

Statement of Commitment to First Nations Peoples



This Statement of Commitment has been developed over many years, in consultation with First Nations community and staff members, Banyule Community Health Board and Management, to demonstrate the strong and enduring commitment that Banyule Community Health has to enhancing relationships, respect and opportunities with First Nations' peoples. This commitment is one important part of our journey towards Reconciliation.

Banyule Community Health recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first inhabitants of our land. Their cultures, lores, customs, care and love of country has existed for over 60,000 years.

We value the important contribution First Nations peoples have made and continue to make to Australia's history, social, economic, and cultural wellbeing.

We acknowledge and pay our respect to the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of the land, country, and waterways where our organisation is located. We commit to working with their Elders and leaders to better understand their cultural values, knowledge, and practices. Sovereignty was never ceded.

We acknowledge the deeply harmful impact of colonisation, including dispossession of land, languages, culture, lore, identity and connection to kin and country. This trauma, loss and grief is cumulative across generations. First Nations individuals, families and communities across Australia experience unacceptable differences in life expectancy, in education and health outcomes, in high numbers of children in out of home care, in family violence, in incarceration, and in substance harm.

We also acknowledge that the lived experience and history of First Nations peoples living in urban areas can be different to First Nations' people in rural and remote areas. First Nations' people in our area come from across Australia, partly due to race-based policies and experiences of discrimination and racism.

We will continue to build awareness, understanding and appreciation of First Nations peoples' history and culture. We have committed to an Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan, co-designed with First Nations community and staff members, Banyule Community Health Board and Management. We commit to celebrating with First Nations' peoples in culture, ceremony, and honouring the resilience, strength and pride demonstrated to survive and thrive.

Our priority is to ensure our services work towards Closing the Gap, by working in partnership with First Nations community members, so they are empowered and supported to be in control of their lives. We commit to support and develop our entire workforce to be able to provide culturally safe services to First Nations community members. We will listen to and act on feedback from First Nations people to ensure our services are inclusive, culturally safe, respectful, and accessible.

We will continue to support our First Nations' staff to strengthen and further develop their professional skills and knowledge, so they are better placed to advise, guide, support, and deliver culturally responsive services.

We recognise Barrbunin Beek Gathering Place as an independent and vital community asset and space for self-determination in our local community. We will continue to build on the already strong working relationships and partnerships we have with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and networks.

Michael Smith
Board Chair

Mick Geary
Chief Executive Officer

