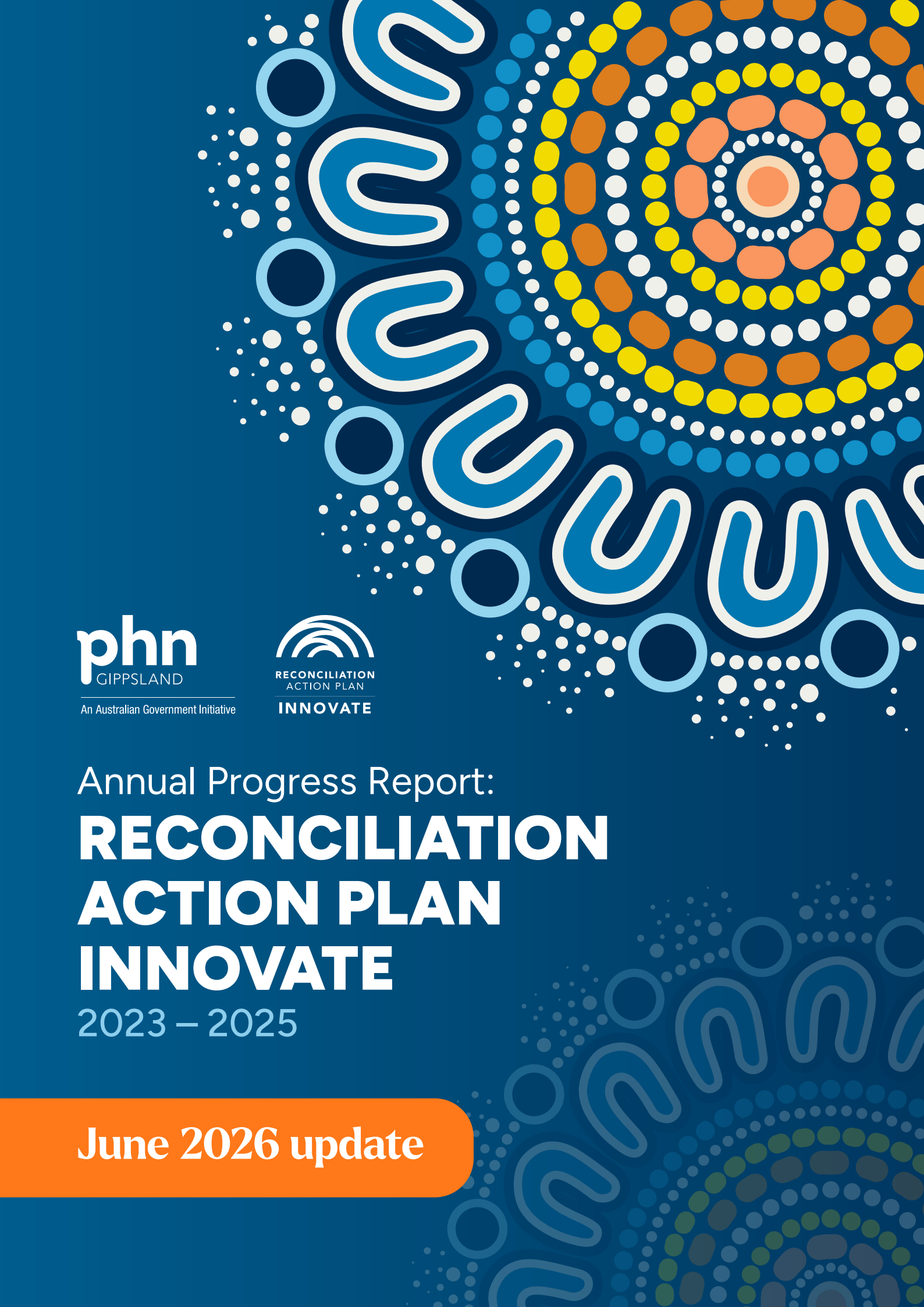




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GIPPSLAND

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Annual Progress Report:
**RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN
INNOVATE**
2023 – 2025

June 2026 update



Gippsland PHN continues its reconciliation journey with a deep appreciation for the relationships, learnings and shared efforts that have shaped this work so far.

Through our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Innovate 2023–2025, we sought to listen, reflect and embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices more meaningfully across our organisation.

The two-year plan was launched in April 2023 and included 80 key deliverables designed to build respectful relationships, increase cultural understanding and improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the region.

Through the development of and submission of our 2023–2025 Reconciliation Action Plan Innovate Final Report to Reconciliation Australia, we have taken time to reflect on our achievements, challenges and areas requiring deeper focus.

Reconciliation is an ongoing journey, and we are committed to building on the foundations we have established as we continue to strengthen our contribution.

Deliverables

Gippsland PHN's Reconciliation Action Plan Internal Working Group worked in partnership with community members to deliver major milestones from the plan, with 40 deliverables completed and 37 embedded into business-as-usual activities. A further three were identified as out of scope for this plan and have been recommended for consideration in future activities.

- **80** deliverables
- **96%** of all deliverables completed
- **4%** of deliverables recommended for future consideration
- **37** deliverables embedded into business-as-usual activities



HIGHLIGHTS

Launching our RAP journey

We launched our RAP, which was marked by a “thank you” event in April 2023 for all those who had helped in its development. Gunaikurnai and Monaro Ngarigo Elder, Aunty Christine Johnson, gave a Welcome to Country and Gunaikurnai man, Tre Moffat, performed the Smoking Ceremony.

Building cultural awareness and understanding

Staff engagement was supported through a range of awareness and reflection activities, including participation in local NAIDOC Week and National Reconciliation Week activities. In May 2024, staff gathered for a morning tea to reflect on personal commitments to reconciliation, which was complemented by a collaborative artwork activity. To mark National Reconciliation Week in 2025, a cultural workshop with Brandon Hood explored reconciliation, truth-telling, the Stolen Generations and the importance of Acknowledgement of Country.

Our Workplace Barometer Survey, which was conducted in 2024, revealed 100 per cent of staff participated in RAP activities, with 97 per cent attending more than three events. Staff also reported confidence in engaging respectfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, with 100 per cent of staff rating the relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians as ‘very important’ or ‘fairly important’.

Strengthening policies and workplace practices

We worked with a specialist consultant to revise six of our policies and procedures to remove barriers to employment and strengthen cultural safety in the workplace. These include:

- *Working Conditions and Benefits Operational Policy*
- *Conduct and Compliance Policy*
- *Recruitment and Continuity Operational Policy*
- *Anti-Discrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity Procedure*
- *Bullying and Harassment Procedure*
- *Job Opportunity Email Template*

A new *Cultural Awareness Operational Procedure* was introduced to strengthen understanding and consistency across the organisation when engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. This resource outlines key protocols, including the difference between a *Welcome to Country* and an *Acknowledgement of Country*, and provides guidance on when each should be used for meetings and events. It also incorporates the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register and Information System mapping as a tool to help determine the Traditional Custodians of the land where events or meetings are taking place.

Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment

The Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Employment, Retention and Professional Development Strategy was created and rolled out. The strategy focuses on attracting, recruiting and retaining Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff through culturally inclusive practices, targeted promotion and supportive workplace policies. It is further strengthened by professional development and cultural awareness initiatives including training, career pathways and organisation-wide education to create a culturally safe and inclusive environment.

We enhanced our process to promote employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by strengthening partnerships with organisations, communities, local networks and utilising targeted social media platforms. Vacant roles are also shared with Latrobe City Council’s Coordinator Employment Development. An expanded advertising approach was introduced to reach candidates beyond the Gippsland region, including using platforms such as Koori Mail. In addition, we introduced inclusive language across all job advertisements and provide applicants with the option to identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

In June 2025, Gippsland PHN’s first Indigenous Community Services trainee successfully completed the two-year program, achieving a Certificate IV in Community Services while gaining hands-on experience within the organisation’s Program Delivery Team. A key component of the trainee’s studies was work placement, which was undertaken with a Gippsland-based Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation. The Indigenous Community Services Traineeship is an important initiative that supports individual growth, builds career pathways and strengthens Gippsland PHN’s commitment to workforce development across the region.

“I’m eager to explore the alcohol and other drugs sector more. To learn and understand the challenges, and to better understand community members who are impacted by alcohol and other drugs.”

– **Carly Weatherby**, Indigenous Community Services Trainee

Embedding accountability and governance

RAP progress updates continue to be delivered quarterly to the Board, staff, senior leaders and key advisory groups, celebrating achievements, highlighting areas for improvement and supporting informed decision-making at all levels. Progress is further communicated to both the Clinical Council and Community Advisory Committee, reinforcing a whole-of-organisation commitment to reconciliation and continuous improvement.



OUR RECONCILIATION JOURNEY FOR THE FUTURE

We are now turning our attention to the development of our next RAP Innovate 2026-2028, which will see us further engaging with stakeholders and our community to identify new opportunities and set clear goals for the future.

As part of this process, we are reviewing the actions from the RAP Innovate 2023–2025, strengthening our existing commitments, and developing new and enhanced actions for consideration.

We will continue to identify opportunities and deliver actions that lead to meaningful and lasting outcomes by:

- Deepening engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders to ensure our initiatives are informed, respectful and mutually beneficial
 - Strengthening accountability by refining our targets, monitoring progress and transparently reporting on outcomes
 - Building cultural capability across all levels of our organisation to foster an inclusive and culturally safe environment
 - Embedding reconciliation principles into business practices, decision-making and service delivery
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Acknowledgements

Gippsland PHN would like to recognise the invaluable contributions of those who helped shape and deliver the plan including:

- Brad Brown (Gunaikurnai) – artist of the RAP artwork Soaring and Growing in Unity
- Aunty Christine Johnson (Gunaikurnai and Monaro Ngarigo Elder) - who delivered the Welcome to Country at the launch
- Tre Moffat (Gunaikurnai) – who performed the Smoking Ceremony at the launch
- Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations - Moogji Aboriginal Council, Lake Tyers Health and Children's Services, Lakes Entrance Aboriginal Health Association, Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative and Ramahyuck District Aboriginal Corporation
- Aboriginal Land Councils
- External community advisors who have supported us through our journey

To learn more about the steps Gippsland PHN is taking to advance inclusive health care outcomes in the region, visit the [Reconciliation Action Plan webpage](#).

Gippsland PHN remains committed to fostering a culturally safe, inclusive environment and strengthening health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Gippsland.