



# REFLECT RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

MARCH 2023 – MARCH 2024





## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

Feros Care acknowledges all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as First Nations peoples and Custodians of the oldest living culture. We recognise their continuing connection to land, water and community, and pay respect to all Elders past and present.

Feros Care team members treated to an Aboriginal dance ceremony by Kuma Kaaru on Kurna country.



**ABOUT THE ARTISTS: MARIAH ROBERTS & SHANTI KELLY-TORRENS**

Mariah Roberts is a proud Arakwal woman, traditional owner and talented young artist. She grew up at Cabbage tree island before moving to Ballina on the North Coast of NSW.

As well as being an artist, Mariah supports her elders by working in Aboriginal aged care.

Mariah began painting early, at the age of seven. She paints to remember and honour her culture. Her grandmother is her biggest inspiration.

Her first commission was in 2022 when Feros Care invited her to create an artwork for their Reconciliation Action Plan. She intends to keep sharing her people's stories through her art and is ready to take up more opportunities to expand her artwork as an individual.

Shanti Kelly-Torrens is a proud Arakwal – Bundjalung Dubay (Woman), Traditional Custodian and talented young Aboriginal artist.

As well as being an artist she works as Field Officer for the National Parks and Wildlife Service, who have Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) and Co – Management in place for Looking after and Caring for Country – established by the Arakwal Elders for over 25+ years.

Shanti first became interested in art at school, studying art and creating a major artwork for her higher School Certificate. She has also been involved with Byron Bay Railway Park – BOBBAC Arakwal Artwork Project with Cultural stories and designs etched by sand blasting onto the pathways.

The focus of her artwork is embedded with Aboriginal Culture and is reflected through its themes, traditional and contemporary techniques. It also incorporates her stories, cultural perspectives and aspects.

Her first commissioned piece was in 2022 when Feros Care invited her to create an artwork for their Reconciliation Action Plan. She intends to keep sharing her people stories and culture, awareness and education through her art now and into the future.

**ABOUT THE ARTWORK: THE JOURNEY**

This artwork represents the journey - Past, Present and Future. Our culture is also expressed throughout this special piece.

The blue flowing pathway and footprints is George's beginnings of birth and upbringing, the memories of collecting funds in a wooden box (ringing his bell) in and around Byron Bay, to the establishment of Feros Care today and future vision.

The first circle with handprints represents the past - George's parents and ancestors, reflections of family values and traditions, learning and growth, becoming a man who has showed so much love and passion.

The second circle with pattern represents George's love and support, caring for his parents, looking after and ensuring them good health and wellbeing. This also is a symbol of the loving generosity of Byron Bay community spirit.

The third circle with Aboriginal huts and Aboriginal people represents the creation and establishment of Feros Care, support and medical assistance, a place of caring for those in need. It symbolises connection, wellbeing, a sense of belonging for men and women.

The Aboriginal huts are the many spaces Feros Care have set up all over, that offer shelter and support to all.



The Arakwal totems of the Dolphin and Sea Eagle express the connection of Feros Care being first established and built on Arakwal country.



### STATEMENT FROM KAREN MUNDINE – CEO, RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA

Reconciliation Australia welcomes Feros Care to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

Feros Care joins a network of more than 1,100 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. The program's potential for impact is greater than ever, with close to 3 million people now working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. This Reflect RAP will lay the foundations, priming the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives, for the most effective outcomes.

These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.

It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

This Reflect RAP enables Feros Care to deepen its understanding of its sphere of influence and the unique contribution it can make to lead progress across the five dimensions. Getting these first steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Feros Care, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.



### MESSAGE FROM KAREN CROUCH – CEO, FEROS CARE

After joining Feros Care in September 2021, I have experienced first-hand the passion and commitment of Feros Care staff to live and engage in a respectful and inspired way with the First Nations peoples in the areas where our staff live and work.

Achieving reconciliation is important to Feros Care.

This Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan demonstrates our organisation's journey and captures our focus and commitment to building a brighter future together.

We are focused on making our workplace and services culturally safe for both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, clients, participants and residents. We know this plan will further develop the understanding and experience of our staff to provide support and care that is respectful and accessible.

This Reconciliation Action Plan sets out our strong commitment to listening and walking with First Nations peoples to help create a kinder, safer and more inclusive Australia.

Every action in our Reconciliation Action Plan has this goal in mind, as we focus on the five dimensions of Reconciliation; race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.

I wish to acknowledge each Elder who has been involved in our programs and events to date; and look forward to strengthening our relationships with them to learn more about their stories and traditions.

My congratulations to the many contributors of this Reconciliation Action Plan who have worked together to bring this to life. We look forward to enhancing our organisational capability and growing our partnerships and networks.

# ABOUT US

## OUR BUSINESS

Feros Care is a not-for-profit People Care organisation, with 30 years' experience in Aged and Disability services in the community, including Home Care Packages, Short Term Restorative Care, Veterans Nursing, NDIS Local Area Coordination (LAC), Commonwealth Home Support Program and Transitional Care.

Feros has a track record in innovation and our mission is to empower people to live happier, healthier and more connected lives. We push the boundaries of what is possible for our clients, residents and participants through co-design methods, service innovation and outcome-driven programs.

## OUR GEOGRAPHIC REACH

Feros Care delivers quality care, lifestyle support and local area coordination services to clients living in New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria, the Australian Capital Territory, Tasmania, and South Australia.

Feros Care has offices located in Mackay, Canberra, Townsville, Tweed Heads, Salisbury (SA) and Gawler (SA), and we are headquartered in Coolangatta, Queensland.

We have three residential aged care facilities located in Northern New South Wales - Byron Bay, Bangalow and Kingscliff.



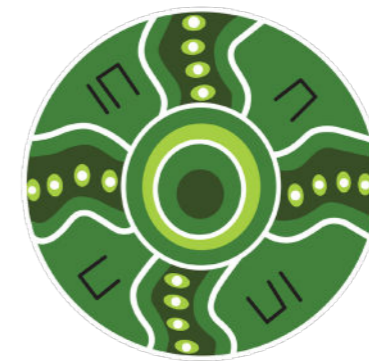
Attendees of the First Nations Community Development Coordinator conference, February 2023

## OUR TEAM

Feros Care employs 975 employees, has 296 volunteers, and we employ 24 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. We are committed to diversifying our workforce and aspire to be an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across our footprint.



Feros Care team members attend the 2022 Bond University Indigenous Gala on Kombumerri country.



## OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

We want to honour and focus on the five dimensions of reconciliation as part of our organisation's blueprint for our Reconciliation Action Plan. These are:

- historical acceptance;
- race relations;
- equality and equity;
- institutional integrity
- unity

These dimensions will set the direction of our Reconciliation Action Plan and help us identify strategies to progress outcomes and our reconciliation journey.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan is aligned to our Inclusion and Diversity Strategy, to better serve clients, residents, participants, staff and communities.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan will shape our workforce strategy, allowing us to provide culturally intelligent services across our footprint. We are a large employer and we are passionate about promoting and influencing race relations and equality, and we will role model the principles of reconciliation amongst our clients, residents, participants, staff and communities.

We want our staff members to be representative of the communities in which we work, in order to enhance the client journey and experience. We also focus on employment opportunities and providing a safe and supportive environment for First Nations staff.

We have a genuine commitment to learning about the histories, lived experiences and contemporary realities of local communities. We will influence the hearts and minds of our staff through cultural training so that each and every team member at Feros Care better understands the perspectives and experiences of First Nations peoples.

We will also build stronger relationships with First Nations communities by listening, asking and learning. We want our organisation to be respected and trusted by First Nations staff and community members.

### IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Everyone in Feros Care will be involved in implementing our Reconciliation Action Plan. We will use an organisational wide approach to include all service lines, supported by the Feros Care Board and led by the Executive team.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group is chaired by the Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development. The Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group membership consists of all Executive staff and a number of other managers and staff members from our service lines, a total of 22 staff. The Reconciliation Action Plan is a standing agenda item on the Executive fortnightly meeting where progress is reported and discussed.

The Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group, with the assistance of Tash Jessimer First Nations Advisor (Identified) (Reconciliation Action Plan Champion), will facilitate change and monitor the progress of our Reconciliation Action Plan across the business.

We will be collaborating and partnering with local First Nations communities to ensure that our Reconciliation Action Plan considers the unique and diverse needs of the communities we service.

### OUR RECONCILIATION JOURNEY TO DATE

In preparing our Reconciliation Action Plan, we have undertaken an organisational wide evaluation of our systems and processes. We have also introduced a cultural training program for staff and Board Members, including on-Country cultural immersion experiences.

We have established a First Nations Staff Network and we have researched what other organisations have done in the development of their Reconciliation Action Plans. We are a member of Supply Nation and are developing a reporting system on our procurement activities. We have developed a standardised Artist Contract and Agreement for the commissioning of First Nations artwork under the guidance of First Nations law firm, Terri Janke and Company, who specialise in Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property.

#### Reconciliation Action Plan Champion – First Nations Advisor (Identified).

Our Reconciliation Action Plan Champion is the Chair of the Yarn'n Circle (First Nations Staff Network) and is a conduit between the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group and the Staff Network.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan Champion is supported by the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group, whose membership consists of:

Jo Field – Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development (Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group Chair)

Tash Jessimer – First Nations Advisor (Identified) (Reconciliation Action Plan Champion)

Karen Crouch – Chief Executive Officer

Melissa Simpson – Chief Experience Officer

Nigel Rennie – Chief Information Officer

Kim Attenborough – Executive Manager, Community

David Barrie – Chief Financial Officer

Mark Kerle – Executive Manager, Residential Services

Jo Hayes – General Manager, Local Area Coordination

Sarah Cochrane – Organisational Capability and Culture Manager

Dean Grantham – Employee Relations Manager

Jaime Johnston-Smith – General Manager, Contact Centre

Jacqi Holloway – Marketing Specialist

Nicola Hoey – Senior Local Area Coordinator

Tony Syme – Head Chef

Tiffan Finn – Marketing Coordinator

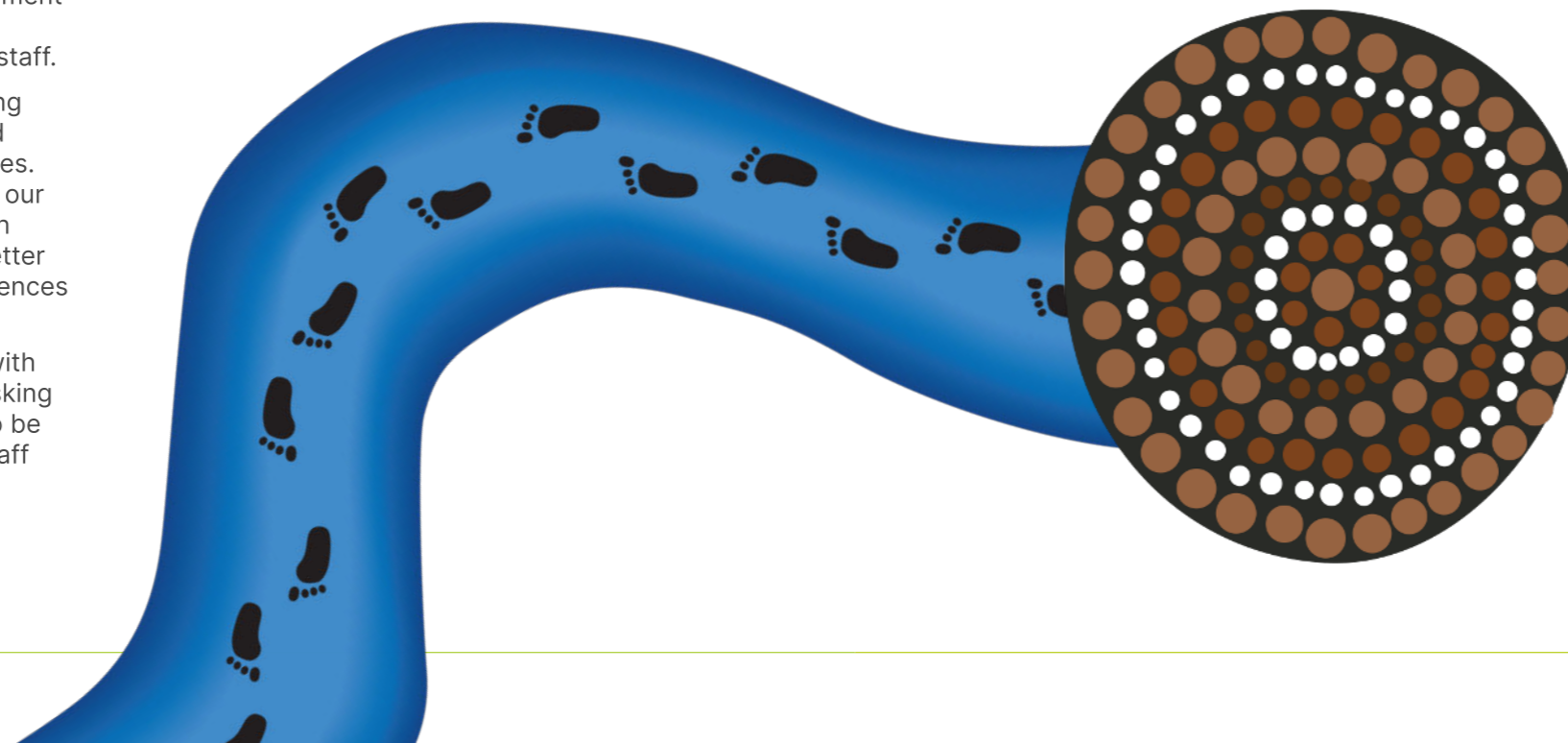
Jarrad Benbolt Agius – Community Development Coordinator, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Rianna Nisbet – Community Development Coordinator, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Jamie Layton – Community Development Coordinator

Antionette House - Community Development Coordinator, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Michelle Kramer – Financial Manager



## OUR PARTNERSHIPS / CURRENT ACTIVITIES

### SUPPORTING FIRST NATIONS STAFF

Feros Care established an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Network in June 2020, aimed at providing: a safe space to connect; information sharing; options for professional development, and opportunities for the Network to feed back to management.

In 2021 Feros Care developed our NAIDOC leave policy to enable leave to be used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees providing the opportunity to participate in local cultural festivities associated with NAIDOC week. Leave equating to one paid leave day, during NAIDOC week, for First Nations staff.

### CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Feros Care is a Gold Partner to Bond University's Indigenous Scholarship and Support Program. Channelled through the Nyombil Indigenous Support Centre, the matrix of financial, academic, cultural, and personal support tailored specifically for Indigenous students has seen Bond University achieve one of the highest retention rates in Australia for its students as a result of this support program.

Feros Care is passionate about Supplier Diversity and as such has become a Supply Nation member. Feros currently purchase our stationery through Winc who are a Tier-1-Supplier and registered with Supply Nation. Our stationery is purchased via Winc, who in turn purchase a variety of products through First Nations Tier 2 Suppliers. For example our copy paper is supplied via Winc from Nallawilli Officewares (a member of the First Nations group of Companies accessed via Supply Nation). Additional First Nations supplier purchases via Winc include - Integrity Health and Safety Pty Ltd - Products for WH&S supplies; J Herro Pty Ltd for Office products - photocopy paper, manila folders and storage equipment; and Nallawilli Office wares - general office supplies.

Feros Care is working with A2Z Indigi Care, who actively recruit and support an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce. Feros is working with A2Z to enable provision of aged care services and care navigation, which recognises the importance of shared knowledge to positively influence clients and deliver culturally mindful services in NSW.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We are focused on building relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We are in the early stages of forming collaborative partnerships with a number of key personnel, as well as organisations.

Feros Care has signed a partnership agreement with North Coast Community Housing (NCCH), the only Northern NSW Tier 1 Community Housing Provider. Feros plan to work with NCCH to provide grass roots community engagement and aged care navigation to local First Nations communities who are linked to affordable, social or community housing initiatives.

Where feasible we try to connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders as we recognise that they are the Custodians of cultural knowledge, and can navigate us to appropriate contacts, resources and decision making. For example, we have reached out to local Aboriginal Land Councils for specialised community and regional knowledge.

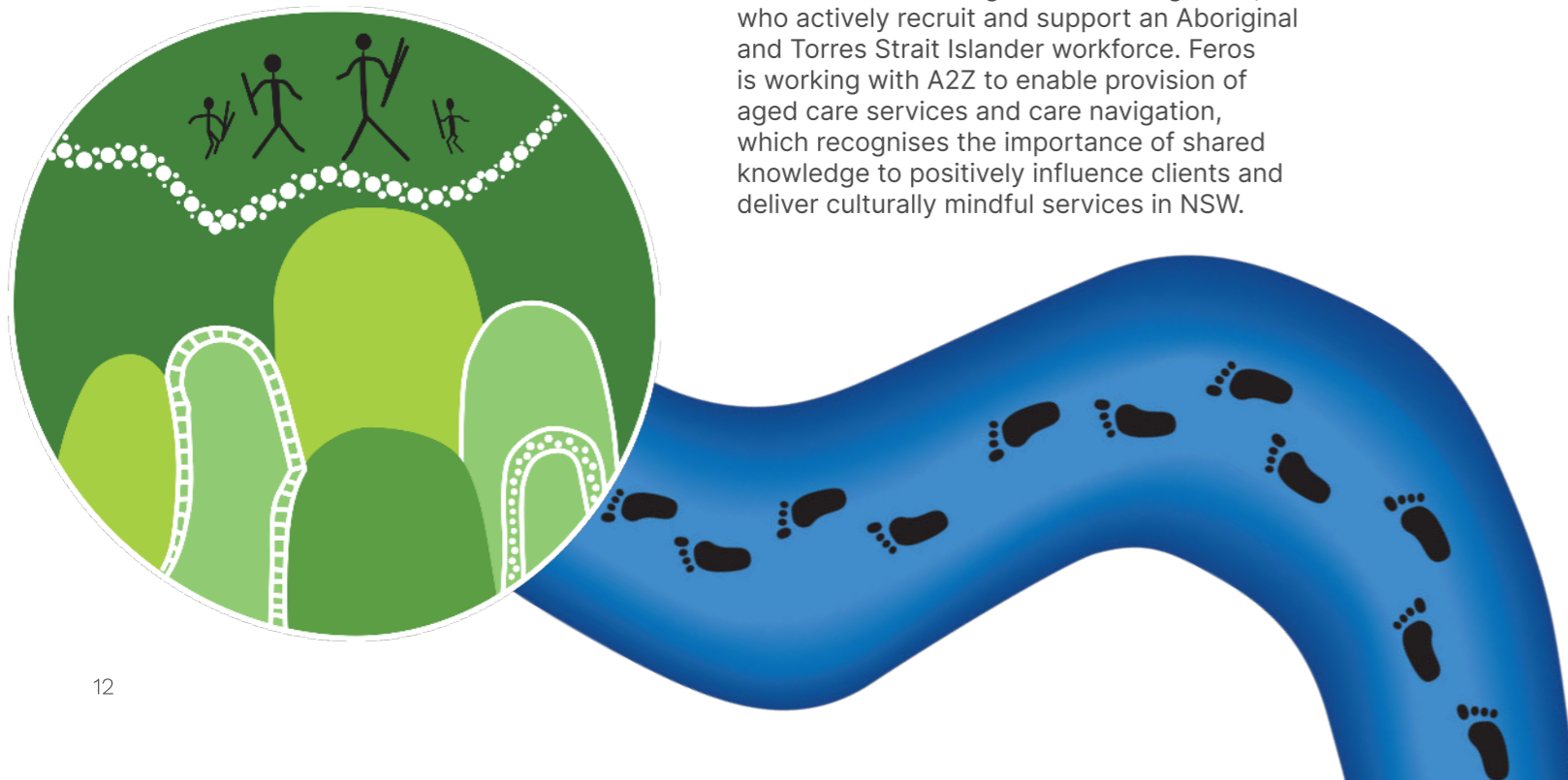
We are committed to the best outcomes for our clients, residents and participants, by placing value on the relationships we are forming with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This is providing insight for our staff into cultural protocols and practices and the importance of family kinship relationships. As an organisation, we are passionate about ensuring clients and their families have choice and control over decisions about their health and wellbeing, and the services they receive.

The following are some examples of our involvement within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities within our Feros footprint:

**Pathways Project:** In collaboration / consultation with Girudala Cooperative in Bowen (Mackay Service Area), Feros Care developed the First Nations Pathways Project, which focused on providing education about National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) access. This supported Girudala staff to identify their clients / patients who might be eligible for the scheme. Following the positive outcomes of the project, this initiative was extended to South Australia where Feros Care worked with Watto Purrunga Aboriginal Primary Health Care Service at Elizabeth and Nunkuwarrin Yunti of South Australia.

**Murri Court:** We are working in partnership with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) to create a smoother pathway for those that enter through the Murri Court System. Mackay has one of the few Youth and Children Murri Court; we are working with the stakeholders (Murri Court, Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (CYJMA), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service, Mackay and DSDSATSIP) in the process to make this an easier pathway and identify any children / youth who may be eligible for NDIS Support. Expected outcomes are that with necessary support less First Nations children will end up back in the justice system.

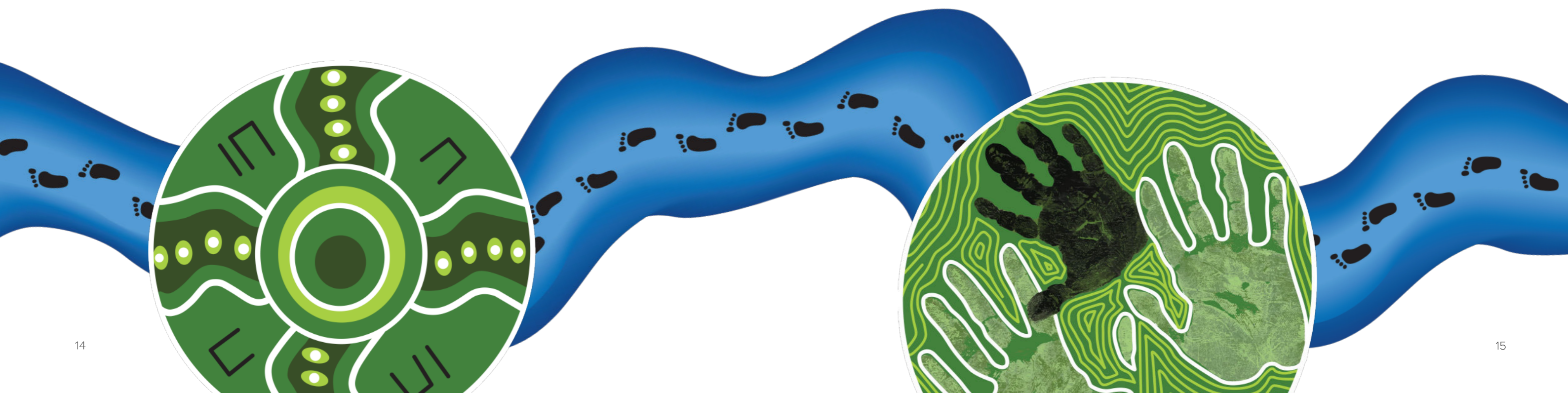
**Elder Engagement:** The Janandi Aboriginal Cooperative has been a positive link to the local Aboriginal community enabling Feros Care to offer support in accessing services and support in development of the local Aboriginal Community. Ballarat and District Aboriginal Cooperative (BDAC) was founded to represent and provide services to the Dja Dja Wurrung community (Jaara people) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents living in the Dja Dja Wurrung boundaries. BDAC have partnered with Feros Care in client care, particularly when managing GP supports and chronic health conditions such as diabetes. Ballarat and District Aboriginal Cooperative work with Feros Care to support with care navigation to services.



# RELATIONSHIPS

RELATIONSHIPS			
ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Continue to identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	June 2023	First Nations Advisor (Identified)
	Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	June 2023	Chief Executive Officer
Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Maintain circulation of Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	27 May – 3 June 2023	Chief Executive Officer
	Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May – 3 June 2023	Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development
	Support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May – 3 June 2023	Chief Executive Officer

RELATIONSHIPS			
ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Communicate annually our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.	June 2023	Chief Executive Officer
	Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	June 2023	First Nations Advisor (Identified)
	Hold an internal organisational event to promote reconciliation awareness and personal reflection.	June 2023	Organisational Capability and Culture Manager
	Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	June 2023	First Nations Advisor (Identified)
Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	August 2023	Chief Experience Officer
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	July 2023	General Manager People Experience



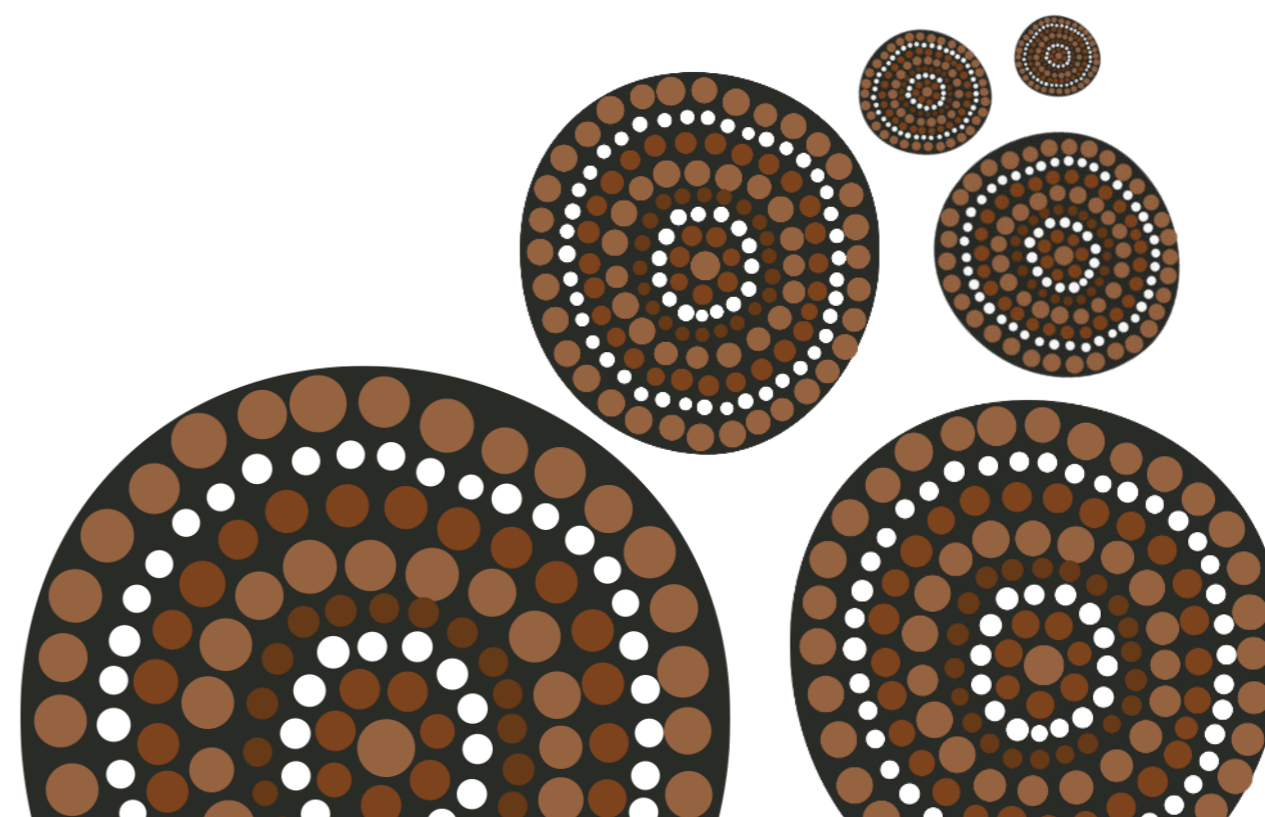


# RESPECT

RESPECT			
ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights through cultural learning.	Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights within our organisation.	August 2023	Organisational Capability and Culture Manager
	Implement a Cultural Learning Strategy to address cultural learning needs within our organisation.	August 2023	Organisational Capability and Culture Manager
	Provide cultural awareness training to Senior Leadership, Board members and other relevant staff.	November 2023	Organisational Capability and Culture Manager
	Conduct an annual review of cultural learning needs within Feros Care	November 2023	Organisational Capability and Culture Manager
Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.	November 2023	First Nations Advisor (Identified)
	Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	August 2023	Organisational Capability and Culture Manager
Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	June 2023	Chief Executive Officer
	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	June 2023	Chief Executive Officer
	Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	2 - 9 July 2023	Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development

# OPPORTUNITIES

OPPORTUNITIES			
ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development.	Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	August 2023	Chief Experience Officer
	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	August 2023	Chief Experience Officer
Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	November 2023	Chief Financial Officer
	Adhere to Artwork / IP Agreement when purchasing art from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists	August 2023	Chief Experience Officer
	Renew Supply Nation membership	May 2023	Chief Financial Officer



# GOVERNANCE

GOVERNANCE			
ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Establish and maintain an effective Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the Reconciliation Action	Maintain a RWG to govern Reconciliation Action Plan implementation.	November 2023	Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development
	Annually review Terms of Reference for the RWG.	August 2023	Executive Assistant to CEO
	Expand Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG in consultation with the Yarn'n Circle (First Nations Staff Network)	July 2023	Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development
Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Maintain the appointment of a senior leader as the Reconciliation Action Plan Champion to champion our Reconciliation Action Plan internally.	June 2023	Chief Executive Officer
	Engage senior leaders in the delivery of Reconciliation Action Plan commitments.	June 2023	Chief Executive Officer
	Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on Reconciliation Action Plan commitments.	September 2023	Chief Executive Officer

GOVERNANCE			
ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Build accountability and transparency through reporting Reconciliation Action Plan achievements, challenges, and learnings both internally and externally.	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 Reconciliation Action Plan correspondence.	November 2023	Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	July 2023	Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	September 2023	Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development
Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next Reconciliation Action Plan.	November 2023	Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development

## CONTACT DETAILS

Jo Field | Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development  
 07 56690555 | jofield@feroscare.com.au

