2017 references goal to introduce Cultural Awareness Program • Cultural Awareness Training has been targeted to specific work areas including: front-line staff, staff hosting Aboriginal trainees and staff involved in the Aboriginal Resource Group • Investigating the Gippsland Aboriginal Health Cultural Competence Framework for application at BRHS. • All position description templates detail Diversity section relating to cultural competence, understanding and empathy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Cultural Awareness Training for BRHS Volunteers • Review Position Description templates and or/work plans to ensure appropriate reference is made to Closing the Gap initiatives in health and employment outcomes for Aboriginal people and the positions contribution to this organisational goal.

Career and Succession Planning

Deliverables	Achievements to date:	Actions
Support career development and training opportunities of our current Aboriginal workforce by actively disseminating information and promoting scholarships, cadet, intern and graduate program opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All staff are integrated with an interdisciplinary team that provides them with peer support and learning opportunities – this is a key focus of the BRHS strategic plan, trademark behaviours and principles etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workforce Capability and Culture are exploring opportunities for funding and support of Aboriginal employees towards further education in cadetships as well as graduate and intern programs. Explore opportunities for graduate and intern positions subject to funding, workplace capacity for support as well as service delivery. Ensure accessibility and attractiveness of BRHS graduate and intern programs to Aboriginal candidates in Medicine, Nursing and Allied Health through effective and culturally appropriate recruitment campaign.

Community and Educational Partnerships

Deliverables	Achievements to date:	Actions
Further develop effective communication channels with key educational stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful networks have been developed with the local Aboriginal community, job network providers, schools etc. to circulate employment, student engagement and training opportunities at BRHS. Contact list for engagement is updated regularly and kept in WCC Department. Marketing opportunities are routinely utilised including BRHS is actively involved with careers expos, tours etc. and encourages our Aboriginal staff including current trainees to attend where possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide opportunities for designated WCC Officer to foster relationships and networks as listed through effective stakeholder engagement including support to attend relevant events and conferences related to Aboriginal and youth employment. BRHS to continue to be involved with careers expos, and maintain the BRHS student programs.
Participate in conferences, workshops, stakeholder meetings and consortiums relevant to Aboriginal employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representatives from BRHS including the Executive, Managers, Mentors, Team Leaders, KHLO and members of the Workforce Capability and Culture as well as Aboriginal employees and current trainees are regularly provided with the opportunity to engage in conferences, workshops, stakeholder meetings and consortiums both internal and external to BRHS and relevant to Aboriginal Employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support BRHS staff, including Aboriginal staff and trainees to attend appropriate events which foster and promote Aboriginal employment and training opportunities within East Gippsland.
Develop materials regarding the Aboriginal Employment strategies at BRHS for 2016-2019 with key community and educational stakeholders as well as the general public.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop materials to circulate Aboriginal Employment Strategies of BRHS, working with Aboriginal staff and Communications Coordinator to ensure external print and communication is effective, visually appealing and also culturally appropriate
Act as a resource to assist other agencies in the region who wish to focus on increasing their Aboriginal workforce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ad hoc advice and assistance provided to other agencies as required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to play a lead role in developing Aboriginal employment opportunities in region. Further develop mentoring and cultural competency training programs with a few to sharing materials with other agencies, as requested. Participate in forums and meetings as requested to explain BRHS' methodology.

Associated Materials & Resources

- Australian Council on Healthcare Standards. EQUIP Standard 12 Provision of Care [Internet] Ultimo NSW: Australian Council on Healthcare Standards; 2013 [cited 2016 Jul 14]. Available from: <http://www.achs.org.au/publications-resources/equipnational/>
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- Health Workforce Australia. Growing Our Future: Final Report of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker Project [Internet]. Adelaide VIC: Health Workforce Australia; 2011 Available from https://www.hwa.gov.au/sites/uploads/Aboriginal_and_Torres_Strait_Islander_ATSI_HWA_FINAL_REPORT_IN1_SML.pdf
- The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. Cultural Awareness education and Cultural safety training [Internet] East Melbourne VIC: The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners; 2011 Apr [cited 2016 Jul 14] Available from: <http://www.racgp.org.au/download/Documents/AHU/2011culturalawareness.pdf>
- Victorian Public Sector Commission. Karreeta Yirramboi [Internet] Melbourne VIC: State of Victoria Victorian Public Sector Commission (AU); 2016 [cited 2016 Jul 14]. Available from <http://vpssc.vic.gov.au/resources/karreeta-yirramboi/>

Artwork back cover:

'Footprints': Artist Brad Brown

Description: The Footprint represents the land and aboriginal people coming to the hospital, feeling comfortable and welcomed. The health service is wanting to help close the gap. The toes are sky, clouds and rain. Within the foot are two large circles representing watering holes with the local Gunaikurnai totems, the male (blue) and female (brown) wrens. Water runs from the watering holes in the river to a central symbol which is the meeting place. A sitting down place to talk about health and get check-ups with the hospital man represented on the side of the meeting place. The meeting place has a cross which signifies faith and healing.





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