

# The RACGP Reconciliation Action Plan

RACGP Member **fact sheet**

*Reflect. Respect. Connect.*



**RACGP**



## Who is Reconciliation Australia?

Founded in 2001, Reconciliation Australia (RA) is a non-government, not-for-profit foundation that works with businesses, governments and individual Australians to promote reconciliation. RA does this by building relationships, respect and trust between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians.

RA aims to inspire and enable ALL Australians to contribute to reconciliation and break down stereotypes and discrimination.

## What is a Reconciliation Action Plan?

In 2006, the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program was launched by Professor Mick Dodson and former Prime Minister John Howard. Through this program, RA supports organisations to develop a strategic business plan, known as a RAP which formalises their commitment to reconciliation in Australia.

A RAP is based on a framework of relationships, respect and opportunities. A RAP defines clear actions and realistic targets that will support the organisation to embed cultural change across all areas of work and spheres of influence.

RAP is a valued trademark of RA and only organisations that have developed their RAP in collaboration with RA may be eligible for endorsement with the official RAP logo.

Organisations seeking endorsement of a RAP are requested to commit to one of four RAP types:

- Reflect RAP – organisations take the necessary time to build relationships internally and externally to inform and guide future RAP commitments – an emphasis is placed on raising awareness of the RAP and reconciliation process in the organisation.
- Innovate RAP – organisations work with stakeholders to engage in innovative approaches that build relationships, demonstrate respect and improve opportunities.
- Stretch RAP – organisations set measurable outcome targets for their activities (e.g. recruitment).
- Elevate RAP – organisations use accumulated knowledge and experience to assist RA and other organisations to expand on the objectives of reconciliation.

Over 550 organisations have already developed their own RAP – examples of RAPs can be found on the RA website:

[www.reconciliation.org.au](http://www.reconciliation.org.au)

## Why does the RACGP need a RAP?

The RACGP RAP was developed in response to a convocation item raised at GP13.

The RACGP position statement on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health states the RACGP is committed to reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

As a founding signatory to the Close the Gap Statement of Intent, the RACGP is committed to supporting our more than 27,500 members to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The RACGP has made significant advances through the establishment of the National Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health in February 2010 and its ongoing contribution to initiatives across education, assessment, standards, advocacy and policy work. The next step is to have the principles of reconciliation embedded operationally and in program work across the entire organisation through implementation of the RACGP RAP.

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## What type of RAP has the RACGP developed?

The RACGP has developed a Reflect RAP – the ‘introductory’ RAP. The RACGP recognises that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health is everyone’s responsibility and as a consequence, our aim is to focus on internal changes that will enhance understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture.

The RAP vision statement is: **‘Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into everyday practice.’**

The RAP will influence organisational workplace culture to create an environment where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, students, members and stakeholders feel welcome, supported and respected.

## How was the RACGP RAP developed?

Leadership of the RACGP RAP journey is coordinated by the National Human Resources department, with valued input from the National Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health. The RACGP appointed the following operational groups to support the development of the RAP:

- RAP Project Team: Alexis Hunt, RACGP National HR Manager and Corina Pesich, RACGP RAP Project Officer.
- The RAP Steering Group: RACGP CEO; RACGP Senior Leadership Team representatives; RAP Cultural Advisors which comprise of Associate Professor Brad Murphy and Associate Professor Mary Martin (members of the RACGP National Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Board).

- The RAP Working Group: 21 self-appointed employee representatives from a diverse cross section of the organisation.

The RAP Project Team conducted extensive consultations with employees from all programs and faculties across the RACGP. All employees were required to participate in these consultation meetings and teams were then requested to complete their own individual RAP templates. In total, 27 teams completed these templates from which common themes were identified. These formed priority areas of focus for the RACGP Reflect RAP.


Cultural guidance and advice was provided by our valued Steering Group members throughout the entire RAP development process.

## What are the next steps for the RACGP RAP?

The RACGP is proud to announce we have recently received official endorsement from Reconciliation Australia for our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan.

We are now working on final artwork and design concepts and will host a National RACGP RAP launch in November 2014. Published copies will be available for distribution post launch, and in the meantime, the current draft of the RAP is available to view for RACGP members on the RACGP website.

The RACGP Reflect RAP is a ‘living’ document which will continue to evolve over its 12 month lifespan. A commitment will be made to develop a higher level RAP next year.



## Why does the RACGP continue to prioritise improving the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples over the health of Australians from other cultural backgrounds?

‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians can expect to live 10–17 years less than other Australians. The mortality rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians is on par with some of the world’s most impoverished nations. The United Nations report, *The State of the World’s Indigenous Peoples* (2009), indicated Australia and Nepal have the world’s worst life expectancy gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.’ – Oxfam Australia

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples belong to the oldest continuous cultures on earth, and are afforded a unique status in Australia’s identity. It is important for all Australians to acknowledge and learn about our nation’s shared history and understand how colonisation and past government policies have impacted on the health status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and continue to impact on health status today.

As a national peak health body and founding signatory to the Close the Gap Statement of Intent, it is imperative the RACGP demonstrates its ongoing commitment to the campaign’s goals and also the broader strategic goals of RA.

By embracing the RAP journey as an organisation wide responsibility, RACGP employees will be better positioned to support members in the delivery of comprehensive primary healthcare services that are culturally sensitive to the holistic needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and individuals.

## Where can I access further information and keep informed of RAP updates?

The current RAP version is available on the RACGP website, which will be updated regularly as our RAP journey continues.

Further information about the RAP program and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture can be found at:

- RACGP: *An introduction to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols and perspectives* – National Faculty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health website at [www.racgp.org.au](http://www.racgp.org.au)
- Reconciliation Australia: [www.reconciliation.org.au](http://www.reconciliation.org.au)
- National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation: [www.naccho.org.au](http://www.naccho.org.au)
- Australian Indigenous HealthInfonet: [www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au](http://www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au)

## I still have more questions and thoughts about the RACGP RAP journey. Who can I contact?

For extra information on the RACGP RAP or how to develop your own RAP:

- complete the back of the RAP postcard in your GP14 compendium and submit to the RACGP booth at GP14
- ‘have a yarn’ with an RACGP employee or visit the RACGP booth at GP14
- email [rap@racgp.org.au](mailto:rap@racgp.org.au)

*Thank you for taking the time to read about our RAP journey.*