Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan

Walking together toward a more inclusive and reconciled Australia.

July 2026 – June 2029

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN
STRETCH

wellways

Contents

Acknowledgement of Country	3
Our vision for reconciliation	4
Message from CEO, Wellways	5
Message from CEO, Reconciliation Australia	5
About the artist and artwork	6
Our business	7
Our RAP	9
Relationships	12
Respect	15
Opportunities	17
Governance	19



Acknowledgement of Country

Wellways acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we live, work and play and pays respect to their Elders past and present.

We are committed to child safety and inclusive communities, workplaces, policies and services for people of all backgrounds, genders, sexualities, cultures, bodies and abilities.

Disclosure: The terms Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, First Nations and Indigenous are used respectfully and interchangeably throughout this document when referring to First Nations peoples of Australia. These terms are used to respectfully encompass the diversity of cultures, identities, and preferences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Image: Wellways team members and local guides at the 2024 Cultural Summit guiding a turtle to safety, on Nywaigi Country, north of Townsville.

Our vision for reconciliation

At Wellways, our vision for reconciliation is to create a culturally safe and inclusive environment where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are respected, valued, and empowered to thrive.

We are working toward a future where First Nations people have the same opportunities to succeed socially and economically, and their rich histories, cultures and contributions are recognised and celebrated at every level of our organisation.

For Wellways, true reconciliation means ensuring that our services, partnerships, and decision-making processes genuinely include and reflect the priorities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices.

Our vision for reconciliation aligns with Wellways' overarching values and purpose of inclusion and community wellbeing.

By embedding cultural safety, amplifying First Nations leadership, building authentic relationships, and integrating reconciliation into all aspects of our services and workforce, we will contribute to a stronger, more equitable Australia where the benefits of our work are shared with all.

Image: First Nations team members, allies and partners looking forward together at the 2026 Cultural Summit, on Barkandji (Paakantyi), Mutthi Mutthi, and Ngiyampaa Country, Mungo National Park.

Message from CEO

It is with great pride that I introduce Wellways' Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) for 2026 - 2029.

Building on the strong foundations of our Innovate RAP that has been in place since 2018, this Stretch RAP reflects Wellways' deeper understanding, stronger connections, and unwavering commitment to a truly reconciled Australia.

The significant progress Wellways has made with its reconciliation actions would not have been possible without the collective commitment of our teams who live Wellways' values of inclusion and embrace reconciliation as core to our identity.

Wellways' Stretch RAP builds on the commitments and initiatives of our Innovate RAP, embedding them into our everyday work. Our Stretch targets will strengthen relationships through collaborative partnerships and community participation, deepen our respect for culture through learning and education, create economic opportunities that empower First Nations businesses, and build a strong, supported workforce.

This 'stretch' is not about pushing beyond our limits; it's a deliberate extension of our capacity to improve the way we work with and support First Nations peoples who access our services, and to achieve deeper impact and meaningful reconciliation within Wellways and the wider community.

Wellways' vision is to create inclusive communities where everyone can reach their potential. To achieve this, we will continue to advocate and work toward a future where the rights and cultures of First Nations peoples are celebrated and upheld, the truth in our nation's history is accepted, and self-determination is afforded to all Australians.

Together, we can contribute to a more reconciled Australia, one step, one action, one connection at a time, and Wellways' Stretch RAP is our commitment to this shared journey.



Laura Collister
Chief Executive Officer
Wellways

A message from CEO, Reconciliation Australia

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I congratulate Wellways on its formal commitment to reconciliation, as it implements its first Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), its second overall.

Formed around the pillars of relationships, respect and opportunities, the RAP program helps organisations realise the critical role they can play in driving reconciliation across their work and area of expertise.

As a not-for-profit organisation that provides tailored supports to people living with mental health challenges, disabilities and other complex needs, Wellways is well positioned to drive reconciliation outcomes through culturally safe services that address social determinants of health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This Stretch RAP is built upon the considerable experience Wellways garnered in previous RAPs.

Understanding that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous staff both play important but different roles in reconciliation efforts, Wellways developed strategies where commitments and support could flourish. Its First Nations Caucus and Cultural Summit provide supportive and culturally appropriate spaces for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to connect and contribute while its 'courageous commitments' initiative encourages non-Indigenous staff to see reconciliation as everyone's business and responsibility.

With these learnings, Wellways has built solid foundations upon which to expand and embed its commitments in this RAP.

A reconciliation partnership framework will outline how Wellways will co-design and sustain partnerships with First Nations communities while an external First Nations advisory group will ensure community guides this work. A First Nations leadership pathway, providing professional development to First Nations staff who want to grow into leadership roles will underpin this relationship-building work.

By working with First Nations communities on health solutions and recognising the expertise and leadership of First Nations staff, Wellways has the potential to drive considerable reconciliation outcomes across its sphere of influence. On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend Wellways on this Stretch RAP and look forward to following its ongoing reconciliation journey.



Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

About the artist and artwork

My name is Sarah Levett, and I am a proud Wiradyuri and Gundungurra woman.

I grew up in Wagga Wagga, NSW, and my mob are from the Murrumburrah area. My storytelling is inspired by sharing culture, travelling, protecting Country and connecting with people.

I worked with Wellways to create Moving Forward, reflecting their move to a Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) status.

At the centre, connected meeting places represent the different First Nations communities Wellways engages with and the strong, inclusive and culturally safe relationships being built to improve outcomes for First Nations peoples.

A river flows through the artwork, representing bodies of water. Water gives life and connects mobs, with pelican tracks showing this connection. It reflects Wellways connecting with First Nations organisations and supporting mental health and wellbeing journeys.

Kangaroo tracks move towards the centre because kangaroos can only move forwards, not backwards. I used this to represent reconciliation. The older and younger kangaroo journey together, showing knowledge passed through kinship. This reflects Wellways walking alongside families, carers, kin and those with lived experience to create connection, support and hope.

The gum leaf, used in smoking ceremonies to cleanse unwanted energy or bad spirits, reflects acknowledgement of past harms and a commitment to listening, learning and moving forward together to help heal individuals, relationships, communities and systems.

Cultural integrity is shown through a person holding a message stick with designs representing male, female and non-binary people. Message sticks share messages and culture between people and mobs, reflecting Wellways' commitment to amplifying First Nations voices through culturally safe services and employment.



Sarah Levett
Artist

Watch the RAP artwork video









Our business

Wellways is one of Australia's largest community mental health and disability non-profit organisations.

Founded by families advocating for better mental health support, lived and living experience remains at the heart of everything we do.

We work alongside people of all ages, their families, carers and kin, who are experiencing mental health challenges, disability, or barriers to their social and emotional wellbeing.

Our commitment to cultural safety and the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is a central part of this work.

We provide services that focus on strengths, aspirations and opportunities for connection. We recognise that every person is the expert of their own life, and we support them to participate in their chosen community in a way that is right for them.

Currently, Wellways employs close to 1,800 people across Australia, including 69 team members who identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.

We continue to prioritise the recruitment, retention, and professional development of First Nations employees, recognising their vital role in shaping our reconciliation and cultural safety efforts.

Wellways has nearly 100 office locations across Australia, providing a strong foundation for this work. Our presence in regional areas, where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations are well represented, allows us to build relationships within the communities where we live and work. Being embedded in local communities helps us build trust and connection, and respond in ways that are grounded, real and lasting.

Our partnerships are critical to our impact. We recognise that to achieve our vision, we must embrace the shared learnings and experiences of our partners and the communities we work with.

One of our biggest strengths is our strong presence in regional areas where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations are well represented. We're embedded in local communities and live where we work, allowing us to build relationships that last. This regional focus means we can truly connect to people and places, and respond in ways that are grounded, real and lasting.

Our partnerships are critical to our impact and we acknowledge that to achieve our vision, we must embrace the shared learnings and experiences our partners and the communities we work with provide.

We engage collaboratively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to co-design culturally safe services and environments, and seek to understand the barriers they face and ways we can overcome them together.

Images: Wellways employees, participants and community members across our regions and services.

Wellways | Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan July 2026 – June 2029

Our RAP

At Wellways, our RAP is a framework to embed reconciliation in every part of our organisation, culture, and relationships.

We see this as an opportunity to foster healing and empowerment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, while also working to address the ongoing effects of colonisation and dispossession.

True reconciliation requires action and a commitment to walking together. Our RAP reflects this commitment and aligns with our vision to create inclusive environments and support the mental health and wellbeing of all Australians.

Our RAP is built around the five dimensions of reconciliation:

- Historical acceptance
- Institutional integrity
- Race relations
- Equality & equity
- Unity

These dimensions guide us to build genuine partnerships with First Nations peoples, demonstrate respect for cultures and histories, create equitable opportunities, and actively work to overcome systemic injustices. Through this RAP, we aim to build trust, increase cultural safety and positively impact the lives of First Nations participants, carers and kin, ensuring First Nations voices are central to our work.

The development of our Stretch RAP was a collaborative and inclusive process, shaped by many voices and perspectives. Employees, communities, cultural advisors and partner organisations provided invaluable insights and helped shape the key themes and priorities for this RAP.

Wellways' Reconciliation Working Group, which includes First Nations employees and external First Nations stakeholders, guided this process and ensured that the RAP reflects the diverse experiences and needs of the communities we serve.



Image: Wellways leaders and key RAP team members with artist Sarah Levett, on Wurundjeri Country, Fairfield.

Key Themes from Consultations

Several key themes emerged consistently through our consultations, especially with First Nations stakeholders:

The importance of cultural safety and cultural integrity

First Nations staff and communities highlighted the need for cultural safety to be treated not just as a box-ticking exercise, but as a core part of our identity and everyday actions. This feedback drives our Respect pillar deliverables, where we will deliver tailored cultural safety training for all staff, review internal policies to ensure cultural safety is embedded, and create spaces for First Nations voices to be heard and valued.

Strengthening trust and relationships with communities

Building trust takes time and transparency. We heard that trust grows when relationships are consistent, reciprocal, and built on mutual respect. This theme is reflected in our Relationships pillar, which includes actions to deepen partnerships with First Nations organisations, co-design with local communities, and ensure that decision-making processes include First Nations perspectives.

Creating more opportunities for First Nations employment and leadership

There was strong feedback about the need for meaningful employment pathways and leadership development for First Nations staff. Our Opportunities pillar speaks directly to this, with actions to increase the recruitment and retention of First Nations employees, support professional development and leadership programs, and strengthen cultural mentoring opportunities across the organisation.

Recognising the strength and resilience of First Nations peoples and histories

First Nations stakeholders reminded us that historical acceptance involves not just acknowledging past harms but also celebrating the strength and cultural wealth of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This theme is integrated throughout our RAP and specifically in our Respect pillar, where we commit to culturally appropriate storytelling, truth-telling initiatives, and the integration of First Nations knowledges into our daily work particularly through our cultural integrity workshops and cultural learning strategy.

Addressing systemic barriers and inequities in service delivery

Feedback from both internal and external consultations identified systemic barriers that continue to disadvantage First Nations peoples in health, wellbeing, and social outcomes. Our RAP actions aim to address these by reviewing our service models, advocating for equitable funding and policy, and working alongside communities to design culturally safe, relevant services.

Resource limitations and regional accessibility

Particularly in regional and remote areas, resource limitations were a recurring theme, impacting our ability to deliver culturally safe services consistently. We have responded to this by including deliverables focused on partnering with local First Nations organisations, leveraging shared resources, and exploring innovative service models that meet local needs.



Image: A view of Wulinantikala (Cradle Mountain) through the flora, Lutruwita (Tasmania).

Our unique deliverables

These key themes have been directly incorporated into our RAP deliverables. For example:

- In the Respect pillar, we have a dedicated action to develop and deliver a cultural integrity plan unique to Wellways, ensuring that cultural safety and respect are not just policies but lived values across all programs.
- In the Opportunities pillar, we will introduce a First Nations leadership pathway, providing targeted support and professional development to First Nations staff who want to grow into leadership roles.
- In the Relationship pillar, we will build a Reconciliation partnership framework, outlining how we co-design and sustain partnerships with First Nations communities.

Challenges and strategic focus

We recognise that challenges remain, particularly in addressing systemic barriers and ensuring culturally safe services are delivered across all regions. We are especially focused on engaging First Nations staff and communities in regional and remote areas more effectively, as well as strengthening cultural learning for non-Indigenous staff who work in these settings.

Our resource limitations in some locations have been acknowledged openly, and in response, we are working to identify innovative service delivery models and build stronger local partnerships. This will be supported through new deliverables focused on shared resource planning, and culturally appropriate service co-design.



Image: Larapuna (Bay of Fires) on Tebrakunna Country, Tasmania, home of the Pairrebeenne and Trawlwoolway clans.



Achievements and reflections

Since starting our Reconciliation journey in 2018, we have seen important progress. Our local “courageous commitments” have encouraged staff to see reconciliation as everyone`s business and responsibility. Our strengthened relationships with First Nations communities have helped us build trust and accountability. We have embedded cultural integrity training across the organisation (designed and facilitated internally), and we actively celebrate National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC and other cultural events. Our First Nations Caucus (internal First Nations employee network), established in 2022, is flourishing with over 40 First Nations employees and our ‘on-country’ First Nations Cultural Summit for First Nations employees and allies continues to evolve.

Moving forward, we will continue to build on these foundations, refining our actions based on the key themes identified through our consultation process. We understand that Reconciliation is not a single outcome but an ongoing journey, and this RAP is both a roadmap and a living document. Our goal is to ensure that First Nations voices remain central to everything we do and that our Reconciliation efforts lead to tangible, positive change for all.

Image: Walking proudly together, Wellways colleagues during NAIDOC 2026, on Wiradjuri Country, Cowra.

Our RAP Working Group

- Director, People & Culture (Executive Sponsor)
- National Manager, Organisational Development
- First Nations Workforce Lead
- RAP Administrator Officer
- Communications Manager
- First Nations Trainer
- Representation from our operational teams in each state and territory we serve

Relationships

Building strong relationships between First Nations peoples and other Australians is essential to the work we do at Wellways and is fundamental to our commitment to reconciliation. At Wellways, we recognise that effective and meaningful relationships are the foundation for creating inclusive, respectful, and culturally safe environments for all individuals, particularly First Nations peoples.

Connecting people: We believe that fostering strong relationships allows us to bridge gaps between First Nations peoples and the broader Australian society. By connecting people from all backgrounds, we can create greater understanding, empathy and solidarity. These connections are crucial in our work, as they enable us to provide better services for First Nations participants and ensure they feel heard, valued and supported.

Sharing experiences: We understand that First Nations peoples have unique experiences, histories, and worldviews, and it is essential for these experiences to be shared and respected. Strong relationships provide a platform for this sharing, which helps all parties learn from one another. At Wellways, we encourage open dialogue and collaboration to ensure First Nations voices are central in our programs, services, and organisational decision making.

Governance and Accountability: Strong relationships are also vital for effective governance and accountability. We believe in transparent, inclusive decision-making processes that involve First Nations peoples at all levels of our organisation. This ensures that our actions align with the needs, priorities, and aspirations of the communities we serve, and that we remain accountable to our reconciliation commitments. First Nations staff, cultural advisors, and community leaders are key partners in guiding out strategic direction.

Communication and Engagement: Open and respectful communication is central to building lasting relationships. At Wellways, we prioritise clear, culturally safe communication with First Nations peoples and communities, ensuring that engagement is meaningful, respectful, and reciprocal. By fostering these communication channels, we enhance our ability to collaborate and deliver services that are relevant and appropriate to the needs of First Nations peoples.

Partnerships: Building strong partnerships with First Nations organisations, community leaders, and other stakeholders is crucial to the success of our reconciliation efforts. These partnerships allow us to share resources, knowledge, and expertise, and collaborate on initiatives that improve outcomes for First Nations peoples.

By working together, we amplify our collective impact and ensure that our actions contribute to the long-term healing, empowerment, and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Ultimately, building strong relationships with First Nations peoples is integral to Wellways commitment to fostering a more inclusive, respectful, and just society, which supports our mission of improving the wellbeing of all Australians, including First Nations peoples.

Focus area:

The Relationship pillar of our RAP aligns with our strategic direction to build trusted partnerships and foster inclusive environments. As a national provider of mental health, disability, and community services, Wellways recognises that authentic relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are critical to delivering culturally safe and effective support. By strengthening relationships across all levels of our organisation, internally among staff and externally with First Nations communities, we aim to ensure that our services and workplaces are grounded.



Image: A moment of connection at the 2026 Cultural Summit, on Barkandji (Paakantyi), Mutthi Mutthi, and Ngiyampaa Country, Mungo National Park.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1.1 Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	1.1a Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to continuously improve guiding principles for engagement.	Jul 2026	First Nations Workforce Lead
	1.1b Review, update and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	Sep 2026	First Nations Workforce Lead
	1.1c Establish and maintain 5 formal two-way partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities or organisations.	Dec 2026	First Nations Workforce Lead
1.2 Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	1.2a Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to all staff.	Apr 2027-28	RAP Admin
	1.2b RAP Working Group members to participate in 3-5 external NRW events.	May-Jun 2027-29	RAP Admin
	1.2c Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in 3-5 external events to recognise and celebrate NRW.	May-Jun 2027-29	RAP Admin
	1.2d Organise at least 3 internal NRW events, including at least one organisation-wide NRW event, each year.	May-Jun 2027-29	RAP Admin
	1.2e Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	May-Jun 2027-29	RAP Admin
1.3 Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	1.3a Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce.	Jan 2027	National Mgr, Organisational Development (OD)
	1.3b Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	Jul 2026	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
	1.3c Implement strategies to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	Dec 2026	First Nations Workforce Lead
	1.3d Collaborate with 3 RAP and other like-minded organisations to implement innovative approaches to advance reconciliation	Jul 2027	First Nations Workforce Lead
	1.3e Develop and distribute a reconciliation information webinar	Jul 2026	First Nations Workforce Lead
	1.3f Deliver cultural integrity training to all employees	Dec 2026	First Nations Trainer
	1.3g Create and maintain a reconciliation page and resources on Wellways intranet	Sep 2026	Comms Mgr
	1.3h Conduct surveys with employees to ascertain and measure reconciliation progress	Jan 2027	National Mgr, OD
	1.3i Host a joint event with external stakeholders promoting reconciliation	Jun 2027	First Nations Workforce Lead
	1.3j Share reconciliation success stories and learnings with external partners	Jan 2027, Jul 2027, Jan 2028	Comms Mgr
	1.3k Facilitate cultural integrity training to 2 external organisations	Dec 2027	First Nations Trainer

Wellways | Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan July 2026 – June 2029

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1.4 Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	1.4a Continuously improve HR policies and procedures concerned with anti-discrimination.	Jul 2027	Director, P&C
	1.4b Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to continuously improve our anti-discrimination policy.	Aug 2026	National Mgr P&C Services First Nations Workforce Lead
	1.4c Review, amend and communicate our anti discrimination policy for our organisation.	Oct 2026	Director, P&C
	1.4d Provide ongoing education to senior leaders and managers on the effects of racism.	Jan 2027	National Mgr, OD
	1.4e Senior leaders to publicly support anti-discrimination campaigns, initiatives, and stances against racism.	Jul 2027	CEO
1.5 Create an organisational wide online cultural safe space to strengthen relationships and promote ongoing cultural learning and dialogue	1.5a Co-design the online cultural safe space framework in consultation with the First Nations Caucus, staff, and cultural advisors to ensure it is culturally safe, inclusive, and meaningful.	Dec 2027	First Nations Workforce Lead
	1.5b Launch the monthly online cultural safe space, ensuring that staff from all teams and regions can participate and learn in a culturally respectful environment.	Jan 2027	First Nations Workforce Lead
	1.5c Establish a feedback and review process to monitor participation, capture staff experiences, and identify opportunities for continuous improvement by the end of 2026.	Jan 2027	RAP Admin



Image: Emu container art on Kalkadoon Country, Mount Isa

Respect

Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights is fundamental to Wellways' core values and business activities. We recognise that deepening our understanding and appreciation of First Nations cultures is not just a moral imperative but also essential to ensuring our services, policies, and interactions are meaningful, culturally safe and inclusive.

Pride in Cultures and Histories

At Wellways, we acknowledge the rich and diverse cultures and histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Respecting these cultures involves recognising their resilience, strength, and continuous connection to Country. We celebrate the cultural contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and are proud to integrate this knowledge into our work. By elevating and honouring these cultures, we create an environment where First Nations staff, participants, and communities feel valued and recognised for who they are.

Understanding and appreciation

Respect means making a concerted effort to understand and appreciate the worldviews, traditions, and values of First Nations peoples.

This understanding is central to our commitment to reconciliation and cultural safety. At Wellways, we prioritise ongoing learning for our staff, ensuring they are equipped with the knowledge and skills to engage respectfully and meaningfully with First Nations peoples. This culture of appreciation promotes stronger relationships and improves the quality of care and support provided to First Nations peoples.

Celebration

We actively celebrate the success, resilience, and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Celebrating culture through events, art, language, and tradition allows us to showcase the richness of First Nations cultures and strengthens our organisational commitment to respect. These celebrations create spaces for all Australians to engage in a deeper appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, enhancing mutual respect and understanding.

Focus area

The focus area of Respect aligns with several key strategic directions at Wellways, particularly those related to cultural safety, inclusive service delivery, and staff development.

Action	Deliverable		Timeline	Responsibility
2.1 Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	2.1a	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	Oct 2026	First Nations Trainer
	2.1b	Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors on the implementation of a cultural learning strategy.	Jan 2027	First Nations Workforce Lead First Nations Trainer
	2.1c	Implement and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our staff.	Mar 2027	First Nations Workforce Lead Comms Mgr
	2.1d	Commit all RAP Working Group members, HR managers, senior executive group and all new staff to undertake formal and structured cultural learning.	Mar 2027	Director, P&C
	2.1e	95% all staff undertake formal and structured cultural learning. 70% Face-to-Face learning and 30% online.	Mar 2027	Director P&C, National Mgr, OD
2.2 Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	2.2a	Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	Dec 2026	First Nations Workforce Lead
	2.2b	Implement and communicate a cultural protocol document (tailored for all local communities we operate in), including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	Dec 2026	First Nations Workforce Lead Comms Mgr
	2.2c	Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at 5 significant events each year, including: Strategic planning days, Woodcock Lecture, On Country Cultural Summit, new site openings, Regional Manager Forum.	Jul 2027	CEO, CEO Office and Admin team
	2.2d	Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	Jul 2026	CEO, Executives
	2.2e	Staff and senior leaders provide an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at all public events.	Jul 2026	CEO, Senior Leaders
	2.2f	Display Acknowledgment of Country plaques in our at least 20 of our sites.	Jan 2027	Corporate Services Mgr

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
2.3 Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	2.3a RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	Jul 2026-29	First Nations Workforce Lead
	2.3b Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	Jan 2027	National Mgr, OD
	2.3c Support all staff to participate in 2 NAIDOC Week events in our local area.	Jul 2026-29	Director, P&C, All leaders
	2.3d In consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, support 5 external NAIDOC Week events each year.	Jul 2026-29	First Nations Workforce Lead, Regional Mgrs
2.4 Equip all Wellways leaders to champion reconciliation and embed cultural safety in every team and program	2.4a Develop a cultural safety leadership toolkit with guidance on promoting reconciliation, responding to culturally sensitive issues, and engaging with First Nations communities.	Dec 2026	National Mgr, OD First Nations Workforce Lead
	2.4b Deliver mandatory cultural safety workshops for all leaders, ensuring they understand their roles and responsibilities in creating safe and respectful workplaces.	Dec 2026	National Mgr, OD First Nations Workforce Lead
	2.4c Establish a leadership peer support network to share learnings and practical examples of how to promote reconciliation in daily operations.	Dec 2026	National Mgr, OD First Nations Workforce Lead

Image: Wellways team members listening to Elders at the 2024 Cultural Summit on Nywaigi Country, Mungalla Station.



Opportunities

Opportunities for First Nations peoples, organisations, and communities are a critical component of Wellways' commitment to reconciliation and integral to the work we do. We recognise that offering tangible opportunities is essential to addressing the historical and ongoing disadvantages faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and to building a more equitable and inclusive society. By creating opportunities in areas such as employment, procurement, professional development, and access to systems and processes, we aim to empower First Nations peoples and communities, while also enhancing the effectiveness and cultural competency of our organisation.

Employment

We believe that offering meaningful employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is crucial to breaking down barriers and fostering economic independence. At Wellways, we are committed to improving the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff across all levels of the organisation. Providing these opportunities not only contributes to a more diverse and inclusive workforce but also helps us better understand and meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants in our services.

Procurement

Our commitment to creating opportunities extends to our procurement processes. We actively seek to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and suppliers, ensuring that our purchasing decisions contribute to economic development in First Nations communities. By priotritising procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-owned businesses, we help foster self-determination and promote a thriving First Nations economy.

Professional Development and Retention

At Wellways, we recognise that creating opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples goes beyond employment, it also involves providing pathways for professional development and career progression. We are committed to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in their professional growth by offering tailored development programs, mentorship opportunities, and access to training. Retaining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff is equally important, and we aim to create an environment where they feel supported, valued, and able to thrive within the organisation.

Access to systems and processes

Ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have access to the systems and processes that shape their experience at Wellways is vital. We work to eliminate barriers in our recruitment, onboarding, and support systems to make sure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and participants can fully access and navigate these processes. This includes providing culturally safe, accessible, and responsive systems that meet the specific needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Focus area

One of Wellways' four strategic goals is specifically focused on making us a 'Truly Great Place to Work'. In an industry that has challenges with retention of staff, creating a working environment where people feel valued and have opportunity to grow and develop is crucial to our strategy.

Image: A Wellways team member is prepared with ochre markings before a ceremonial dance on Wandi Wandian (Wandandian) Country, Jervis Bay.



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3.1 Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	3.1a Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on the effectiveness of our First Nations Employment Strategy.	Dec 2026	First Nations Workforce Lead National Mgr OD
	3.1b Review and update an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development strategy.	Jan 2027	National Mgr OD
	3.1c Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	Jan 2027	Mgr, Talent
	3.1d Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	Jul 2027	National Mgr OD Mgr, Talent First Nations Workforce Lead
	3.1e Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to be supported to take on management and senior level positions.	Jul 2027	National Mgr OD
	3.1f Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment by doubling representation to 6%.	Jun 2029	Director, P&C Talent team and leaders
	3.1g Investigate and initiate cultural mentoring opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.	Dec 2026	First Nations Workforce Lead
	3.1h Investigate and initiate leadership development opportunities and programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff through our Performance and Development Review process.	Jan 2027	National Mgr OD
	3.1i Offer at least 5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees the opportunity to attend conferences and workshops that support their development.	Jul 2027	National Mgr OD
	3.1j Review workforce and career pathways within the early careers space with the intent of having at least 3% of our traineeships and cadetships being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.	Dec 2027	National Mgr OD

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3.2 Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	3.2a Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	Dec 2027	Corporate Services Mgr, Assets
	3.2b Maintain Supply Nation membership.	Dec 2026-28	National Mgr OD
	3.2c Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	Jul 2027	National Mgr OD
	3.2d Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	Jul2027	National Mgr OD
	3.2e Maintain commercial relationships with 10 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	Oct 2027	Primary: CEO Secondary: CFO
	3.2f Increase annual procurement spend from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses by 10% year on year.	Jun 2029	CFO, Finance team and leaders
	3.2g Train all relevant staff in contracting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses through Supply Nation or an equivalent organisation.	Dec 2027	First Nations Trainer, Finance team
3.3 Establish a First Nations Response Team to provide expert guidance and cultural safety support for complex issues and critical events within Wellways and the communities we serve.	3.3a Formally establish the First Nations Response Team by December 2026, drawing on staff with experience across different service areas such as People and Culture, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Learning and Development, Suicide Prevention and Aftercare Programs.	Dec 2026	National Mgr OD
	3.3b Develop clear protocols and role definitions for the First Nations response team to ensure culturally safe, appropriate and consistent responses to organisational challenges.	Feb 2027	National Mgr OD
	3.3c Provide tailored training and support the First Nations response team to strengthen their capacity to respond effectively and confidently in high stakes or sensitive situations.	Jun 2027	National Mgr OD

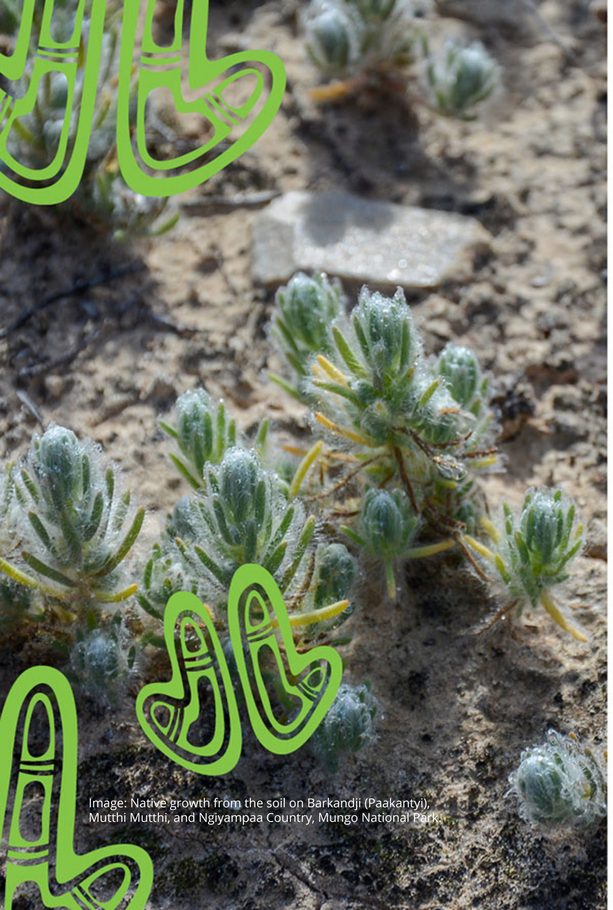


Image: Native growth from the soil on Barkandji (Paakantyi), Mutthi Mutthi, and Ngiyampaa Country, Mungo National Park.

Governance

Putting the right structures in place are critical to us being successful with our RAP. This will allow us to track and monitor progression against our RAP goals. Quarterly scorecards will be presented to the Executive team and our Board, and shared with all team members through our Intranet to ensure clear transparency and organisation wide engagement against our progress.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
4.1 Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	4.1a Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	Jul 2026-28	National Mgr OD
	4.1b Review and update the Terms of Reference for our RWG.	Jul 2026-28	RAP Admin
	4.1c Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	Quarterly 2026-29	First Nations Workforce Lead
4.2 Explore current state analysis and best practice to ensure First Nations voices and perspectives are embedded within our organisation.	4.2a Review current governance structure, identify gaps and recommend best practice solution.	Nov 2027	First Nations Workforce Lead
	4.2b Implement best practice solution.	Dec 2027	First Nations Workforce Lead
	4.2c Continue to review and ensure First Nations voices remain at the centre of our work.	Mar, Jun, Sep, Dec 2028	First Nations Workforce Lead
4.3 Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	4.3a Embed resource needs for RAP implementation.	Jul 2026	National Mgr OD
	4.3b Embed key RAP actions in performance expectations of senior management and all staff.	Jan 2027	Director, P&C
	4.3c Embed appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	Jul 2026	RAP Admin
	4.3d Maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	Jul 2026	National Mgr OD
	4.3e Include our RAP as a standing agenda item at senior management meetings.	Jul 2026	National Mgr OD
	4.3f Create an annual cultural integrity and governance reflection process, to be conducted each November, that allows the Reconciliation Working Group and First Nations response team to review RAP outcomes, cultural safety incidents, and lessons learned.	Jul 2026	National Mgr OD

Action	Deliverable		Timeline	Responsibility
4.4	Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	4.4a	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.	Jun annually	RAP Admin
		4.4b	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey.	Aug annually	RAP Admin
		4.4c	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	Sep, annually	First Nations Workforce Lead
		4.4d	Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly.	Mar, Jun, Sep, Dec (annually)	National Mgr OD
		4.4e	Publicly report against our RAP commitments annually, outlining achievements, challenges and learnings.	Jan 2027-28	CEO
		4.4f	Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	Apr 2028	First Nations Workforce Lead
		4.4g	Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	Jul 2028	First Nations Workforce Lead
4.5	Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	4.5a	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	Jan 2029	RAP Admin

Image: Wellways team members yarning beneath a native shelter at the 2025 Cultural Summit on Wandi Wandian (Wandandian) Country, Jervis Bay.



Learn more

To learn more about reconciliation at Wellways, please contact:

Alan Johnson

National Manager Organisational Development

Email: ajohnson2@wellways.org or rap@wellways.org

Wellways respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters of Australia.

We are committed to inclusive communities and the contribution of lived and living experience in mental health.

Image: Artist Sarah Levett creating digital art on Wurundjeri Country, Fairfield.

All photographs used in this document are owned by Wellways and form part of our brand image library. Photographs were either commissioned by Wellways or taken by Wellways employees, and appropriate permissions have been obtained for their use. No stock photography has been used.



