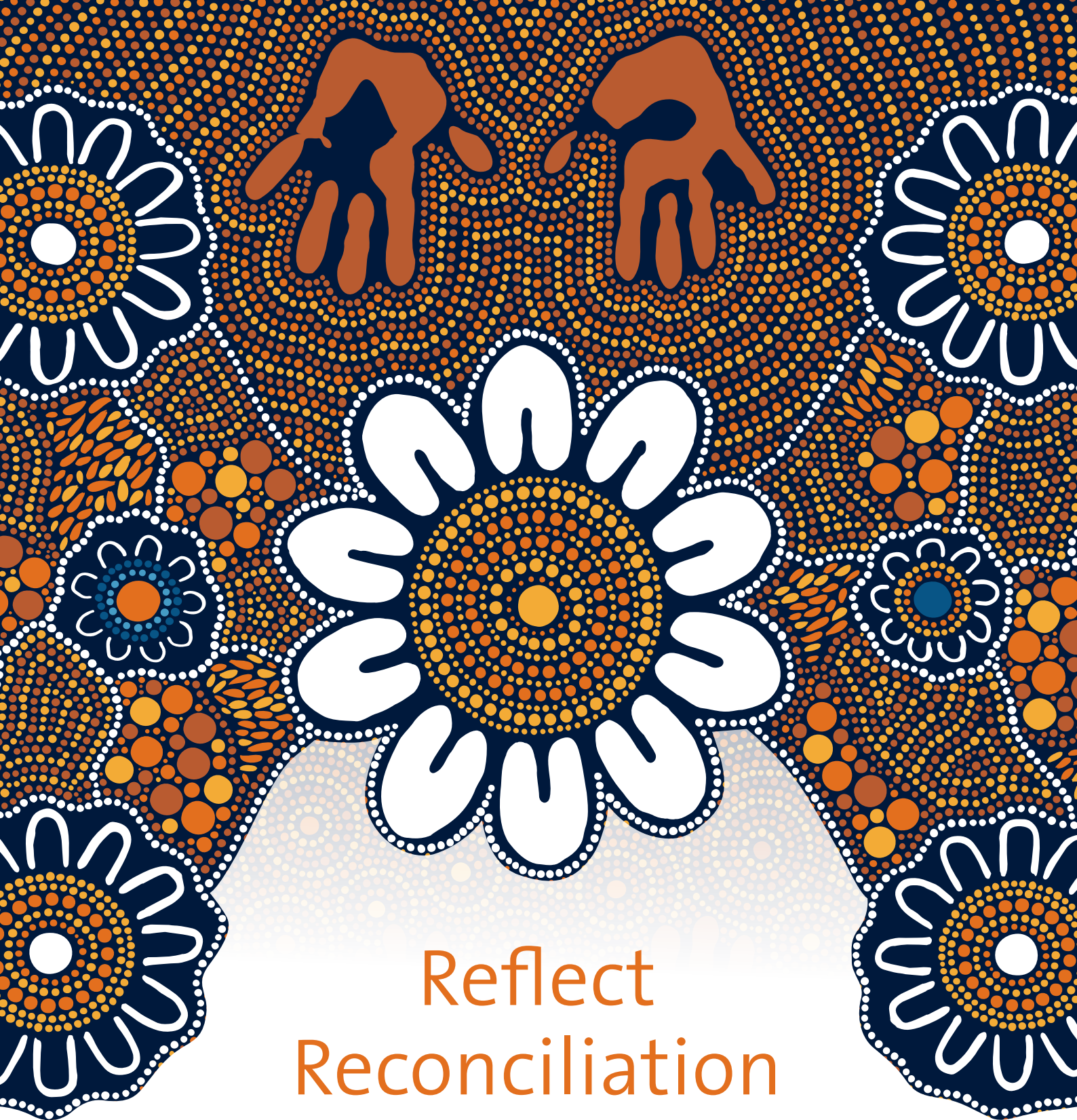




Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

July 2023 - December 2024

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Acknowledgement of Country

The Ochre Group acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and we recognise the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to Elders and Custodians past, present and emerging. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should be aware that this document may contain images or names of people who have passed away since its publication.



Photo: George Williams' niece Harmoni who is also an Ochre Medical Centre Walgett patient

Artwork

About the artist - Meleisa Cox

The artwork and design elements that feature in this publication, including those on the cover, are from the commissioned work below by Meleisa Cox, a proud Wiradjuri woman from Bathurst. Specialising in dot paintings, Meleisa is a self-taught artist who started painting in 2016 to help fight personal mental illness and also as a way of connecting with her Aboriginal heritage. She has created works for exhibitions as well as for a wide range of commissions and merchandise.

About the artwork - “Ochre - A story of care”



Meleisa's comments on imagery:

From a distance, the painting is a birds-eye view of the land, with its rivers, communities and other natural features.



Moving closer, the circular clusters become flowers (the beauty of nature and the act of providing care) and you clearly see the hands (the Aboriginal symbols for patient care as well as harking back to Ochre's Australian Outback Locums' logo which featured a hand) and the brush strokes representing medicine leaves.



The main central circle represents the promise of care for all and the beating heart of Ochre as an organisation. The patient is at the centre of the circle (with the beauty and complexity of the body represented by the finer detail) and the U shapes around them represent the Ochre team providing them with quality patient-centred care and support.

The four circles/flowers in each quadrant represent Ochre's focus on:



Caring for patients



Caring for communities



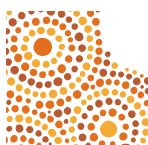
Caring for fellow team members



Caring for the future encompassing training, growth opportunities and environmental impact



The white pathways represent the rivers on which many Ochre medical centres are located, as well as referencing the water/wave element of the Ochre logo. They also represent the connectivity, support and knowledge-sharing between Ochre's network of medical centres around the country.



Finally, the additional smaller circles/flowers represent some of Ochre's wider network of clinics and offices – reaching out to provide quality care to their diverse communities, large and small.

Meleisa's comments on colours:

The earthy "ochre" orange, brown and yellow tones represent the land. In Aboriginal art, natural ochre pigments were originally used to depict Dreamtime stories and maps. For Indigenous people, ochre is a precious resource – a tactile imprint of all that is sacred and all that connects people to their culture, past, present and future. Ochre resides in the land, absorbing the earth's history through millennia, until people extract it, mix it with other earthly elements and use it to be one with the land. They use it to tell their stories, to practice their ceremonies, to feel its transformative texture on their skins and to mix into medicines for healing.

Blue represents water, the lifeblood of the earth and the main connector of communities. Indigenous people feel an innate connection to water through spirit, culture, songs and dreaming.

A message from our Founders



We would like to open by thanking Ochre's Working Group for making our first Reconciliation Action Plan possible.

Everybody has their own reconciliation journey. For the two of us, this started well before we founded the company. Hamish worked in South Auckland in New Zealand with a large Māori and Polynesian population, while Ross worked on Palm Island off the Queensland Coast with a population almost 100% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples. In these roles, we witnessed first-hand the huge discrepancy in the health of First Nations people compared with other population groups. We also became excited to understand that we could make a proportionally greater positive impact in those communities than more privileged communities.

We met each other in 1999 as medical practitioners in Bourke, 800km north west of Sydney, where First Nations people make up a third of the population. Again we witnessed health inequality every day. During our subsequent careers, we have been privileged to have the opportunity to lessen that inequality. We have tried to provide respectful and appropriate care to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients, being mindful of their sometimes different needs and the impact that a lifetime of discrimination can have on their relationships with doctors.

For nearly 30 years we have personally, and through our Ochre Recruitment business, provided medical staffing to many First Nations communities and health organisations. We have designed and managed public health projects in those communities, and we are proud to have used our resources to play a part in helping to maintain and strengthen First Nations health and community services in communities such as Ilpurla in the Northern Territory and in the south west of Victoria.

These are some key learnings we would like to share from our reconciliation journey:

- We have learned to be respectful. The best person to make decisions about their health is the individual. And the last thing First Nations peoples need is for “white fellas” to tell them what they need. We personally believe a constitutionally-recognised Voice to Parliament is long overdue!
- We have learned it is important to have expectations of success. To make a difference you need to believe you **can** make a difference. We have independent evidence showing some of the most remote First Nations communities in which we have been involved have, at times, had significantly better health outcomes than the Australian average. We commend the vision and effort of our team in achieving these results, and we know the incredible work it takes to maintain them.
- We have learned that health is often a product of social determinants. As a doctor, you get to suture a laceration, to treat a child with pneumonia or to diagnose a new case of diabetes. However, a healthy community requires much more than just good health care - it relies on people feeling secure and having hope for the future. A key part of achieving this is meaningful employment prospects. We are proud of our efforts to date in engaging our employees who identify as First Nations peoples, but we also know we can improve in this area.
- We have learned that making a personal connection is important and that there is great value in listening to the First Nations peoples amongst our patients, our team members and our communities to understand their lived experience.

Those of us working in healthcare sometimes do not realise the impact we have on others. As an organisation, we aim to be role models, to use kind words, and to offer encouragement so that First Nations peoples always feel welcome and included in our clinics and workspaces - and perhaps even be inspired to pursue healthcare careers of their own.

We close with the powerful words of Dr Lilla Watson, a Gangulu woman: “If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.”

Dr Ross Lamplugh
Co-Founder & Chair

Dr Hamish Meldrum
Co-Founder & Director



A message from our Chief Medical Officer



The doctors Ochre supports care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities from Queensland and North Western New South Wales to Cape Barren Island in Bass Strait and mainland Tasmania. They treat acute conditions, and they also treat and manage a high proportion of chronic disease amongst those patients.

Our core purpose as an organization is improving the health of all of our communities around Australia. To record and track our progress, we measure patient health outcomes via a comprehensive program which has been in place since 2006. Focused on both preventative care and Chronic Disease Management (CDM), this program serves the dual purpose of measuring the positive impact of our clinics on community health as well as driving continuous improvement in the quality of the healthcare services provided by the doctors we support. Under it, we record clinical indicators for coronary heart disease, diabetes, asthma and other chronic diseases which we plot and track monthly against averages and goals across our network around the country. Monthly results are then reported across the group as well as forming the key criteria for our annual excellence awards - celebrating both health outcomes achieved and also outstanding delivery of care by clinics and individuals.

The patient health outcomes achieved by doctors practicing with Ochre and the processes followed have consistently been above industry standards and those of our peers. While we saw a general decline in the metrics across the sector due to the COVID pandemic and its impact on face-to-face care, outcomes have been steadily improving since the start of 2022. We are doing everything we can to promote preventative care and CDM across all patients, including those identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and we are absolutely committed to closing the healthcare gap through the provision of quality care in culturally-safe environments, delivered by a culturally-aware team with a good understanding of the history and heritage of First Nations people.

Dr Francois Pretorius
Chief Medical Officer



Photo: Smoking ceremony in Bathurst led by local Wiradyuri elders and community members to launch our Reconciliation Action Plan

A statement from the CEO of Reconciliation Australia



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

Ochre Health joins a network of more than 2,200 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

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

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

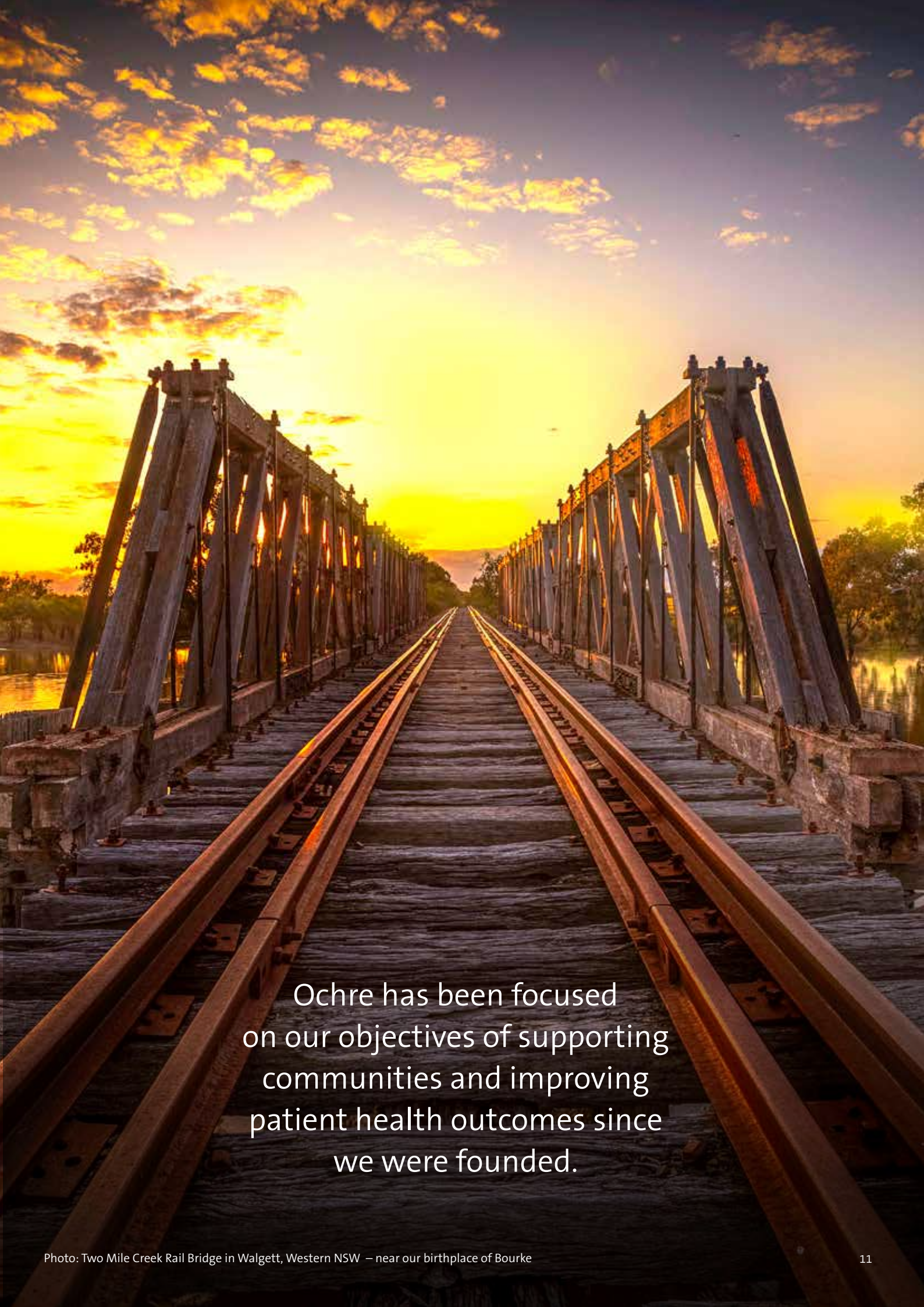
The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives, for the most effective outcomes. These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.

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

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

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

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia



Ochre has been focused
on our objectives of supporting
communities and improving
patient health outcomes since
we were founded.

Who we are

Our story began in 2002, when doctors Ross Lamplugh and Hamish Meldrum worked as procedural GPs in the NSW outback town of Bourke. Challenged by the loss of medical services in surrounding towns, Ross and Hamish established a business initially called Australian Outback Medical Services promoting the family-friendly, Australian Outback lifestyle to like-minded and capable doctors. They changed the name to Ochre soon after to reflect the orange/red colour of the outback soil and the pigment used by the Aboriginal peoples of the region in their artwork. They also added a blue “wave” element to the logo to represent the river systems on which all outback communities depend.

Today, Ochre Health is a leading provider of healthcare to rural, regional and urban communities with a network of medical centres across five states and territories. We also run two of

Australia’s leading medical recruitment agencies, Ochre Recruitment and Medical Directions, recruiting doctors for our medical centres as well as working with hospitals and medical practices throughout Australia and New Zealand to develop medical workforce solutions and to source and place locum and permanent doctors across a wide range of specialties.

Improving healthcare across Australia’s disparate environments remains an enduring passion for Ross and Hamish, who have always based Ochre’s approach on three simple principles:

- We only manage clinics we would be happy to work in ourselves.
- We only support doctors we would be happy to take our own kids to.
- We try to exceed expectations in everything we do.

Ochre has been very involved with Aboriginal communities since we were founded. Our Ochre Recruitment team recruits doctors for Aboriginal Medical Service organisations around the country and, through our medical centres, we provide care to many Aboriginal communities, including the doctors who practice with us on

Flinders Island flying across to Cape Barren Island every fortnight to run a clinic for the indigenous community there. We have a number of Aboriginal team members, many of whom play key roles in our NAIDOC Week and National Reconciliation Week activities as well as in the development and implementation of this Reconciliation Action Plan. We are also proud annual sponsors of the Australian Federation of Medical Women (AFMW) “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Purple Bush Leaves Medicine Bursaries”, which provide recipients with financial support to attend events for professional development and leadership opportunity.

Around Australia, Ochre supports over **400** independent doctors in delivering care to their patients and we employ over **700** team members, including part-timers and casuals.

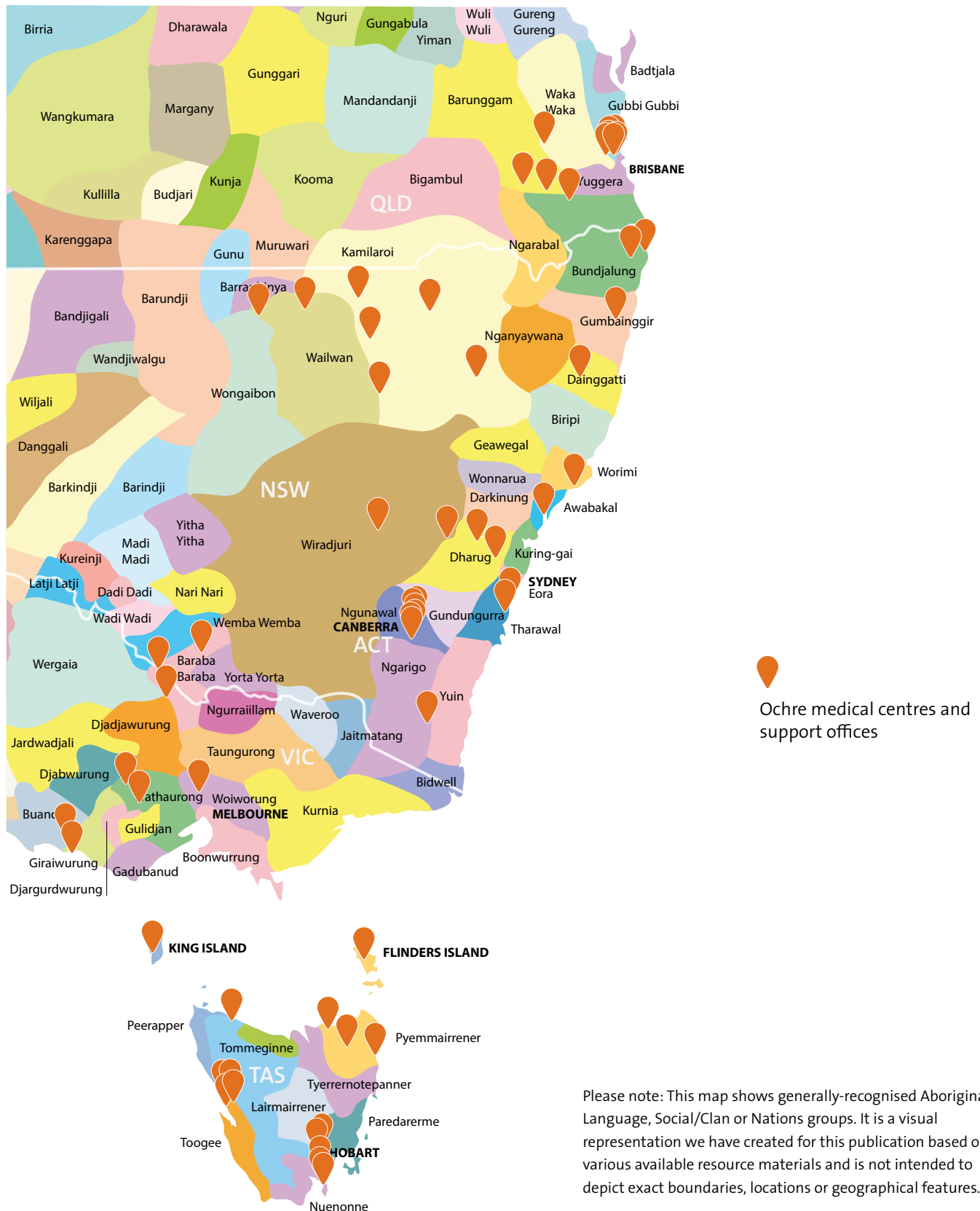
In a survey conducted in early 2023, with 30% engagement, **13** team members identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The doctors with whom we partner also care for over **12,000** patients around the country who identify as First Nations peoples. We will work within this RAP to update and understand these figures in culturally-appropriate ways.

Ochre supports doctors
in caring for over **12,000** patients
around the country who identify
as First Nations peoples.

Where we are

We have over 60 medical centres and support offices from Queensland's Sunshine Coast to Southern Tasmania...



Aim of our Reconciliation Action Plan



Our practice network across rural, regional and metropolitan Australia, as well as our recruitment of doctors and development of medical workforce solutions around the country, means Ochre is in an excellent position to drive positive change. Our aim is to leverage our standing and our opportunities to achieve genuine and meaningful reconciliation as well as to continue delivering quality care and improved health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, organisations and communities.

At its heart, reconciliation is about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples for the benefit of all Australians.

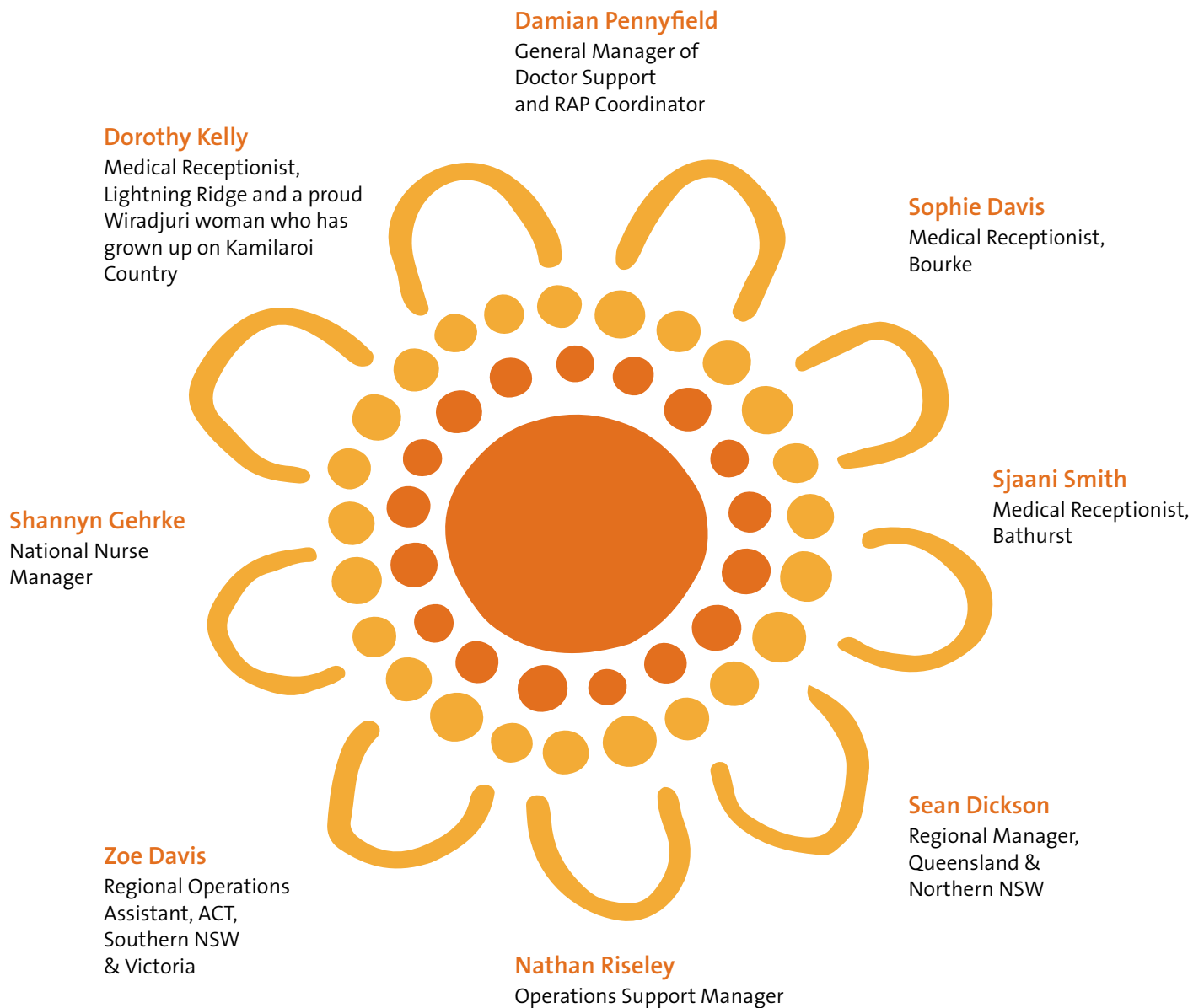
As shown on the following page, our RAP Working Group is made up of Ochre team members from a wide range of levels, functions and locations. This ensures we have perspectives and commitment from across our organisation. Our RAP provides the Ochre Group with a framework to build relationships and understand more about the impact we have on indigenous patients, suppliers, partners and communities.

Our RAP Working Group meets regularly, and will continue to do so, to develop and implement our 'Reflect' action plan – scoping and developing relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, deciding on our vision for reconciliation and exploring our sphere of influence. The Group has worked hard to outline the goals and key actions outlined in this plan, and I would like to extend my thanks to everybody who has contributed. While we have had very strong connections with indigenous communities around Australia since we were founded, this is an important step for Ochre as an organisation in 2023 and beyond.

Damian Pennyfield
General Manager of Doctor Support and RAP Coordinator

Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group

The key members of our RAP Working Group (RWG) are below. They have been, and continue to be, supported by a wide range of people across the organisation.



Action Plan - Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	Aug 2023	RAP Coordinator & Operations Support Manager
	Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Jul 2023	Regional Operations Assistant
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2024	Medical Receptionist, Lightning Ridge
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May - Jun 2023	Lead: RAP Coordinator Support: RWG members
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May - 3 Jun 2023	Regional Manager, Queensland & Medical Receptionist, Lightning Ridge
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.	Jul 2023	CEO
	Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	Jan 2024	RAP Coordinator
	Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	Mar 2024	Operations Support Manager
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	Nov 2023	Regional Operations Assistant
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	Nov 2023	Operations Support Manager



Action Plan - Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	• Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	Jul 2023	Regional Operations Assistant
	• Conduct a review of cultural practice in health care settings.	Aug 2023	National Nurse Manager
	• Develop a plan for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	Oct 2023	National Nurse Manager
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	• Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.	Dec 2023	Medical Receptionist, Bathurst
	• Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	Aug 2023	Medical Receptionist, Lightning Ridge
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	• Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	Jun 2024	Regional Operations Assistant & Medical Receptionist, Lightning Ridge
	• Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	First week in July 2023	Regional Manager, Queensland
	• RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NAIDOC Week events.	First week in July 2023	Lead: RAP Coordinator Support: RWG members

Action Plan - Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	• Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	Jul 2023	RAP Coordinator
	• Review and develop Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment targets and opportunities within our organisation.	Nov 2023	Regional Manager, Queensland & Medical Receptionist, Bourke
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	• Review current procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-owned businesses and identify opportunities for further supplier relationships.	Nov 2023	Medical Receptionist, Bathurst & National Nurse Manager
	• Investigate Supply Nation membership.	Jul 2023	Medical Receptionist, Bathurst & Medical Receptionist, Bourke



Photo: NAIDOC Week celebration welcome dance at Narrabri Public School attended and photographed by George Williams

Action Plan - Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain a RWG to govern RAP implementation.	Dec 2023	RAP Coordinator
	Review the Terms of Reference for the RWG.	Dec 2023	RAP Coordinator
	Maintain and strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	Dec 2023	RAP Coordinator
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	Jul 2023	RAP Coordinator
	Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	Jul 2023	RAP Coordinator
	Maintain a senior leader to champion our RAP internally.	Dec 2023	CEO
	Review and update systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	Dec 2023	RAP Coordinator



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence.	Jun, annually	RAP Coordinator
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	Aug, annually	RAP Coordinator
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	Sep, annually	RAP Coordinator
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	Mar 2024	RAP Coordinator

Contact details for public enquiries

Damian Pennyfield

Ochre RAP Coordinator

Phone: 0483 380 812

Email: dpennyfield@ochrehealth.com.au

Photography

The photography featured in this publication has been sourced with consent from George Williams, a proud Barkindji man on his mother's side, a highly regarded photographer and a patient of our Walgett practice.

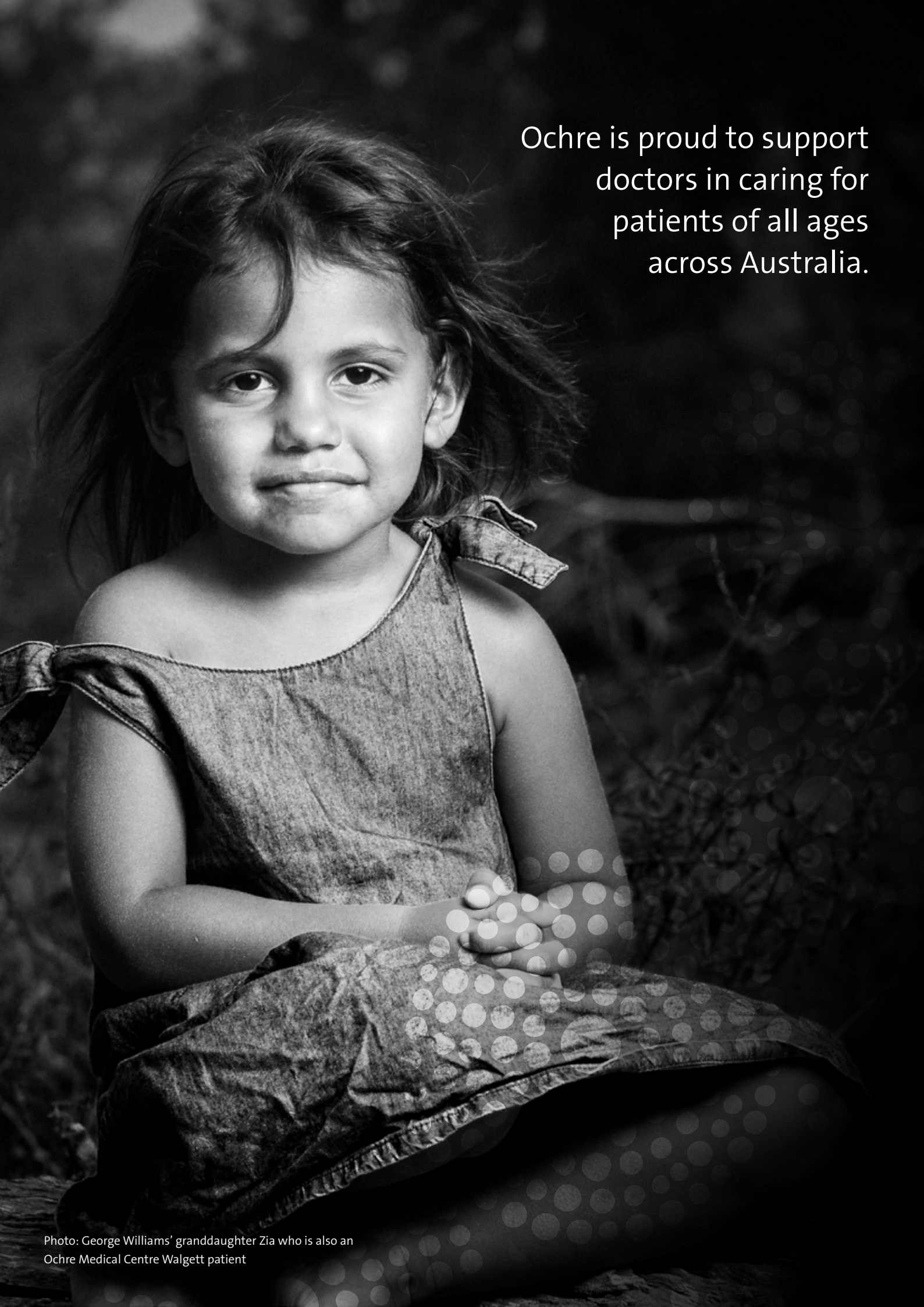
Originally from Brewarrina, George travelled to Walgett in 1979 to visit family and the town is now home to himself, his five children and his eighteen grandchildren. Formerly a painter and sculptor, George's current work is mainly in the contemporary art form of photography. His favourite shoots are nightscapes, taking him out

into the landscape at the quietest times, under the same stars of his mother's and father's country, and giving him the feeling of the closest possible connection to the land.

In 2022, George won the annual Christmas Photo Competition run by Mark Coulton, Federal Member for Parkes, for his image of the Two Mile Creek Rail Bridge in Walgett which features on an earlier page. He titled the photograph 'Bridge over troubled waters', primarily in reference to the devastating floods that had hit the area.



George Williams (centre) with Brewarrina Mayor and Ochre Brewarrina Practice Manager, Vivian Slack-Smith (left), and Brewarrina Councillor and George's family member, Trish Frail (right), at the opening of his recent photography exhibition in Brewarrina



Ochre is proud to support
doctors in caring for
patients of all ages
across Australia.

Photo: George Williams' granddaughter Zia who is also an
Ochre Medical Centre Walgett patient

