



medibank reconciliation action plan

2014–2016 Report

medibank
For Better Health



CEO message

Medibank fully supports the RAP process, which is fundamental to doing business in Australia. Furthermore, our mission for better health for all wouldn't be possible without a focus on Indigenous Australia.

Having joined Medibank recently, I am pleased with the work that's being done by our team together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partner organisations. From our senior leaders' commitment to working together with the remote community of Wadeye, to those involved in driving the Indigenous Employment Strategy, and the Retail team raising awareness of the Close the Gap campaign - it's great to see people stepping up and taking responsibility for reconciliation.

As we work with internal and community stakeholders to develop our next RAP, and explore ways to deepen our commitment to reconciliation, we've been reflecting on what we've learned since first establishing a RAP in 2012.

Medibank's key commitment has been to address health equality, and we learned early in the process the vital role that community-led health organisations play in driving better health outcomes.

With the 2016 Closing the Gap report showing limited progress towards health equality between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other Australians, it's up to all of us to dig deeper and focus on the practical and everyday differences we can make via our RAPs, in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and through a whole-of-community effort.

You'll see in this, our final report for the 2014-16 RAP, all actions are complete with the exception of a board presentation which I'm grateful has been scheduled in order for me to participate.

We've seen strong results internally where the whole of our organisation has been engaged, and so our hope for the future is that our collective efforts continue to build momentum for greater action on reconciliation within the broader community.

I'm proud to have joined an organisation with an ongoing commitment to health equality. I'm encouraged by what our organisation has achieved to date and look forward to reaffirming our commitment in our next plan in early 2017.

Craig Drummond
CEO
Medibank



Reconciliation Australia message

Reconciliation Australia congratulates Medibank on the achievements of its most recent 2014-2016 Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

As Australia's leading health insurance provider, Medibank has placed particular focus in this RAP on its efforts to Close the Gap on health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families and communities.

Among these successful initiatives we see health organisations brought together in partnership to share knowledge and explore opportunities, with Medibank employees gaining first-hand experience and insights into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and communities. Together with cultural learnings, cultural engagement and governance measures, these efforts act to address equity in health and wellbeing outcomes and build respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians.

Medibank are deeply committed to developing and maintaining respectful and meaningful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through their community efforts and partnerships with Aboriginal-led health organisations and initiatives. Medibank's RAP working group is an example of their commitment to relationship maintenance and building on an internal level, while initiatives such as their Close the Gap Day celebrations throughout retail stores shows a commitment on the external level.

Medibank offers opportunities for their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other Australian employees across education, employment and business. These opportunities include educational scholarships, volunteering opportunities, and involvement with external events such as Reconciliation Australia's National Reconciliation Week. This dedication to improved relationships, respect and opportunities is demonstrative of Medibank's commitment to continued growth in their reconciliation journey.

I commend Medibank on the achievements that have come from their RAP, and look forward to their future contributions toward reconciliation.

Justin Mohammed
CEO
Reconciliation Australia

Our vision for reconciliation

We acknowledge that the health inequality of our nation's First Peoples affects, and is the responsibility of all Australians.

We all need to work towards a society where there is equality in health and wellbeing outcomes between Indigenous and other Australians. We believe the path to better health outcomes is through working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, through a whole-of-community effort and by fostering national pride in the value of culture.

As Reconciliation Australia and the nation mark the 25-year anniversary of Australia's journey towards reconciliation, our commitment remains unwavering.



For further information on Medibank's RAP, please contact Sharni Wearne.

medibank.corporateaffairs@medibank.com.au

3D External Artworks at Medibank Place

Images

Artworks: Garrginji (Axe), Wulunji (Digging stick) and Wit Wit (children's toy)

Artists: Glenn Romanis and Mandy Nicholson

The Artworks

Incorporated into the surrounds of our new head office at Medibank Place, Docklands, the three works reflect Medibank's purpose **For Better Health**, to represent local Aboriginal culture in a meaningful

way. Hunting and gathering tools and children's toys were instrumental to the health and wellbeing of the Wurundjeri People, on whose land our building now stands.

The works were designed by local visual artist, Mandy Nicholson and created by Glenn Romanis. Mandy was raised in Healesville and belongs to the Wurundjeri-willan (Wurundjeri-baluk patriline) clan of Melbourne and surrounds. Her style consists of traditional motifs of south-eastern Australia, blended with her own contemporary interpretation.

Glenn Romanis has created over 150 large-scale public and community arts projects, all revealing a deep concern for the relationship between storytelling and the environment. His visual stories seek to inform about the natural and cultural histories as opportunities to deepen understanding, respect and a sense of belonging.

Healthy skin week



“Initiatives such as Healthy Skin Week demonstrate how critical grass-roots local action is for better health. Working with local people we learnt that we are all bound together in creating stronger communities and better health outcomes.

We experienced first-hand the positive outcomes made possible when the strengths of the local community are engaged.”

Andrew Matthews,
Chief Actuary, Medibank.

Image: Medibank senior leaders and Wadeye students work together to plant a veggie patch and flower bed.

In 2012, over 16 senior leaders first travelled to Wadeye, 420km southwest of Darwin, together with not-for-profit organisation [Red Dust](#) as part of Elevate, Medibank's most senior leadership development program.

Elevate uses community immersion to develop adaptive leadership capability, focusing on one of Australia's most significant leadership issues – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' health. The community context is an essential, critical learning point.

As a result of our people's commitment and passion, in 2015 we returned to Wadeye with Red Dust, to assist with

the annual 'Healthy Skin Week', a community-led initiative that aims to raise awareness around scabies.

In remote communities scabies, a chronic but preventable disease, often develops into the much more serious condition of acute rheumatic fever (ARF). If left untreated, ARF can progress to rheumatic heart disease which requires life-long medical treatment.

Our on-ground support involved assisting the Wadeye health clinic, visiting local families and contributing some essential community resources including topical medications, and industrial and household washing machines.

Relationships

Medibank has a role to play in Closing the Gap. Through developing relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, we aim to address equity in health and wellbeing outcomes. Such relationships are built on the principles of dialogue, respect, understanding, partnership and reciprocity. We will support our employees to form new community relationships while we continue to work with our current community partners.

Focus area	Action	Progress
Governance	External advisory council, the Medibank RAP Advisory Council (MRAC) comprises representatives from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and meets twice yearly	COMPLETE The MRAC met twice yearly from 2014 to 2016.
	MRAC members will advise on Medibank's reconciliation work	COMPLETE Medibank is grateful for the commitment of the members of the community-represented MRAC – Dr Ngiare Brown, Mark Yettica-Paulson and Kate Malpass, who continue to provide valuable input, insights and feedback to the RAP Working Group.
	Actions from the MRAC fed back into the RAP Working Group	COMPLETE The MRAC continues to work closely with the Medibank RAP Working Group, implementing recommendations and guiding its activity.
	The RAP Working Group will meet at least twice a year, actively monitoring RAP development, implementation of actions and tracking progress	COMPLETE The RAP Working Group met twice yearly from 2014 to 2016 to implement actions and actively monitor progress.
Cultural engagement	Medibank will promote a variety of external events to employees, including National Reconciliation Week (NRW) and encourage them to get involved, with the aim of building relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities	COMPLETE Local external events promoted to employees across Australia in 2015 and 2016.
	Medibank will commit to offering at least two internal events for employees to participate in during National Reconciliation Week	COMPLETE In 2015, Medibank offered three internal events in Sydney, Melbourne and Wollongong to mark NRW with employees. Morning and afternoon teas featured key note addresses from community leaders, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander inspired food, provided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-owned businesses. In 2016, three events took place: a cultural walk with local Traditional Owners in St Leonards, an Indigenous wellness class with Wayapa Wurrk and film festival screening of Indigenous health documentary, Mother's Day at Medibank Place.
	Medibank will organise and offer at least one event in partnership with a community group to celebrate National Reconciliation Week	COMPLETE In 2015, Medibank worked together with Recognise to provide opportunities for employees to learn more about the campaign for constitutional recognition, with Recognise representatives joining NRW events. In 2016, Medibank worked together with two community groups to celebrate NRW: The Gadigal Traditional Owners group in St Leonards, NSW and Wayapa Wurrk Indigenous Wellness Foundation in Melbourne, VIC.
	At least two volunteering opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led organisations developed and offered to all employees	COMPLETE Since 2014, Medibank has worked together with a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples-led organisations, providing support across both practical implementation of initiatives and strategic planning through professional mentoring. Employees gained first-hand experience and greater insight into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture as well as opportunities to contribute to community health and wellbeing.

Relationships continued

Establish health solution partnerships	Medibank will engage with other organisations in the health and wellbeing area, holding at least two meetings per year to share learnings from their reconciliation journeys	COMPLETE Bringing health organisations together to share knowledge and explore opportunities to collaborate on addressing the health gap, these Health RING (RAP Industry Networking Group) meetings occurred at least twice yearly from 2014 to 2016.
	Health RING meetings to focus on how health organisations can help in 'Closing the Gap'	COMPLETE The first three discussions concentrated on potential focus areas for collaborative effort, with an emphasis on sharing learning, and connecting with community-led initiatives to learn more.
	Deepen existing relationships with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) close to where we operate, including but not limited to volunteering opportunities, Anywhere Healthcare and discussions around PHI products	COMPLETE Medibank recognises that strong, trusting relationships are built over time and continues to work with ACCHOs through the Medibank Community Fund Indigenous Grants Program. Since 2013, the program has provided over \$300,000 to support a number of community-led health focused initiatives delivered in partnership with leading ACCHOs. We continue to seek advice from the MRAC and our community partners to shape valuable, community-led support initiatives and products, built on understanding the needs of the communities we serve.
	Empower local managers with the tools to form new relationships with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in their local area	COMPLETE Close the Gap information packs were provided to Retail Centre Managers across Australia who are supported to engage with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
Reconciliation	Support external campaigns that promote reconciliation in the community such as hosting Close the Gap Day celebrations in retail outlets	COMPLETE In 2015, information packs were provided to retail stores to support their Close the Gap Day celebrations, such as a morning tea that took place in Launceston, TAS. In 2016, we leveraged the national reach of our 97 retail stores; with Close the Gap Day morning teas and branded badges, our people sharing the message and raising awareness with our customers.
Recognise	Complete an internal awareness campaign across the business to support the Recognise movement	COMPLETE Recognise messaging was included in Close The Gap Day and RAP launch communications. Guest speakers and Recognise collateral formed part of National Reconciliation Week events in 2015, across three major Medibank locations.
Awareness at Board level	An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples community leader to have spoken at a Medibank Board meeting	POSTPONED Medibank's new CEO commenced July 1, 2016. Accordingly, MRAC guidance was that this action should be postponed until after our new CEO joined.

Indigenous employment strategy

“The placement introduces you to real and meaningful project work. The staff were really supportive and the opportunity to rotate around different business areas and learn new skills, was a key takeaway for me.”

Jazleen De Busch



Nakita Kirby and Jazleen De Busch, Medibank's inaugural Indigenous interns.

Medibank is Australia's leading private health insurer. As a proudly customer-focused organisation, it's important to us that we reflect the broad community we serve.

In 2015, we launched two exciting IES initiatives, for young people exploring work options and seeking practical experience.

At Medibank we value an inclusive and diverse workforce and are working towards equity in employment opportunities with our Indigenous population. We recognise the impact

of social determinants of health such as employment and education on health and equality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and are committed to providing meaningful and sustainable employment and development pathways within our workforce.

At the heart of our Indigenous Employment Strategy (IES), is providing more and better career pathways for Indigenous employees within our organisation, and to drive a culturally safe place where employees feel valued and can bring their whole selves to work.

The Indigenous School Based Traineeship Program delivered with our partner, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment specialist [Maxima](#), provides young trainees work experience at Medibank and accreditation towards a certificate in business at the end of their studies. The **Indigenous Internship Program**, in partnership with [CareerTrackers](#) and [Yalari](#), was introduced late 2015.

We believe in developing meaningful connections with community organisations and seek opportunities to deliver programs with real impact and positive health outcomes. Our internship program with CareerTrackers and Yalari is a perfect example and we're thrilled with what's been achieved so far.

“To have interns Jazz and Nakita with us was a true pleasure. We gained so much from the experience, including learning about Nakita and Jazz as individuals, and culture. Standout interns, the girls were notably confident and mature.

As a result of the experience, our people are really energised to continue the internship program, and to create pathways for a Career at Medibank.”

Katelyn Reddin

Talent Engagement & Sourcing Manager
People + Culture

Since 2011, through our partnership with Yalari, we've supported students to complete secondary education at high performing schools and it's been great to continue this support through our 2016 Indigenous Internship.

Yalari student, Jazleen De Busch joined us for a nine-week internship before beginning her Bachelor of Arts at Melbourne University. Jazz was joined by second year Bachelor of Health Science student Nakita Kirby, who joined us from the CareerTrackers' pre professional internship program.

With Nakita soon entering the professional workforce and Jazz direct from high school, it's been a privilege to support their exciting transition to university, and aspirations for the journey beyond.

For our talented interns and participants, the program provided valuable learning. Jazz and Nakita spent time with our teams, in several areas of the business on a rotational basis.

During their time with us, our interns coordinated various key projects, including a farewell interview with retiring Managing Director, George Savvides for Medibank TV! We look forward to supporting Nakita and Jazz in their future professional plans and expanding the program in our next RAP.

Respect

We value an organisation-wide culture based on respect. We understand that to 'Close the Gap,' we must respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples culture and history while helping others to do the same.

Focus area	Action	Progress
Cultural learning	All people leaders to complete online cultural awareness training	COMPLETE Enterprise-wide online cultural awareness training launched in December 2015 and forms part of the recommended 'new starter' training pack.
	Opportunities for at least 500 employees to increase understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples culture through our community partners and programs	COMPLETE In addition to the regular and ongoing business-wide communication around Indigenous focused internal events, over 500 employees have had opportunities to engage in cultural learning and approximately 50 have worked together with our community partners on programs such as the 100km commemorative Walk to Cherbourg, camps with educational partner Yalari, the CareerTrackers internship program and professional volunteering.
Cultural protocols	Cultural protocols guidelines developed and available on the Medibank intranet	COMPLETE Cultural protocols guidelines available to all employees on the Medibank intranet and reviewed annually.
	Arrange a Traditional Owner to give a Welcome to Country address at two significant internal events	COMPLETE In March 2016, Medibank's Senior Leader Forum had a Close the Gap theme. Wurundjeri Elder, Aunty Georgina launched proceedings with a Welcome to Country and the full day program featured Indigenous catering and theming During NRW 2016, Medibank launched the tailored Aboriginal Quitline Program, in St Leonards, NSW with Gadigal Elder, Mr Ray Davison who shared a Welcome to Country and led a discussion around reconciliation.
	Information about identifying and acknowledging Traditional Owners distributed to employees and included in the 'new starter' pack	COMPLETE Traditional Owners and acknowledgement information included in the 'new starter' pack and on the group intranet. Prompt cards have been provided to employees to assist when sharing an Acknowledgement of Country.
Celebrate NAIDOC Week	Promote local community events to all employees and encourage them to participate	COMPLETE Each July, Medibank supported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and community by encouraging participation in internal NAIDOC Week initiatives and the promotion of local events.
	Contact local NAIDOC Week Committees in Victoria, NSW and Queensland to explore opportunities	COMPLETE Medibank connected with local NAIDOC committees in 2015 to explore opportunities, and local events were promoted to all Medibank employees. In 2015, Medibank employees in South Australia participated in and provided voluntary support for NAIDOC Week events in Adelaide.
Community immersion	Up to 16 leaders completing the Adaptive Leadership Training to have visited a remote community	COMPLETE 16 Senior Executives participated in the award-winning, Elevate Adaptive Leadership program, with the Wadeye community, Northern Territory in 2014.
Art and culture	Art exhibition to occur in at least one corporate office with tours of the art available	COMPLETE A short film featuring the Indigenous sculptures at Medibank Place made with Indigenous filmmaker Tim Church as a 'virtual' art exhibition. With a strong link to Medibank's purpose For Better Health, the sculptures depict health and wellbeing implements from local traditional Wurundjeri culture. Shared internally and externally, the film will reach all Medibank employees nationwide and the public, via our social media platforms.

Close the Gap day

“At Medibank, we stand For Better Health – for all Australians. It is our belief that every person has the right to good health, but the sad reality is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can expect to live up to 10-17 years less than non-Indigenous Australians.

Closing the Gap is a national responsibility and as a leading health organisation we recognise the role we can play. I would love to see Australians band together to address this shared challenge.

Close the Gap Day was a terrific way to raise awareness and get people, all of us, talking. I support whatever we can do to Close the Gap.”

Theo Sarantopoulos,
General Manager, Retail, Medibank



Medibank's Galleria store holds a Close the Gap Day morning tea hosted by General Manager of Retail, Theo Sarantopoulos. Left to right: Sathya Ramanan, Deepan Devasahayam, Theo Sarantopoulos, Sukhinder Kaur.

With a strong link to Medibank's For Better Health purpose, Close the Gap Day has become a key date on our community calendar.

We now mark this day annually with employee engagement opportunities and external activity.

We appreciate that while progress has been made in closing the gap, there is more work to be done and Medibank continues to advocate for this by raising awareness and building support in the broad community.

As a health focused organisation, with passionate teams of people and busy retail centres Australia-wide, we recognise the role we can play in addressing the health gap.

Our Close the Gap Day campaign is an opportunity for Medibank to contribute, by engaging our staff and stimulating community discussion.

In 2016 we leveraged the national reach of our 97 retail stores to raise awareness of the Close the Gap campaign and continued health inequity.

Our people were critical to our campaign and we shared information to help them develop greater understanding of the health gap issue. We provided Close the Gap Day kits to retail outlets. Our people hosted team morning teas and 'meet ups', and as customer facing event ambassadors, shared the message with our customers.

Hawker project



“Under the tender care of the community the hub will continue to grow and develop into the special place envisioned – where heritage, culture and knowledge live on and can be passed on for many generations to come.”

Linda Hamlyn

Practice Manager, Nurse Triage, Telephone and Online Population Health, Medibank

Image: Medibank employees join the Stephanie Alexander team and the Hawker community to create a cultural hub and traditional garden.

Left to right: Marcelle Coakley, Jacqui Lanarus, Sharni Wearne, Aunty Pauline McKenzie, Shelley Abrams, Jodie Granger, Dermot Roche, Aunty Denise Champion, and Linda Hamlyn.

Health, wellbeing and two-way cultural exchange were at the heart of Medibank’s volunteer project with the community in Hawker, South Australia.

In October 2015, five Medibank employees travelled to Hawker to partner with the local Aboriginal community and together, create an exciting community-led health and wellbeing cultural project.

A long-held Hawker community vision, the hub was realised with the support of Medibank, together with partners, the [Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation](#) and the [Artesian Foundation](#).

Over two days we worked alongside the Aboriginal community team, to turn a cleared lot into a budding, culturally influenced garden with an array of bush tucker, traditional plants, and bush medicine.

The Hawker project generated two way knowledge transfer, particularly around cultural traditions, garden design, systems and approaches.

The intense work involved clearing grass, digging holes, moving dirt, building planter boxes and planting, in the heat. What we most remember from our stay however, are the smiles, conversations, learnings, traditional stories, songs and dance.

The experience was a wonderful opportunity to connect with community and deepen our understanding of the value of Aboriginal culture.

Opportunities

As a health organisation, Medibank is committed to 'Closing the Gap' through education, employment and partnership opportunities. We know that by helping to create these opportunities, we play a role in better health and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Focus area	Action	Progress
Supporting Indigenous employment	An Indigenous Employment Strategy (IES) developed and implemented to increase recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees	COMPLETE Medibank's IES launch and implementation in 2014 was led by support from across the business including People & Culture, the Diversity and RAP teams.
	IES to address issues of culture, career opportunities and involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples employees in decision making	COMPLETE Medibank is proud to have worked together with 8 Indigenous young people in the new Indigenous School Based Traineeship Program launched in 2015 as the first IES initiative. Also launched in 2016, our Indigenous Internship Program saw two interns completing a nine-week placement, rotating throughout different business areas.
Supporting Indigenous business	Will have spent at least \$20,000 per year with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples-led organisations such as the 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples suppliers' register through Supply Nation	COMPLETE Goods and services purchased from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led organisations, saw a The procurement spend exceeded this target by 10% in for FY14/15 and 32% for FY15/16.
	Update the Supplier Checklist annually to ensure Supply Nation details are updated	COMPLETE Medibank has updated the Supplier Checklist annually, ensuring details of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier businesses at Supply Nation remain up to date.
	Host at least one supplier diversity workshop to increase the understanding of Supplier Diversity within the workforce	COMPLETE An informative networking workshop brought together Indigenous owned businesses, with the procurement team, other key Medibank business areas, and other Supply Nation members, to discuss growing opportunities for Indigenous-owned businesses to supply their goods and services to the organisation.
Educational opportunities	Scholarship opportunities offered to the value of at least \$50,000 annually	COMPLETE Medibank is proud to have continued supporting Yalari, an Aboriginal-led community organisation delivering educational scholarships at high performing Australian boarding schools, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from rural, regional and remote communities. Support included \$50,000 in scholarship support annually, volunteer participation at Yalari camps and fundraising dinners.
Health partnerships	\$100,000 offered annually	COMPLETE Medibank recognises that ACCHOs are best placed to deliver health support to local communities. ACCHO sustainability ensures this important work can continue and from 2014 to 2016, Medibank provided \$200,000 in grants to work together with leading ACCHOs to address identified challenges, through governance training and support.

Indigenous health and wellbeing grants

“The kids are definitely listening to your messages...yesterday my son and I got out of our car and could smell a fire burning. The first thing he said was “If you smoke, you choke!!” Great work guys!!!”

VAHS (The) Coach Program parent



Coach Sarah Sheridan shares health knowledge with children at Bubup Wilam Aboriginal Childcare Centre in Thomastown

We recognise Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) are best placed to provide evidenced-based, quality services to and in their local communities.

Through our Indigenous health and wellbeing grants program, Medibank proudly continued to support ACCHOs as they work to improve health outcomes.

Since 2013, Medibank has contributed over \$300,000 to support the important work of ACCHOs around the country, addressing priorities identified by the ACCHOs themselves.

In 2014/15 we supported programs that strengthened capabilities through improved governance and in 2015/16, grassroots health and wellbeing programs for children and young people, including **The Coach Program**, delivered by the **Victorian Aboriginal Health Service** ([VAHS](#)).

We're passionate about community wellbeing and supporting kids, so it was great to discover an innovative program for littlies, with widespread community reach.



At the [Bubup Wilam Aboriginal Child Care Centre](#) in Thomastown, around 60 three and four year old kindergarten kids participate in the weekly Coach Program. Through play, the program aims to increase the kids' physical activity, wellbeing and health education. The Coach Program instils positive and healthy habits as building blocks for their adult lives.

VAHS Program Manager Laura Thompson sat down with us for a chat about the program:

Our Healthy Lifestyle and Tackling Tobacco team, partners with Bubup Wilam, to run the culturally relevant, strength-based and super-fun Coach Program.

Delivered by an Aboriginal health worker and personal trainer, our Koorie kinder kids also become 'Coaches' as they learn about, then educate or 'coach' their families and communities about the benefits of healthy eating, not smoking, physical activity, drinking water and other important health and wellbeing messages.

We have found kindergarten children to be effective community educators. Many Coach participant parents have stories of their children asking them to quit smoking, telling them how much sugar is in their soft drink and relaying other health messages.

Lifestyle and chronic diseases are prevalent in Indigenous communities but are entirely preventable. We believe education in early childhood and adolescence can address this. The term 'healthy body, healthy mind' reflects the Aboriginal concept of health, by incorporating all aspects of both one's own life, and the Community to which they belong.

We've learnt from ACCHOs that community-informed programs, like Coach have a flow-on effect - in helping to change lives, attitudes, and improve the health and wellbeing of participants, who can share what they've learnt with family and the wider community.

Procurement

“The Officemax – [Tjindgarmi](#) partnership makes great business sense. Our teams love the range, the quality of the product matches our expectations, and the Indigenous designs bring a day-to-day reminder of our commitment to health equality throughout the business. The range is also in retail stores so customers can see it too.”

Jennifer Pratt,

Procurement Business Partner, Medibank



Medibank Procurement Business Partner, Jennifer Pratt and the Tjindgarmi office products range.

At Medibank inclusion and diversity is part of our DNA and, we believe, links directly with health and wellbeing.

Supplier diversity is a key area of our RAP focus and an exciting area for us to build on.

Medibank recognises economic participation as a key social determinant of health that contributes significantly to health equality.

We know a strong Indigenous business sector provides positive flow-on effects such as increased work opportunities for community members as employers of choice, and also inspires other young entrepreneurs to take the leap.

Indigenous business owners play a valuable role in driving change and we proudly work together with suppliers to build new commercial relationships.

Our procurement team and other business areas have established commercial relationships with several Indigenous businesses, and keep us across opportunities to purchase goods and services from Indigenous-owned businesses, through our preferred supplier checklist.

Since 2012, Medibank has been an active member of Supply Nation, the Indigenous minority supplier council of Australia. In early 2016, Medibank worked together with Officemax, our current supplier of office consumables, to swap our products to those offered by their Indigenous-owned partner – Tjindgarmi, owned by Torres Strait Islander descendant and artist Jasmin Herro.

We now stock the OfficeMax Indigenous-themed Tjindgarmi range, including notebooks, tissue boxes and office furniture, featuring Jasmin's beautiful artwork, across all offices nationally.

With office consumables a substantial spend for the business, and driven by Medibank's procurement team, this business decision has resulted in several positive outcomes.

It helped exceed our target spend with Indigenous suppliers by 25%, delivered a cost saving for the business and has positioned the striking products front and centre, for employees and customers, around our national network.

Next steps

Medibank recognises that the future health of our nation is inextricably linked with our ability to fully reconcile the wrongs of the past, address the issues of the present and celebrate the future promise of Indigenous Australia.

Taking into account the social determinants of health including education, employment, and economic participation, we continue to focus on playing our role in the national reconciliation effort through addressing health equality, and striving for a shared sense of pride, fairness and justice.

Progress has been made but it is clear there is much more work to be done. We recognise it takes a whole of community approach to address health equality and it takes a whole of organisation approach for us to realise our contribution. Our people have driven the delivery of our commitments and through opportunities to deepen our understanding of the value of culture and the health challenges we face as a nation, have continued to ask; what more can we do to increase momentum towards closing the gap?

Looking ahead, we know new thinking is required by us all. Our RAP Working Group has begun to explore innovative approaches with internal and external stakeholders to build upon the progress to date.

With health at its core, our fourth RAP will remain firmly focused on working together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations whom we believe are best placed to provide culturally tailored services outcomes for better health. We look forward to launching a new set of objectives in early 2017 that are rooted in community-led, empowered action and cross-sector support.



A close-up portrait of a young woman with dark hair pulled back, smiling warmly at the camera. She is wearing a dark blazer over a light-colored top. The background is a solid, vibrant red. Overlaid on the image is the text "i grow + progress better" in a white, sans-serif font. The word "i" is lowercase and italicized, while "grow", "progress", and "better" are in all caps. A plus sign is positioned between "grow" and "progress".

i grow +
progress
better

Featuring Nakita Kirby,
Inaugural Indigenous Intern,
Career Trackers Participant, and
Bachelor of Health Science Student

medibank
For Better Health