

## A.5. Reconciliation

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

In 1996 Pope John Paul II said:

*“... for thousands of years you have lived in this land and fashioned a culture that endures to this day. And during all this time, the Spirit of God has been with you. Your "Dreaming", which influences your lives so strongly that, no matter what happens, you remain forever people of your culture, it is your only way of touching the mystery of God's Spirit in you and in creation. You must keep your striving for God and hold on to it in your lives...*

*The establishment of a new society for Aboriginal people cannot go forward without just and mutually recognized agreements with regard to these human problems, even though their causes lie in the past. The greatest value to be achieved by such agreements, which must be implemented without causing new injustices, is respect for the dignity and growth of the human person...*

*... what has been done cannot be undone. But what can now be done to remedy the deeds of yesterday must not be put off till tomorrow.<sup>1</sup>*

Twenty years later Pope Benedict XVII

*“Much has been achieved along the path of racial reconciliation yet there is still much to be accomplished. No one can exempt themselves from this process...I therefore again encourage all Australians to address with compassion and determination the deep underlying causes of the plight which still afflicts so many Aboriginal citizens.”<sup>2</sup>*

In this spirit we commit ourselves to the future envisaged by the Australian Parliament:

*“A future where we harness the determination of all Australians, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to close the gap that lies between us in life expectancy, educational achievement and economic opportunity.*

*A future where we embrace the possibility of new solutions to enduring problems where old approaches have failed.*

*A future based on mutual respect, mutual resolve and mutual responsibility.”<sup>3</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Pope John Paul II Address to Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, Alice Springs 29 November 1996 Insegnamenti IX 2 1996

<sup>2</sup> Pope Benedict XVII, 22 September 2006 Message to Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders on the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Pope John Paul II Visit

<sup>3</sup> Apology to Stolen Generations by Australian Parliament 13<sup>th</sup> February 2008

**2.0 SCOPE**

This Reconciliation Policy and Procedures aims to provide information and instructions to assist management and staff to establish and maintain positive working relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within and outside Mercy Services.

**3.0 POLICY STATEMENT**

*Mercy Services acknowledges and pays respect to the Awabakal, Worimi and Wonarua, as the original and ongoing owners and custodians of the land across which we work.*

*Mercy Services recognises that the European occupation initiated massive changes to the land and its peoples.*

*As a vital step towards building a just, common future, Mercy Services recognises the loss and the grief felt by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for the alienation from their traditional land, the loss of their freedom, their lives, the forced removal of their children and other injustices.*

*Mercy Services supports the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to live according to their own values and cultures.*

*Mercy Services will consult with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their services and will develop ways to better respect them and assist them to enjoy a standard of living equal to that of others in Australia, without the loss of their personal spirit or cultural identity.*

**4.0 PROCEDURES**

**a. Acknowledgement and respect**

Mercy Services accepts the definition of an Aboriginal person, as being a person who:

- is of Aboriginal descent.
- identifies as an Aboriginal person, and
- is accepted by the Aboriginal community in which he/she lives.

Traditional people in our area (see Appendix 1 Consultation):

Newcastle/Lake Macquarie ..... Awabakal  
 Port Stephens ..... Worimi  
 Maitland ..... Wonarua

**4.a.1 Consulting**

Mercy Services has established a Reconciliation Advisory Group to provide advice to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) on the

organisation's Reconciliation Plan. The CEO will report the views of the Advisory Group to the Board.

The Reconciliation Advisory Group will endeavour to meet at least annually to discuss progress on fulfilling the directions of the Reconciliation Policy. This Advisory Group will ideally be made up of: the Mercy Services CEO, two Mercy Services staff chosen by the CEO and three Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people (see Appendix 2 Advisory Group Terms of Reference).

#### 4.a.2 Getting permission

Mercy Services will endeavour to speak with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and/or their services before seeking funding, starting a service or making significant changes to services that assist them. (see Appendix 1 Consultation)

Mercy Services acknowledges the right of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people to be recognised as the owners and guardians of their cultural and intellectual property.

The prior informed consent of the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander persons and groups will be obtained prior to any recording, use or display of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Cultural and Intellectual Property.

Consent will be obtained from both:-

- Copyright owners
- Group - discuss with elders - persons in authority (see Appendix 1 Consultation)

#### 4.a.3 Following correct protocols

1. Mercy Services will display a sign in the entrance area to its buildings used for service provision that says:



2. Welcome to Country

At all major official events, where members of the public and/or the media are present, Mercy Services will seek to include a Welcome to Country ceremony.

A Welcome to Country requires an Aboriginal Elder to welcome people to the land. If this person does not have employment that will pay for their participation Mercy Services will pay a suitable honourarium.

At events at which flags are shown, the order of display, from an audience perspective from left to right, is the Australian flag then the Aboriginal flag and the Torres Strait Islander flag.

### 3. Acknowledgment of Country

At major events or meetings that are substantially comprised of Mercy Services staff, volunteers and/or clients the Chairperson will start

*I would like to acknowledge that we meet today on the traditional land of the Awabakal (or applicable) people.*

## 4.b Supporting Aboriginal organisations

Mercy Services will assist the development of Aboriginal services through partnerships, consortiums and other mutually agreed assistance

## 4.c Assisting Aboriginal people within Mercy Services

- 4.c.1. Mercy Services will join with individuals and groups to foster Reconciliation e.g. Newcastle Aboriginal Support Group
- 4.c.2. Mercy Services will provide a positive cultural environment and build awareness of Aboriginal culture and its relevance among Mercy Services staff, volunteers and clients by recognising in appropriate ways significant Aboriginal and Reconciliation events e.g.,
- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| 26 January .....           | Australia Day/Survival Day                  |
| 13 February .....          | Anniversary of Federal Parliament's Apology |
| 26 May .....               | National Sorry Day                          |
| 26 May to 3 June .....     | National Reconciliation Week                |
| 3 June .....               | Mabo Day                                    |
| 1st full week of July..... | NAIDOC Week                                 |
- Staff will be supported in attending such events
- 4.c.3. Mercy Services will conduct an annual audit of the number of and situation of its Aboriginal clients and staff.
- 4.c.4. Mercy Services will seek opportunities to develop the Aboriginal cultural competence of Mercy Services staff/volunteers particularly those working in services where there is no equivalent Aboriginal service.

- 4.c.5 Mercy Services will ensure that its employment policies and procedures result in adequate recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in Mercy Services.
- 4.c.6 Mercy Services will ensure Aboriginal people are encouraged and supported to seek career development opportunities while employed with Mercy Services
- 4.c.7 Mercy Services will provide high quality services in culturally appropriate ways to Aboriginal people.

## 5.0 REFERENCES

<b>1. Legislation</b>	a) Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW) b) Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
<b>2. Australian Standards</b>	N/A
<b>3. Professional guidelines</b>	N/A
<b>4. Codes of Practice</b>	a) NSW Government Aboriginal Cultural Protocols And Practices Policy b) NSW Dept of Education and Training Aboriginal Consultative Group Inc Welcome to Country & Acknowledgment of Country c) Community Cultural Development New South Wales (2003) RESPECT, ACKNOWLEDGE, LISTEN: Practical protocols for working with the Indigenous Community of Western Sydney
<b>5. Codes of Ethics</b>	a) Australian Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics <a href="http://www.aasw.asn.au/document/item/1201">http://www.aasw.asn.au/document/item/1201</a> b) Australian Psychological Association Code of Ethics <a href="http://www.psychology.org.au/Assets/Files/Code_Ethics_2007.pdf">http://www.psychology.org.au/Assets/Files/Code_Ethics_2007.pdf</a> c) The Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia. Registration Requirements <a href="http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Registration-Standards.aspx">http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Registration-Standards.aspx</a> d) Integrity in the Service of the Church <a href="https://www.catholic.org.au/media-centre/media-releases/cat_view/10-organisations/38-national-committee-for-professional-standards">https://www.catholic.org.au/media-centre/media-releases/cat_view/10-organisations/38-national-committee-for-professional-standards</a> e) Mercy Services Code of Conduct
<b>6. Other</b>	a) Arwarbukarl Cultural Resource Association (ACRA) <a href="http://www.arwarbukarl.com.au/">http://www.arwarbukarl.com.au/</a> b) Lake Macquarie City Council (2005) A Commitment by Lake Macquarie City Council to Aboriginal People of the City of Lake Macquarie c) National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council <a href="http://www.natsicc.org.au/">http://www.natsicc.org.au/</a> d) Newcastle City Council Aboriginal Employment Strategy 2004-2006 e) Reconciliation Australia (2006) Reconciliation Action Plans: Turning good intentions into actions f) Uniting Care (2007) <u>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Project Dreaming As One</u>
<b>7. Mercy Services Values</b>	Justice, Respect, Care, Unity, Service

## 6.0 OTHER RELATED POLICIES

- A.01 Mission and Philosophy
- A.02 Code of Conduct - Board
- A.03 Code of Conduct – Staff/Volunteers
- A.04 Environmental Responsibility
- A.06 Pastoral Care
- B.01 Board Policy and Procedures
- B.02 Delegations
- C.01 Management Roles and Responsibilities
- C.02 Strategic Planning
- C.03 Operational Planning
- C.04 Program performance and monitoring
- C.05 Quality Improvement
- C.06 Risk Management
- D.09 Use of Facilities & Equipment Policy
- D.15 Policy Development, Review and Implementation
- E.01 Principles of Service Delivery
- E.02 Service Access and Equity
- E.03 Meeting Individual Needs
- E.04 Client fees
- E.05 Client Participation, Decision Making & Advocacy
- E.06 Involvement of Families and Friends
- E.08 Complaints
- E.09 Client Records
- E.10 Community nursing
- E.11 Coordination with other services
- E.12 Client Exit from Programs
- E.13 Cultural Awareness
- E.14 Duty of Care
- E.15 Privacy Policy
- E.16 Protection of Vulnerable adults from Abuse and Neglect
- E.17 Protection of Children from Abuse and Neglect
- F.01 Employment conditions
- F.02 Diversity Policies
- F.03 Recruitment Policies
- F.04 Learning and development
- F.05 Performance Review and Development
- F.06 Management of Poor Conduct or Performance
- F.07 Employee records
- F.09 Compelled assistants
- F.10 Volunteers
- F.11 Credentialing
- F.12 Succession Planning
- G.01 WHS Policy

**7.0 RELATIONSHIP WITH STANDARDS**

<b><i>Aged Care Accreditation Standards</i></b>	<b><i>Home Care Standards</i></b>	<b><i>Disability Standards</i></b>	<b><i>EQUIP Standards</i></b>
3.5, 3.6, 3.8, 3.9,	1.4, 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 3.1, 3.4, 3.5	1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 1.8, 1.9, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 3.5, 5.1, 5.2, 5.5,	1.1.1, 1.1.6, 1.3.1, 1.6.1

**8.0 DOCUMENT CHANGES RECORD**

<b><i>Dates of change</i></b>	<b><i>Section altered</i></b>	<b><i>Natures of changes made</i></b>
10/02/2009	All sections	Policy created
23/03/2011	7.0 Relationship to Standards	Replace HACC Standards and CACP Standards with Community Care Common Standards and update to EQUIP 5 Standards
10/10/2012	All Sections	Organisation name updated
23/03/2015	7.0 Relationship to Standards	Replace Community Care Common Standards with Home Care Standards and update to EQUIP 5 Standards
10/02/2016	All sections	Relace General Manager with Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
22/06/2016	a) 5.0 References b) 6.0 Other related policies c) 7.0 Relationship to Standards	a) Update Codes of Ethics b) Update list c) Add Aged Care Accreditation and update Disability Standards
Review due 22/06/2019		

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Consultation – updated 10-05-16**

Additional options can be found in the Hunter Valley Directory produced by the Arwarbukarl Cultural Resource Association <http://www.miromaa.org.au/ourcentre/indigenousandirectory/onlinedirectory.html> with full agency details in the paper copy of the Directory available from Mercy Services Tighes Hill or Carrington or West Wallsend offices.

<b>Person</b>	<b>Position &amp; Organisation</b>	<b>Postal &amp; Email address</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>To be consulted regarding</b>
<b>Whole of community issues</b>				
Chief Executive Officer	Awabakal Land Council	127 Maitland Road, Islington (PO Box 437, Hamilton 2303) <a href="mailto:awabaka@bigpond.net.au">awabaka@bigpond.net.au</a>	02 4965 4532	Economic and cultural development of ATSI people living in the Newcastle LGA
Chief Executive Officer	Bahtabah Land Council	44 Pacific Highway, (PO Box 3018) Blacksmiths 2281 <a href="mailto:bahtabah@nexon.com.au">bahtabah@nexon.com.au</a>	02 4971 4800	Economic and cultural development of ATSI people living in the Eastern Lake Macquarie area
Chief Executive Officer	Mindaribba Local Aboriginal Land Council	Lot 457 1A Chelmsford Drive, Metford (PO Box 401, East Maitland 2323)	02 4934 8511	Economic and cultural development of ATSI people living in the Maitland LGA
	Wanaruah Land Council	19 Maitland St, Muswellbrook NSW 2333	02 6543 1288	Economic and cultural development of ATSI people living in the Upper Hunter Valley area
Chief Executive Officer	Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council	173 Nelson Bay Rd, Williamtown 2314 (PO Box 56; Tanilba Bay 2314) <a href="mailto:reception@worimi.org.au">reception@worimi.org.au</a>	02 4965 1500	Economic and cultural development of ATSI people living in the Port Stephens LGA
Andrew Hawkins	Lecturer	Hunter TAFE		Education and Training issues and Reconciliation Policy
Lyndsay Stanford	Blakwoks			Employment solutions
Sandra Griffin	Elder			Issues in western Newcastle
Chief Executive Officer	Awabakal Cooperative	64 Hannell Street, Wickham 2293	02 4969 4711	Services for ATSI people
<b>Aged and Home &amp; Community Care Services</b>				
Donna Munn	CACP Worker Awabakal		02 4962 2811	Services for older ATSI people
	Awabakal Disability Service		02 4969 4711	Services to ATSI people with a disability
Kathleen Leayr	Home Care Service of – Daramulen Aboriginal Centre	70 Northcott Ave Kotara NSW 2289	02 49 66 6322	Domestic assistance and personal care services for older ATSI people



<b>Person</b>	<b>Position &amp; Organisation</b>	<b>Postal &amp; Email address</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>To be consulted regarding</b>
Clare Shrimpton	Port Stephens Community Care, Aboriginal Services Project Officer	14/25 Sturgeon St, Raymond Terrace (PO Box 170, Raymond Terrace 2324) <a href="mailto:clares.admin@psc.com.au">clares.admin@psc.com.au</a>	1300 763 257	Community Support including transport Services for older ATSI people
<b>Alcohol &amp; Other Drug Services</b>				
Darren Barton	Service Manager Awabakal Medical Service	38a Samdon Street, Hamilton 2303	02 4969 2424	AOD services and issues for ATSI people
David Maher	AOD Worker Awabakal Medical Service	38a Samdon Street, Hamilton 2303	02 4969 2424	AOD services and issues for ATSI people
<b>Children's &amp; Family Services</b>				
Louise Campbell	Education Officer (Aboriginal Education) Catholic Schools Office	841 Hunter Street Newcastle West (P.O. Box 714 Newcastle 2300) <a href="mailto:louise.campbell@mn.catholic.edu.au">louise.campbell@mn.catholic.edu.au</a>	02 4979 1222	Education and Catholic Church issues for ATSI people
	Awabakal Pre School		02 4956 9132	Services and issues for ATSI children 4-5 years old in Newcastle/Lake Macquarie area
	Muloobinba Aboriginal Corporation Family Support Service	22 Lambton Road, (PO Box 208) Broadmeadow 2292 <a href="mailto:admin@muloobinba.org.au">admin@muloobinba.org.au</a>	02 4962 1809	ATSI families or individuals in the Newcastle LGA who are experiencing financial hardship, separation, homelessness, domestic violence, and parenting problems.
	Kup-Poon -Dee Community Services	29 Shearman Avenue Raymond Terrace 2324 <a href="mailto:kup29@bigpond.net.au">kup29@bigpond.net.au</a>	02 4987 7685	This is a family support services that offers support for students at school and counselling for families in crisis etc
	Port Stephens Family Support Service Inc. Ba-Ra-Bolarang (is an annex to the above service)	3 Phillip Road Raymond Terrace 2324 <a href="mailto:admin@psfss.org.au">admin@psfss.org.au</a>	02 4987 4674	This is a family support centre and the Aboriginal services offer culturally based skill building and learning experiences such as weaving classes as well as men's meetings.
	Wandiyali	16 Bruncker Road Broadmeadow 2292	02 4940 8133	youth (14-18yrs), 13-25 yrs parenting support, OOHC (8-18yrs) in foster placement and support for parents of children aged 0-16yrs.
Karen O'Hara	Coordinator Wandiyali – Brighter Futures	3 Thomas Street, Cardiff <a href="mailto:wandiyalikbf@hotmail.com">wandiyalikbf@hotmail.com</a>	02 4954 2736	Early intervention for families with children 0-8 years as part of the Brighter Futures consortium of which Mercy Services is also a member
<b>Bush Tucker</b>				
	Youle-ta		4949 5877	

## Appendix 2. Advisory Group Terms of Reference

**Mercy Services Reconciliation Advisory Group**

Terms of reference as at 10/02/09

## Aim:

- to provide advice to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) on the content the Mercy Services Reconciliation Plan
- to respond to the CEO's annual report on the activities and progress in implementing the Mercy Services Reconciliation Plan
- to provide advice to the CEO on issues of relevance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait people, especially those who are Mercy Services clients or staff

## Membership

- Mercy Services CEO,
- Two Mercy Services staff (chosen by the CEO)
- Three Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people (chosen by the CEO) - The CEO will ask ATSI individuals and agencies (listed in Appendix) to advertise vacancies when they arise on the Advisory Group. Individuals will then contact the CEO who will choose individuals with the best understanding of: (1) ATSI issues (2) the situation of ATSI people eligible to be Mercy Services clients and/or (3) the services operated by Mercy Services.

## Term of Membership

- All Advisory Group members, except the CEO, are limited to a three year term. After a year away from the Advisory Group a person can be invited to join for another term.

## What can be discussed?

- The CEO will chair meetings in an informal manner (more like a discussion than a formal meeting)
- The CEO will ensure that an Agenda is circulated prior to the meeting listing items for discussion.
- The chair will always ask at the beginning of the meeting if members have other items to add to the agenda. The agenda will always have a place for Advisory Group members to raise other issues.
- If there is some dispute on the relevance of an issue the meeting will vote and a majority will decide if it is relevant. If there is insufficient time for all items the chair will limit the length of time for each item.

**Frequency of meetings:**

- Meetings will usually last for up to 90 minutes
- Meetings will often involve a meal or snack and be held at Aboriginal venues
- The Advisory Group must meet at least annually to discuss progress on fulfilling the directions of the Reconciliation Policy and the Reconciliation Plan.
- Only the CEO can call additional meetings.

**Payments:**

- Advisory Group members who do not have employment that will pay for their participation will be paid an honourarium of \$50 per hour of meeting time.

**Communication:**

- The CEO will ensure that minutes are kept of discussions and decisions of the Advisory Group
- The CEO will report the views of the Advisory Group to the Board.
- All Advisory Group members must keep as confidential discussions that an Advisory Group member has requested be confidential
- Mercy Services members of the Advisory Group will try to follow these guidelines<sup>4</sup>:
  1. Don't assume anything.
  2. Be honest and sincere.
  3. Use simple clear, plain and appropriate language.
  4. Speak slowly if and when necessary.
  5. Jargon or technical language should be explained.
  6. Don't mimic Aboriginal ways of speaking i.e. words, slang, speech or accent.
  7. Be open minded.
  8. Never be boastful about your ideas.
  9. Don't be too direct as this can be taken as confrontational and/or rude.
  10. Direct eye contact may also be considered confrontational and/or rude.
  11. Emphasise the purpose of your activity and intended benefits to the community.
  12. Don't ask hypothetical questions.
  13. Deal in practical real issues not theoretical ideas

**Decision making capacity:**

- The Advisory Committee is a valued means of learning from the experience and wisdom of Aboriginal people but it does not have responsibility for running Mercy Services. As this is a consultative forum, the CEO is not obliged to follow the advice of the Reconciliation Advisory Group

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<sup>4</sup> Protocols for Consultation and Negotiation with Aboriginal People', by Huggins, Jackie, Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development, Brisbane, QLD, 1999

**Mercy Services Reconciliation Action Plan 2016**



Activities	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
<i>Acknowledgement and Respect</i>			
Reconvene Reconciliation Advisory Group to meet at least once in 2016	CEO	By November	Minutes as a record of meeting
Consultation sought before seeking for funding or starting a service that aims to assist Aboriginal people/services	CEO	ongoing	Report to Advisory Committee number of times consultation is sought
Permission sought prior to any recording, use or display of ATSI Cultural and Intellectual Property	CEO	ongoing	Report to Advisory Committee number of times permission sought
Continue to display a Reconciliation sign in the entrance area to all buildings used for service provision	CEO	ongoing	Report to Advisory Committee to sign still present
Welcome to Country at all major official events, where members of the public and/or the media are present	CEO	ongoing	Report to Advisory Committee number of times Welcome provided
Acknowledgement of Country at major events or meetings that are organised by Mercy Services	CEO	ongoing	Report to Advisory Committee number of times Acknowledgement provided
<i>Supporting Aboriginal Organisations</i>			
Assist the development of Aboriginal services through partnerships, consortiums and other mutually agreed assistance: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cooperate with Wandiyali as a partner in Brighter Futures Consortium</li> <li>2. Cooperate with Awabakal Medical Service as a potential partner in any possible suitable Initiative.</li> <li>3. Respond positively to Aboriginal organisations requesting our assistance with submission writing</li> </ol>	CEO	ongoing	Report to Advisory Committee number of times and types of assistance provided

**Mercy Services Reconciliation Action Plan 2016**



Activities	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
4. Respond to other requests for assistance			
<i>Assisting Aboriginal People within Mercy Services</i>			
Provide a positive cultural environment and build awareness by recognising in appropriate ways significant Aboriginal and Reconciliation events <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. During Reconciliation Week (26 May to 3 June) Mercy Services will launch it's Reconciliation Policy and Reconciliation Action Plan</li> <li>2. Day Centre to recognise NAIDOC week via activity</li> <li>3. Social Support service to offer bus trip to a NAIDOC event</li> <li>4. Improve the Orientation session for new staff/volunteers coverage of Reconciliation and info on where staff can find out more about Aboriginal services and culture</li> <li>5. at least 3 items in Mercy Matters newsletter in 2016 including information on significant Aboriginal/Reconciliation dates</li> </ol>	CEO, Managers and Program Coordinators	ongoing	Report to Advisory Committee number of and types of positive cultural environment initiatives
Annual audit of the number of and situation of its Aboriginal clients and staff <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Update intake form and ensure all new and existing staff have answered this question</li> <li>2. Ensure all reviewed clients are asked if they identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait islander</li> </ol>	CEO	ongoing	Report annual audit results to Advisory Committee
Seek opportunities to develop the Aboriginal cultural competence of Mercy Services staff where there is no equivalent Aboriginal service <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. CEO and L &amp; D Manager to attend Aboriginal Workforce Strategy Training</li> <li>2. Hold a forum for applicable Mercy Services programs to workshop with relevant Aboriginal services/individuals on better ways of engaging Aboriginal clients where there is no Aboriginal service alternative to those Mercy Services program</li> <li>3. Hold a forum for Mercy Services programs to workshop with relevant Aboriginal services/individuals on better ways of engaging Aboriginal clients where these people have chosen Mercy Services instead of an equivalent Aboriginal service</li> </ol>	CEO	ongoing	Report to Advisory Committee number of and types of cultural competence development initiatives

**Mercy Services Reconciliation Action Plan 2016**



Activities	Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable Target
Review employment policies and strategies to improve the employment experience of Aboriginal people 1. Increase number of ATSI staff to be equivalent to the proportion of ATSI population in the Hunter (currently 2.6%) - targeting services that do or should have ATSI clients 2. Approach aboriginal employment services when recruiting staff	CEO and Learning & Development Manager	ongoing	Report to Advisory Committee percentage of ATSI staff and recruitment/retention initiatives
Provide high quality services in culturally appropriate ways to Aboriginal people 1. Lake Macquarie Community Transport to continue providing a bus and driver for two activities the elders organised for their youth 2. Lake Macquarie Community Transport to seek funding to have an Aboriginal design painted on one of its buses 3. Promote Mercy Services programs to ATSI people in the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie areas	CEO and Community Transport Manager	ongoing	Report to Advisory Committee number and types of services to Aboriginal people