

# Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan Update 2024/25





# Acknowledgement of Country

Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands and the waters upon which we work and live.

We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and future, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia.

Artwork: Life on Country by Aunty Kerrie Kenton



# Where we're located



## NSW Metropolitan

### Central Coast

Bateau Bay / Darkinjung ●●●

Caves Beach / Darkinjung ●●

### Sydney North

Manly Vale / Gayamaygal ●

Marsfield / Wallumedegal ●●

North Turramurra / Dharug ●

### Sydney East

Daceyville / Gweagal ●●

Maroubra / Bidjigal ●●●

South Coogee / Gadigal/Bidjigal ●●●●

### Sydney South

Marrickville / Gadigal/Wangal ●●

Caringbah / Gweagal ●

Kirrawee / Dharawal ●

Sutherland / Dharawal ●

## Sydney West

Greystanes / Dharug ●●

Merrylands West / Dharug ●●●●

North Parramatta / Dharug ●●

Penrith / Dharug ●●●

Plumpton / Dharug ●●●●

## Illawarra Shoalhaven

Thirroul / Dharawal ●

## NSW Rural & Regional

### Northern NSW

Banora Point / Bundjalung ●●●

Casino / Bundjalung ●●

Tweed Heads South / Bundjalung ●●●●

Grafton / Bundjalung/Yaegl ●●

### Western NSW

Parkes / Wiradjuri ●●●

## Southern NSW

Goulburn / Ngunnawal ●

### Riverina

Corowa / Wiradjuri ●●●

Moama / Yorta Yorta/Wamba Wamba ●●●

Deniliquin / Wamba Wamba ●●

Lavington / Wiradjuri ●●●

### South West Slopes

Cootamundra / Wiradjuri ●●

Leeton / Wiradjuri ●●

Temora / Wiradjuri ●

Young / Wiradjuri ●●

## ACT

Braddon / Ngunnawal/Ngambri ●

Campbell / Ngunnawal/Ngambri ●●

Garran / Ngunnawal/Ngambri ●●

Yarralumla / Ngunnawal/Ngambri ●

**Legend** ● Retirement ● Home Care ● Residential

## Our reach across NSW and the ACT includes at least the following 13 Aboriginal Nations:

• Bundjalung • Yaegl • Gumbaynggirr • Awabakal • Darkinjung • Dharawal • Eora • Dharug • Wiradjuri • Ngunnawal • Ngambri • Wamba Wamba • Yorta Yorta

Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT), with deep respect and humility and through listening to many voices in relationship, acknowledges the Aboriginal nations and clans named above, and recognises the ongoing impacts of colonisation on borders and boundaries.

# Contents

About us	5
Message from CEO	6
Message from Brooke Prentis	7
Our approach to Reconciliation	8
Relationships	10
Respect	14
Opportunities	16
Governance	20



# About us

Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) is a not-for-profit aged care provider committed to supporting older Australians through Residential Aged Care, Home Care, and Retirement Living services. With more than 40 locations across at least 13 Aboriginal nations taking in metropolitan, regional and rural communities, we deliver person-centred care that honours dignity, connection and belonging.

At the heart of our organisation are the HEART values; honesty, empathy, acceptance, respect, and teamwork. These values guide every aspect of our work, shaping our relationships with residents, clients, families, staff, and partners. They define how we care, how we lead, and how we show up for our communities, ensuring that every individual feels seen, supported, and valued.

We recognise that Reconciliation is an essential part of building inclusive, compassionate and culturally safe environments. Guided by our Catholic mission and commitment to justice, we are working to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples feel welcomed and respected in all areas of our organisation as well as belonging.

Our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) represents the first step in our formal Reconciliation journey. Through this plan, we are building strong foundations with a focus on relationships, strengthening cultural understanding, and establishing Reconciliation into our systems, practices and partnerships.

This update highlights our progress across four key pillars: Relationships, Respect, Opportunities and Governance. It reflects our shared commitment to listening, learning and leading with purpose, while walking alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations, and communities with humility and respect.



**Pictured:** Walangari Karntawarra and Diramu dancers with residents from the North Turrumurra Residential Aged Care home at the Reflect RAP launch inauguration. Pictured on Dharug Nation.





# Message from CEO

**At Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT), Reconciliation is not a checklist. It is a shared commitment to walking together, grounded in truth, trust and action.**

Our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan has given us the opportunity to pause, to listen, and to ask how we can more meaningfully recognise and support the First Peoples of this land. It is helping us build the foundations for lasting change, not just in policy, but in the everyday decisions we make and the culture we nurture across our homes, teams and communities.

Reconciliation is not separate from our work. It must be woven into how we care, how we lead, and how we plan for the future. In 2025, we have started doing just that.

Key achievements since the launch of our RAP:

- Establishing our RAP Working Group and Pillar Teams to embed responsibility and leadership across the organisation.
- Establishing partnership with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC) including obtaining 50 licences for cultural awareness training for staff and making resources accessible to all through our staff Intranet.
- Celebrating National Reconciliation Week and National NAIDOC Week across sites, including livestreamed events, local storytelling, and community choirs.
- Appointing new leadership roles to support diversity and cultural capability, including the Head of Capability and Inclusion and RAP Manager.
- Becoming a member of Supply Nation and through this membership strengthening procurement pathways with Indigenous-owned businesses.
- Creating new systems to track our progress, elevate accountability, and prepare for impact reporting.

What I am most proud of is how our people have stepped forward with openness, care and a willingness to learn. The choir project, bringing together residents, students and local artists to perform Solid Rock at our Garran Residential Aged Care Home during 2025 National Reconciliation Week, is one of many examples where our commitment came to life through community and creativity.

This Yearly Statement is one expression of our values in action. It is grounded in transparency, collaboration, and continuous learning. It reflects our progress so far, but also the work still to come.

We know Reconciliation is not linear. It requires us to reflect, to listen without defensiveness, and to be brave enough to do things differently. It is not just a project for one team or department. It must be shared by all of us.

To the many voices who have helped guide our work this year, our staff, our partners, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations, and communities, thank you. You are helping us become a more inclusive, more reflective, and more connected organisation.

I look forward to continuing this journey together, with purpose and humility.

*Monique Reynolds*

**Monique Reynolds**  
CEO



# Message from Brooke Prentis

**Walking alongside Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) through the journey of its first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan has been both a privilege and a meaningful expression of what true partnership can look like.**

Walking alongside Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) through the journey of its first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan has been both a privilege and a meaningful expression of what true partnership can look like. From the earliest conversations, it was evident that this was not simply a compliance exercise, but a deeply felt commitment to do better, to learn, and to walk more respectfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

There is a growing movement across aged care, faith-based services, and the broader community sector to embed Reconciliation in practice. Yet what made this experience unique was the intentional way that Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) created space to listen, to reflect, and to act. Reconciliation is not treated as an add-on. It was woven through the values, aspirations, and leadership of the organisation, guided by humility and a strong desire to contribute to healing.

One of the most significant moments came during the 2024 Leadership Conference. I had the opportunity to deliver a cultural awareness session for more than 100 senior leaders. We spoke openly about the experience of older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the reality of the lack of Closing the Gap, and the importance of cultural identity, truth-telling, and how to shape safer, more inclusive workplaces and aged care services.

Beyond that single event, I have been encouraged to see strong governance frameworks established to support implementation. The RAP Working Group and Pillar Teams have become trusted vehicles for progress and accountability. Terms of Reference were carefully co-developed. Cross-functional representation was encouraged. Conversations were story based, rich, strategic, and relationships-focused. This has laid a strong foundation to ensure that Reconciliation efforts are not left to one person or one team, but are carried forward by the whole organisation.

The appointment of a new executive leader focused on capability and inclusion, and the ongoing commitment of the CEO as RAP Champion, reflects a high level of executive ownership. These leadership decisions matter. They create the conditions for change to take root. They provide the scaffolding for long-term cultural transformation.

Throughout the Reflect RAP, Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) has also demonstrated a willingness to build respectful partnerships. The conversations with local Traditional Owners, the engagement with Aboriginal-led organisations, and the early steps towards community-led collaborations show a genuine intent to walk together. It has been an honour to be invited into these spaces, to help guide, support and affirm this work, and to see the care taken in centring and respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, stories, histories, and cultures.

The Reflect RAP has laid solid groundwork. While there is still more to do, there is now a shared language, shared commitment, and shared direction. I am so excited that SCC NSW & ACT is eagerly stepping into an Innovate RAP and as those steps are made, I feel confident that the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will continue to be centred, amplified, and respectfully engaged. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to walk this path together, and I look forward to seeing how the seeds planted during this Reflect RAP continue to grow into real, lasting change.

*Brooke Prentis*

**Brooke Prentis**

Wakka Wakka woman, Aboriginal Christian Leader and First Nations External Advisor



# Our approach to Reconciliation

At Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT), our journey toward Reconciliation is grounded in respect, partnership, and a deep commitment to justice. Inspired by Catholic social teaching and the principles of self-determination, we are working to build strong foundations for Reconciliation into every aspect of our purpose, from care and governance, to workforce and community engagement.

As we deliver on our Reflect RAP, we recognise that Reconciliation is not a checklist, but a living and evolving commitment to truth-telling, relationship-building and healing. This yearly update outlines our key activities, learnings, and future directions as we continue to strengthen our cultural capability, listen deeply to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices, and contribute to a more inclusive and equitable future.

## Governance and Organisational Commitment

Reconciliation is emerging as a core strategic priority across our organisation. In 2025, we began embedding RAP reporting and discussion into executive and Board-level forums. While formal governance structures are still evolving, this early integration is increasing visibility and accountability across our care streams and corporate functions.

To guide implementation, we have established a RAP Working Group and Pillar Teams, comprising staff from across key departments such as People & Culture, Clinical Governance, Residential Care, and Marketing and Communications. These groups meet regularly to drive delivery, monitor progress, and lay the groundwork for Reconciliation to be reflected in day-to-day practice.

As we mature our approach, we are focused on building stronger feedback loops between operational activity and leadership decision-making, supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership, and maintaining transparency through structured reporting.

## Cultural Capability and Staff Engagement

Our people are central to our Reconciliation journey. In 2025, we launched several foundational actions to build awareness and cultural capability across our workforce:

- We developed and released two key resources: the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protocols and Guidelines and the Engagement Principles. These resources were introduced

through staff training and webinars, and are now available on the staff Intranet to support respectful engagement and build consistent understanding of Acknowledgement of Country, Welcome to Country, and cultural protocols across the organisation.

- Our April 2025 webinar, led by Wakka Wakka woman Brooke Prentis, provided insights into respectful engagement and was accessed by staff through our Intranet portal.
- Our leadership teams participated in cultural awareness sessions as part of broader diversity and inclusion initiatives, including dedicated sessions with the People & Culture team, the RAP Working Group, and at our organisation-wide Leadership Conference.

As we grow this work, we are exploring cultural immersion opportunities and partnerships with Aboriginal-led organisations to deepen staff connection and understanding.

## Celebrating National Reconciliation and National NAIDOC Weeks

We recognise National Reconciliation Week (NRW) and National NAIDOC Week as important moments to pause, reflect, and connect. In 2025, Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) supported meaningful engagement through:

- Hosting livestreamed events during NRW, including cultural performances, song, and storytelling.
- Promoting local Council-led events and encouraging Facility Managers to initiate local recognition activities.
- Supporting a choir of residents and local school children to perform "Solid Rock" in alignment with the national NRW theme.

These initiatives reflect our growing awareness that Reconciliation is best nurtured through shared experience and local connection.

We also look at other dates of celebration and commemoration including participating in the Yabun Festival and engaging in "Yarning" circles led by respected Aboriginal leaders.



## Employment and Inclusion

We have made early strides to ensure our workforce reflects the diversity of the communities we serve:

- Onboarded a new RAP Manager role to support Aboriginal employment and inclusion across the organisation.
- Created a new leadership position, Head of Capability and Inclusion, responsible for embedding First Peoples knowledge and principles into our strategic people agenda.
- Began internal demographic reporting improvements to better understand cultural diversity across our teams.

In FY2026, we aim to build stronger pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment, including internships and partnerships with higher education providers.

## Procurement and Partnerships

Our commitment to Reconciliation extends into our supply chain and partnerships. In 2025:

- We became a member of Supply Nation and began building relationships with businesses that support Indigenous economic participation, including Winc—through its joint venture with Mandura, a First Nations-owned company—and Bunzl, which partners with Indigenous suppliers and is a certified Supply Nation member.
- We developed a dashboard to track procurement spend with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and peoples.
- Our procurement policies are being reviewed to better align with ethical sourcing and cultural responsibility.
- We were successfully accepted into the Careers Tracker internship program for the Summer of 2025/26.

We continue to strengthen our engagement with sector peers, Catholic organisations, and community stakeholders to amplify impact and share best practice.

## Looking Ahead

As we move into the next phase of our RAP journey, our focus will be on deepening cultural partnerships, supporting Aboriginal leadership within our workforce, and strengthening governance and reporting frameworks. This includes:

- Establishing a structured RAP Governance Model.
- Developing a cultural awareness implementation plan.
- Expanding data collection and tracking for employment, partnerships, and procurement.
- Continuing to celebrate and reflect through NRW and National NAIDOC Week.
- Participate as an Ochre sponsor (major sponsor) of the 2025 NATSICC National Assembly, “Pilgrims of Hope”, on Wonnarua Country.

## Our Commitment

This Yearly Statement reflects our shared accountability, our openness to learn, and our enduring commitment to walking alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Reconciliation is a long-term journey, one that requires courage, truth-telling, and action. We are honoured to be part of this journey and remain committed to building a more just and inclusive future for all.

**Pictured:** Residents from St Joseph's Residential Aged Care Home in Tweed Heads visiting Jellurgal Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Experiences centre during NAIDOC week. Pictured on Jellurgal country.



# Relationships



## Progress summary

This pillar focuses on establishing strong and meaningful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations, and communities. Our work has centred on identifying key stakeholders, supporting local engagement, and building cultural understanding across our services.

### Key achievements in FY2025:

- Mapped local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations in the regions where we operate Residential Aged Care, Home Care, and Retirement Living services.
- Conducted an initial relationship mapping exercise to identify established connections and relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations, and communities to also identify stakeholders, engagement opportunities and gaps.
- Participated in events such as the Yabun Festival and hosted a live-streamed NRW event featuring cultural performances and community storytelling.
- Supported local initiatives during NRW and National NAIDOC Week, including Residential home-based events, choirs and school partnerships.
- RAP Working Group participated and staff were encouraged to participate in external NRW activities, including Aboriginal History Talk & Bushfood Tasting and Truth Telling Webinar.

### Next steps:

- Ensure the relationship map continues to be updated and utilised to identify local engagement priorities.
- Support Residential managers to deliver Reconciliation activities during key cultural dates.
- Advocate for a RAP Network within the aged care sector to share best practice and collaboration.
- Expand strategic partnerships with First Nations organisations to support inclusive services and workforce pathways.
- Complete a review of HR policies to embed anti-discrimination and cultural accommodation.

**Pictured (Left to right):** Beatrice Sailor with Wakka Wakka woman Brooke Prentis at the RAP launch event, held at North Turrumarra Residential Aged Care home during Reconciliation Week 2024. Pictured on Dharug country.

## Spotlight on key projects

### Case study: Reflect RAP launch

In 2024, Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) launched its Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan with a shared commitment to listening, learning and acting.

The event brought together staff, leaders and community partners to mark the beginning of this journey. It included cultural performances, reflections from our Executive team, and a message of solidarity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Watch the highlights from our Reflect RAP launch by scanning the QR code below.



*Scan me*





ACTION	DELIVERABLES	STATUS	OFFICIAL UPDATE
<b>1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.</b>	Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and stakeholders within our local areas of business or sphere of influence, including our congregational partnerships and service areas where we operate our RAC, HC and RLU.	Completed	The RAP Working Group developed a live Relationships log listing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and stakeholders connected to Southern Cross Care's local areas of business and congregational partnerships. Staff were encouraged to update the register as new relationships were established.
	Conduct a Relationship Mapping exercise across our organisation to inform this process.	Completed	The RAP Working Group conducted a Relationship Mapping exercise and developed a living document for ongoing staff contribution. During National Reconciliation Week, all 40 service locations participated in mapping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and stakeholders relevant to their local areas.
	Develop a Relationship Map that includes potential engagement opportunities.	Completed	A Relationship Map was created in collaboration with the RAP Working Group. The map included identified engagement opportunities and key events. A Reconciliation Action Plan page was launched on the Intranet to support staff in accessing resources that enable culturally respectful engagement.
	Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and stakeholders.	Completed	The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Principles document was developed and shared with staff through internal newsletters and the Intranet. To support the launch, a webinar was held on 30 April 2025 and facilitated by Brooke Prentis, a Wakka Wakka woman and RAP Advisor.

## Spotlight on key projects

### Case study: Voices for Reconciliation Intergenerational Choir 2025

As part of National Reconciliation Week 2025, Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) brought together residents, school students, and community members to form a choir that performed the iconic song Solid Rock by Goanna; a powerful anthem that speaks to the strength and resilience of First Nations peoples.

The performance featured residents from our Garran and Campbell Residential Aged Care homes, alongside students from Sts Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School. Guided by singer-songwriter Royston Noell and supported by local staff, the group rehearsed and recorded their performance as part of the national "Voices for Reconciliation" initiative by Reconciliation Australia.

This project reflected the heart of our Relationships pillar: connection, community, and shared expression. It created a space for storytelling across generations and cultures, and brought Reconciliation to life through music.

You can watch the full performance by scanning the QR code.



Scan me

**Pictured:** Australian Idol winner Royston Noell with students from Sts Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School. Pictured on Ngunnawal/Ngambri country.



ACTION	DELIVERABLES	STATUS	OFFICIAL UPDATE
<b>2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).</b>	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and Reconciliation materials to our staff (consider plan for digital signage Boards).	Completed	Reconciliation Australia's digital assets for NRW were made available on the staff Intranet to support local engagement. Posters were distributed to Facility Managers, and NRW email signatures were shared ahead of the 27 May to 3 June campaign. Digital display content for Residential Homes is in development, aiming to increase awareness and participation across sites.
	Host an all-staff livestream event to recognise NRW.	Completed	In 2024, a livestreamed event from Epping marked the official launch of the Reflect RAP at Southern Cross Care's North Turrumurra residential home. The event featured the NRW theme "Now More Than Ever" and was shared on social media. In 2025, the organisation-wide NRW event was livestreamed from the Marian site on 29 May, aligned with the theme "Bridging Now to Next" and included the site's official opening.
	Encourage Facility Managers to consider hosting their own local NRW event.	Completed	In 2025, Southern Cross Care participated in the "Voices for Reconciliation" initiative. A performance video was recorded featuring residents and staff from across the organisation, alongside students from Sts Peter and Paul Primary School in Garran, and Australian Idol winner Royston Noell. The video celebrated unity, truth-telling, and intergenerational collaboration. All 27 Residential Homes were invited to join the livestream from the Marian site and encouraged to host their own local events. A centralised database of planned activities was created for each site.
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	Completed	RAP Working Group members were invited to attend external National Reconciliation Week events. A participation register was created to document attendance and engagement across the organisation. Staff attended events including Indigenous Cultural Talk, UniSA Online Nunga Screening, The Psychology of Bridging Now to Next Webinar, Red Dust Role Models, Truth Telling Webinar, and Aboriginal History Talk & Bushfood Tasting.
	Encourage and support staff, senior leaders and Board to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	Completed	Staff, senior leaders, and Board members were encouraged to take part in at least one external NRW event. Attendance was captured through a dedicated participation register to track involvement.
	Provide listings of NRW activities in our local service areas to all staff.	Completed	A list of local National Reconciliation Week events was compiled and published in the May edition of the staff newsletter, Take5, ensuring broad staff awareness and access to participation opportunities.





ACTION	DELIVERABLES	STATUS	OFFICIAL UPDATE
<b>3. Promote Reconciliation through our sphere of influence.</b>	Communicate our commitment to Reconciliation to all staff.	Completed	The launch of the Reflect RAP was communicated both internally and externally. This included staff updates, social media posts, and website articles. The CEO also published a personal LinkedIn message reflecting on her experience at the Yabun Festival, reinforcing the organisation's support for truth-telling and cultural celebration.
	Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our Reconciliation journey.	Completed	Key external relationships were initiated and strengthened to support culturally inclusive partnerships. Notably, Royal Rehab was introduced to the local Aboriginal community in Dubbo through a referral from Life Without Barriers. Additional connections were developed with Anglicare WA and Uniting Care QLD. These partnerships support knowledge-sharing, community inclusion, and amplify SCC's advocacy for culturally safe care environments across its service regions.
	Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our Reconciliation journey.	Completed	Strategic supplier Bunzl was engaged for joint initiatives spanning Reconciliation and Modern Slavery. In January 2025, Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) met with Bunzl to explore shared outcomes and circulated updates through internal channels. Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) also established a relationship with NATSICC, leading to the Assembly Ochre sponsorship of their 2025 National Assembly Pilgrims of Hope. This partnership positions Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) as an active contributor to faith-based Reconciliation and national Aboriginal Catholic engagement.
	Investigate the potential to advocate for a RAP network within the aged care sector (Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) to facilitate – RAP representative from each organisation in the sector who has a RAP, quarterly meetings etc.).	Completed	Initial stakeholder mapping identified aged care organisations with active RAPs, with invitations extended to form a sector-specific Reconciliation network. Discussions were supported through the RAP Working Group, and CEO-led engagement with organisations including Uniting QLD, Anglicare WA, Life Without Barriers, Billingarra (Caring for MOB), and Bunzl. This network fosters collective learning, strengthens sector-wide cultural capability, and positions Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) as a proactive leader in aged care Reconciliation efforts.
<b>4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.</b>	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	Completed	To support the promotion of positive race relations and strengthen anti-discrimination practices, Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) joined Diversity Council of Australia to provide access to best practice resources. A partnership was also established with NATSICC, enabling all staff to undertake NATSICC's online cross-cultural training course. This organisation-wide initiative aims to build cultural awareness and respect at all levels. The People & Culture team has commenced development of a Cultural Awareness Plan and attended a Cultural Awareness Workshop on 28 May 2025. A review of the Diversity & Inclusion Policy was also tabled at the May Board People & Culture Committee meeting, aiming to embed cultural safety and inclusive principles more deeply into organisational policy.
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions and future needs, including investigating an approach for making accommodations for people of culturally diverse backgrounds to observe celebrations and ceremonies.	Completed	A review of HR policies and procedures was undertaken to ensure alignment with updated regulatory requirements and the strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards, effective from 1 November 2025. A Cultural Leave policy has been written and implemented for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

# Respect



## Progress summary

Our Respect pillar is focused on embedding cultural understanding, celebrating First Nations identity, and ensuring all staff are equipped with the knowledge to engage respectfully. This work spans from Onboarding and induction to training and everyday workplace practices.

### Key achievements in FY2025:

- Developed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protocols and Engagement Principles and delivered a webinar on the resources, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country guidance.
- Added cultural protocol content to staff induction and created a new Intranet portal to support cultural awareness.
- Obtained licences for NATSICC Cross-Cultural Awareness Training as part of SCC's broader commitment to building cultural capability across the workforce.
- Launched planning for cultural leave entitlements for identified roles.

### Next steps:

- Develop a consistent, organisation-wide approach to acknowledging Country in meetings and events.
- Develop a cultural learning pathway for all staff
- Continue staff access to training and webinars, supported by partnerships with Aboriginal-led educators.
- Expand local site resources to support staff participation in National NAIDOC Week.

**Pictured:** Staff from across Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) gathered at the 2024 Leadership Conference following a cultural awareness training session led by Wakka Wakka woman and RAP Advisor, Brooke Prentis. Pictured on Eora Nation.

## Spotlight on key projects

### Case study: Staff Cultural awareness training

In 2024, Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) deepened its commitment to Reconciliation by expanding cultural awareness training for staff and leaders. At the annual Leadership Conference, over 100 senior leaders were introduced to cultural awareness learning in a session led by Wakka Wakka woman Brooke Prentis. This session focused on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and culture, the lived reality of the lack of Closing the Gap, and inclusive workplace practices.

Alongside this, the organisation has recently partnered with NATSICC and through this partnership has secured licences for NATSICC's accredited Cross-Cultural Awareness Training.





ACTION	DELIVERABLES	STATUS	OFFICIAL UPDATE
<b>5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.</b>	Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	Completed	Business case has been completed and identified cultural awareness within the organisation was low. Funding has been provided in FY2026 budget and a proposal in place for all staff, includes consideration for volunteers.
	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation, including an investigation of opportunities to embed cultural competency into our everyday business.	In Progress	A review is underway at Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) to assess organisational cultural learning needs and define a scalable framework for embedding cultural competency into day-to-day operations. This includes reviewing existing modules through our learning provider (Altura), exploring partnerships with Arrilla (endorsed by Reconciliation Australia), and assessing the integration of Acknowledgement of Country and cross-cultural learning into Onboarding and professional development. These actions aim to ensure long-term capability building that reflects best practice and supports respectful, inclusive workplaces.
<b>6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.</b>	Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational areas.	Completed	A stakeholder map was developed to capture key relationships with Traditional Owner groups across Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT)'s footprint. A dedicated map of NSW was also created to support localised engagement and recognition.
	Distribute a printed asset of the NSW ACT map of the Aboriginal nations showing SCC service locations.	Completed	A printed map of Aboriginal Nations across NSW and the ACT was developed and shared with the RAP Committee. While a digital version has been produced, it is yet to be distributed. Further consideration will be given to its practical use, including whether an Acknowledgement of Country plaque may offer a more relevant and impactful way to honour Traditional Custodians across our sites.
	Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	Completed	The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protocols and Engagement Principles were shared via Take5, the staff Intranet, and through a live webinar on 30 April 2025. Facilitated by Brooke Prentis, the session supported deeper understanding of cultural protocols and respectful engagement.
	Develop a consistent approach across SCC on when and how to Acknowledge Country e.g. meetings, events	In Progress	Guidance on when and how to deliver an Acknowledgement of Country has been included in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protocols document. Additional practical tips are in development. Further work will be undertaken to look at email signatures and personalised Acknowledgement of Country.
	Encourage and support staff, senior leaders and Board to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	Completed	A calendar of events was developed and shared with all staff, including senior leaders and the Board. Participation was encouraged through internal communications to build awareness and engagement in National Reconciliation Week.
<b>7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.</b>	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of National NAIDOC Week.	Completed	In 2024, Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) launched its Reflect RAP during NAIDOC Week at North Turramurra, helping to raise awareness across the organisation. Staff communications and engagement activities were focused on building understanding and visibility of NAIDOC Week's significance.
	Introduce our staff to National NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	Completed	Local Lifestyle teams collated and shared information about external NAIDOC Week events across communities in NSW and the ACT. These were promoted through internal channels to support staff participation and connection with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	Completed	Members of the RAP Working Group attended local NAIDOC Week events across various locations, strengthening community connections and modelling active engagement across the organisation.

# Opportunities



## Progress summary

The Opportunities pillar is focused on increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment, leadership, and procurement across Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT). We are building the foundations to support longer-term representation, capability, and inclusive supply chains.

### Key achievements in FY2025:

- Developed a business case and secured approval of a new RAP Manager role.
- Enhanced our workforce demographic reporting by expanding MyHub to include cultural identification data.
- Became a member of Supply Nation and established early procurement relationships with Indigenous-owned suppliers as well as developing partnerships with organisations championing First Nations procurement including Winc and Bunz.
- Embedded a spend tracking process and explored opportunities for ethical sourcing in alignment with our modern slavery commitments.
- Developed inclusive wording for job advertisements to reflect our commitment to Reconciliation.
- Advertised and recruited the RAP Manager role via Pipeline Talent, a 100% Aboriginal-owned executive recruitment and consulting agency.

### Next steps:

- Launch new employment pathways including internships and cadetships in partnership with Universities.
- Expand procurement with Indigenous-owned businesses, using new dashboards and site-level planning.
- Finalise diversity data reporting and establish internal targets for inclusive recruitment and development.

## Spotlight on key projects

### Case study: Inclusive Procurement Strategy

Our early procurement engagement with Winc and Bunzl with their First Nations suppliers demonstrated strong impact. In the first quarter of 2025, we directed over \$164,000 in spend toward verified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers. With improved tracking in place, this will continue to grow in FY2026.

**Pictured:** A resident enjoying a special 2025 NAIDOC Week moment with Kaylee from Girri Girra Aboriginal Experiences at Caves Beach. Pictured on Darkinjung Country.





ACTION	DELIVERABLES	STATUS	OFFICIAL UPDATE
8. 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, including consideration for the role of an Indigenous Champion.	Completed	Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) has finalised a business case to strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment at Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT). The business case outlined approaches to improve employment outcomes through recruitment, retention and professional development. A budget has been established. Appointment of a RAP Manager, effective from September 2025.
	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	Completed	A voluntary staff survey was distributed on 27 May 2025 to understand current representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT). Insights will inform inclusive recruitment, professional development, and retention strategies.
	Reporting on staffing demographics	Completed	In August 2025, Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) undertook its first formal process to identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff through a voluntary organisation-wide survey. The survey was distributed to all employees, inviting them to self-identify. A total of 38 staff members identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, representing 1.7% of the workforce. This marks the organisation's first baseline for internal reporting and will be included in the 2025 Annual Report.
	Commit to at least one Identified First Nations role (minimum) to be advertised on Indigenous Employment Australia or similar Indigenous specific job board.	Completed	The RAP Manager role was advertised via an Indigenous-specific job board (ATSI Jobs) and supported through the services of an Indigenous-owned recruitment agency, Pipeline Talent. This targeted approach formed part of Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT)'s broader commitment to inclusive employment pathways. The position has since been successfully filled, with the RAP Manager now Onboarded and actively contributing to the implementation of our Reconciliation Action Plan.
	Investigate potential opportunities to offer TAFE and or University Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students intern or cadet paid opportunities for work experience.	Completed	Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT)'s People & Culture team has actively progressed opportunities to support career pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Engagement has included meetings with the University of Sydney, as well as outreach to Macquarie University, Western Sydney University, and CareerTrackers, a recognised internship program with placements opening from July 2025. A partnership is also being explored with TAFE following an initial meeting on 13 June 2025. These initiatives aim to increase participation, provide meaningful work experience, and support First Nations students in gaining experience within aged care and related fields.
	Review job advertisements to ensure advertising SCC's commitment to Reconciliation and to attract Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants.	Completed	A review of job advertisement content was completed to ensure alignment with Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT)'s Reconciliation Action Plan and to improve the visibility of our commitment to creating culturally inclusive workplaces. This work includes updating messaging across all recruitment channels to better reflect our values and support stronger attraction of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants.







ACTION	DELIVERABLES	STATUS	OFFICIAL UPDATE
<b>9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.</b>	Develop a business case for procurement that communicates opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	Completed	A procurement reporting dashboard is in development to track spend and support data-driven decisions. This has enabled stronger visibility over existing supplier engagement and is being used to identify new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers for inclusion in stakeholder mapping.
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	Completed	Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) activated Supply Nation membership in January 2025. A Supply Nation representative attended the RAP Committee meeting on 7 May to support internal engagement, and delivered a webinar on 15 May 2025 to raise awareness of the network and supplier opportunities.
	Review current procurement policies to ensure aligns with best practice.	Completed	The procurement policy review has been finalised as part of Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT)'s engagement with the NSW Sustainability Advantage Program. This process ensured alignment with best practice procurement approaches and supports our broader commitment to sustainable, ethical sourcing. Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) has now achieved Silver status through the program and is actively progressing toward Gold.
	Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	Completed	New procurement opportunities are being explored in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned suppliers. For example, a major office supplier partnership now includes a comparison of traditional and First Nations-led supplier costs and impacts. These case studies are being shared internally to support education and uptake.
	Report annually on the procurement spend and engagement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	Completed	Procurement spend reporting is now being implemented across all business units at Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT). The data will be collated and shared annually through both the Reconciliation Action Plan and the Living Care: People and Planet reports. This work supports improved transparency and accountability in engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.
<b>10. Support initiatives that strengthen First Nations health outcomes.</b>	Develop detailed plans to drive First Nations health-focused partnerships with clear and agreed objectives, KPIs and evaluation methods.	Completed	Initial planning has taken place to align First Nations health-focused partnerships with broader aged care reform initiatives. Work is underway to formalise evaluation metrics and shared objectives.
	Build relationships and consult with First Nations-led health organisations and partners to inform future health-focused decisions.	Completed	An exercise was undertaken to identify best-practice like-minded organisations that had First Nations leadership. This included Uniting Care QLD, Anglicare WA, and Life Without Barriers. Partnerships were formed to support cultural capability, sector collaboration, and health equity.

# Governance



## Progress summary

This pillar ensures we are building strong foundations for governance, reporting, and accountability. From working groups to data systems, we are laying the groundwork to sustain and measure our Reconciliation efforts over time.

### Key achievements in FY2025:

- Established a RAP Working Group and Pillar Teams with representatives across the organisation.
- Finalised Terms of Reference for both the RAP Working Group and each Pillar Team.
- Maintained ongoing communication with Reconciliation Australia and initiated early RAP Impact reporting planning.
- Appointed the CEO as RAP Champion and created a new executive leadership role dedicated to culture and inclusion.
- Aligned our RAP tracking with organisational systems to support consistency and visibility.
- Participated In Reconciliation Australia's Workplace Barometer Survey with 8.5% of staff completing the survey.

### Next steps:

- Submit our first RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and prepare for future reporting cycles.
- Continue to build executive and Board engagement with RAP outcomes and strategy.
- Strengthen our internal reporting systems to ensure we can measure and share meaningful impact across sites and services.
- Plan for development of our next RAP, focused on deeper commitments and expanded engagement.
- Look for representation on the RAP WG and Pillar Teams across all business areas.

**Pictured:** Australian Idol Winner Royston Noell (second from the left), Jasmin Ellis, General Manager, Integrated and Community Health, Western Sydney Local Health District (fourth from the left), Brooke Prentis, Wakka Wakka woman, Aboriginal Christian Leader and SCC RAP Consultant (end) pictured with Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) leaders and RAP Working group staff at Marian Residential Care, North Parramatta during NAIDOC week 2025. Pictured on Dharug country.

## Spotlight on key projects

### Case study: Governance Foundations for Reconciliation

In FY2025, Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) brought Reconciliation into its governance by forming a RAP Working Group and Pillar Teams with cross-organisational representation. Clear Terms of Reference were developed, and the CEO was appointed as RAP Champion, supported by a newly created executive role for culture and inclusion.

Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) also participated in Reconciliation Australia's Workplace Barometer, providing insights into how Reconciliation is being embedded across the organisation. Survey results showed that 78% of respondents felt more positively about First Nations people and cultures after participating in cultural learning training, and 74% reported increased confidence to engage respectfully with local First Nations communities and leaders. Additionally, 78% of staff participated in at least one Reconciliation-related activity in the past year. These results confirm that our early governance foundations are building awareness, capability, and genuine support for deeper engagement across our workforce.





ACTION	DELIVERABLES	STATUS	OFFICIAL UPDATE
<b>11. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.</b>	Maintain a RWG to govern RAP implementation.	Completed	Regular meetings of the RAP Working Group (RWG) have continued throughout the year, providing strategic oversight and ensuring alignment with the RAP's vision, commitments and deliverables. The RWG monitors progress against the RAP and serves as a key coordination and engagement mechanism across the organisation.
	Form Pillar Teams to drive Pillar Actions and Deliverables.	Completed	Dedicated Pillar Teams have been established for each of the four pillars, Relationships, Respect, Opportunities and Governance, to lead on delivery of specific RAP actions. These cross-functional teams provide focused leadership and accountability for their assigned deliverables, and feed into overall reporting and strategy.
	Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	Completed	A Terms of Reference for the RAP Working Group was developed and endorsed, outlining the purpose, membership, responsibilities and decision-making processes of the group. This provides a strong governance foundation and ensures transparency and clarity in its operation.
	Draft a Terms of Reference for the Pillar Teams.	Completed	Terms of Reference for each Pillar Team have been finalised and approved.
	Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	Completed	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation was embedded in the RWG through internal staff, external advisors and community representatives.
<b>12. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.</b>	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	Completed	Budget planning was completed to ensure funding and resources are allocated for RAP coordination, events, cultural learning, and partnership development.
	Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	Completed	Senior leaders are active members of the RAP Working Group and Pillar Teams. RAP-aligned KPIs and performance goals are now being integrated into executive goal-setting processes.
	Appoint a senior leader to champion our RAP internally.	Completed	The newly appointed Head of Capability and Inclusion was designated as the RAP lead, with executive accountability for RAP delivery retained by the CEO.
	Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	Completed	RAP actions are currently tracked using Excel, with plans to move to a centralised digital platform to enhance reporting, visibility, and data quality.
<b>13. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.</b>	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.	Completed	Contact information has been reviewed and confirmed with Reconciliation Australia, and a regular communication process is in place.
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	Completed	The unique access link to the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire (Barometer) was received and reviewed by the RAP Working Group.
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	Completed	Internal insights, survey data, and RAP performance tracking were used to complete the questionnaire. Submission was prepared and reviewed in collaboration with the RAP Working Group.
<b>14. Continue our Reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.</b>	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	Completed	Registration to commence development of the next RAP was accepted by Reconciliation Australia on 27 May 2025.









# Thank you

## Walking together, looking ahead

Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) extends its heartfelt thanks to every resident, client, staff member, volunteer, family, community leader, partner and advisor who has supported our Reconciliation journey.

We are especially grateful to the many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have shared their time, wisdom and cultural knowledge with us. This has included Elders, community leaders, artists, cultural educators, advisors, and team members who have generously contributed to yarning circles, ceremonies, events, protocols, and planning. Each contribution has helped us deepen our respect, broaden our understanding and build stronger foundations for lasting change.

The Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan has guided us through this important first phase. It has been a time for listening and learning, building internal awareness, developing governance structures, and creating practical tools and cultural protocols to support our people. These foundations are already influencing the way we deliver care, partner with community and engage with purpose.

As we move into our Innovate RAP, our focus will shift towards deeper implementation, increased cultural capability, and more clearly defined opportunities for influence. We will work across all areas of the organisation to strengthen cultural learning, form new partnerships, and grow a shared understanding of what Reconciliation means in practice.

To the residents and staff who have embraced Reconciliation through art, storytelling, music, workshops and shared learning, thank you. Your commitment has shaped this journey and will continue to inspire the path ahead.

## Follow our journey at [www.sccliving.org.au/Reconciliation](http://www.sccliving.org.au/Reconciliation)

or connect with us on Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube.

**Pictured (left page):** Artwork by Sarah Clarke, Dunghutti woman and Aboriginal artist. **Pictured (top left):** Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT) CEO Monique Reynolds with Wakka Wakka leader and RAP Advisor Brooke Prentis, Chair Caroline Waldron, and Director Mike Christensen at the 2025 NAIDOC event at Marian Residential Home, Parramatta (Dharug country). **Pictured (top right):** Dunghutti woman and Aboriginal artist Sarah Clarke with residents from John Woodward Residential Care Home in Merrylands, showcasing the artwork they created together in art classes. Pictured on Dharug country.

we care  
about  
people