

2025-2030

Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health and Community Service Strategic Plan



Together We Thrive

WINNUNGA NIMMITYJAH
ABORIGINAL HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Together We Thrive - Journey towards Wellness

Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians.



Winnunga acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the ACT and surrounding region and throughout all of Australia. We acknowledge their continuing connection to land, sea, waterways and community. There are many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from other parts of the country living in and visiting Canberra that access our service. On behalf of the Winnunga Board and staff, we forever pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the lands of the ACT and the surrounding region, to their cultures and to their Elders past, present and emerging leaders. We respect the rich diversity of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in the ACT and surrounding regions, this beautiful place so many of us call home.

Artwork.



Meaning behind The artwork

This artwork beautifully captures the heart and soul of Winnunga Nimbitjyah Aboriginal Health and Community Services (WNAHCS), emphasizing the vital importance of accessibility and community engagement in healthcare. It signifies the various pathways available for our community to seek help, whether through medical appointments, counseling sessions, cultural activities, or social support networks.

At the heart of the artwork are the U shapes, symbolising the dedicated professionals at Winnunga Nimbitjyah who play a crucial role in supporting the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. They include;

- General Practitioners
- Practice Nurses
- Alcohol and Other Drugs Nurse
- Mental Health Nurse
- Paediatric Nurse
- Pharmacist
- Aboriginal Health Workers
- Psychiatrists
- Psychologists
- Midwives
- Dentists and Dental Assistants
- Physiotherapists
- Podiatrists
- Dieticians
- Audiologists

This diverse array of professionals showcases the holistic approach to health that WNAHCS embodies. Each provider brings their unique expertise and knowledge, contributing to a comprehensive support system that addresses the physical, emotional, and cultural needs of individuals and families within the community.

The travelling lines illustrated in the artwork symbolize the essential transportation services that connect the community to medical care at WNAHCS. These lines represent the vital links that allow individuals to access healthcare facilities, ensuring they can attend appointments and receive the medical attention they require. It's crucial that everyone has unhindered access to the support they need, without facing any barriers.

The meeting places depicted in the artwork symbolize the wide array of services provided by WNAHCS. These spaces represent programs and initiatives that contribute to the holistic well-being of individuals and families. They encompass various dimensions of health and support, highlighting that wellness is not a one-size-fits-all concept. This emphasises the understanding that wellness involves multiple pathways tailored to the unique circumstances and needs of each person. The meeting places stand as a powerful reminder of WNAHCS's collaborative and inclusive approach to community support. They embody a safe and welcoming environment where individuals can come together, share their experiences, and access the resources necessary for their growth and well-being.

The handprints featured in the artwork symbolize nurturing and reflect the care, support, and essential roles that individuals play in fostering health and well-being within the community. They extend a helping hand, offering assistance, comfort, and guidance—whether among family, friends, or the connections between healthcare providers and patients. These handprints represent a heartfelt commitment to cultivating an environment where everyone feels respected, valued, understood, and supported on their unique wellness journeys. They serve as a powerful reminder that, together, we can create a nurturing atmosphere where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

The leaves and circles intertwined with traveling lines in the background represent growth, connection, and the dynamic journey of the community. The traveling lines illustrate the paths we take, both as individuals and as a community, highlighting the various journeys toward wellness, support, and healing. Together, these elements convey a powerful message about the interconnectedness of our experiences and the strength we draw from one another as we navigate our health and wellness journeys together.

The corroboree frog is a remarkable symbol of resilience and cultural significance, deeply rooted in the traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This unique creature highlights the vital importance of connection to the land and environment, serving as a reminder of the rich cultural heritage and the profound relationship that Indigenous communities have with nature.

Each individual's journey is unique, and when we come together, we not only uplift one another but also build a vibrant community where everyone feels valued and empowered. Let's continue to foster this spirit of collaboration and care, ensuring that every member has the tools and support they need to thrive!

About the Artist

Kristie Peters is a proud Wiradjuri Artist, Graphic and Fashion Designer and the recipient of ACT NAIDOC Artist Of The Year 2021 and All First Nations Creative Fashion Designer 2024

Kristie is the founder of Yarrudhamarra Creations (re-branding as Blaklabel Dreaming) and currently lives in Canberra with her partner and 9 Beautiful boys. She prides herself working with community, where she has been very quickly recognized and well known for her distinctive styles and powerful artworks including her indigenous murals.

Kristie sees her art as a platform which speaks from the heart to empower and breakdown barriers.

"To create an art piece is one thing, but to create an art piece that can inspire and change someone's life journey, now that is really special. "



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Message from the Board of Directors.

The Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health and Community Services (Winnunga) Board of Directors (the Board) recognises we are living in a time where relationships, partnerships, understanding differences in opinions and points of view are essential if we are to map out our communities' health priorities.

The Board are committed to responding to the rising demand for client and community centred comprehensive primary health care. We will achieve this by partnering with the community, listening to their needs and embracing evidenced based best practice, focussing on client access to culturally safe health services and increasing better health and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who reside in the ACT and the surrounding region.

We believe delivering this strategic plan provides a blueprint for building strong, long-term sustainability, offering self-determined culturally safe and responsive comprehensive primary health care that supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to live longer, stronger, healthier lives, from a physical, social and emotional wellbeing standpoint.

Introduction.

Winnunga is an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service operating in the ACT and surrounding region. We are considered a flagship in the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Sector, providing culturally safe best practice models of comprehensive primary health care, underpinned by the highest standards of corporate and clinical governance in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.

There is a well-documented and long history of colonisation, racism and discrimination towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Because of this, we acknowledge many people are deeply impacted by these atrocities, carrying many scars that have not healed. This generational trauma has long impacted on the social determinants of health and influences on health inequities between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous populations of Australia.

This strategic plan will target ways to overcome the barriers associated with systems reform, investment and partnerships, acknowledging the impacts of past and present health policies, laws and institutional racism that have failed so many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia.

Our Vision.

Our vision is to provide a culturally safe environment where services are provided to support optimal health and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our Aim.

Our aim is to:

- continue a ground-up ownership and participatory solutions approach for determining client and family centred health and wellbeing service models,
- continue to address the barriers of inequity and racism to achieve health parity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our Governance.

Winnunga is governed by a Board of six Directors elected by the membership at the Annual General Meeting every three years. The primary role of the Board is to set the strategic direction of Winnunga and oversee the implementation of the strategic plan, providing leadership within a framework of good governance. It includes ensuring that all legal obligations are met. The Board employs a Chief Executive Officer who is charged with the management of the day-to-day operations of the organisation.

Our Guiding Principles.

Our guiding principles are:

1. The health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples includes the physical, social, emotional and cultural wellbeing of an individual and the whole community.
2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community control is central to achieving and maintaining cultural wellbeing.
3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples constitute an unacceptable proportion of disadvantaged and vulnerable peoples, partly due to the impact of past and present discriminatory attitudes, policies and laws that impact upon justice and fairness, health and social and economic wellbeing.
4. The improvement of health and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is dependent on overcoming all barriers to good health outcomes.
5. Our duty is to take a leadership role in shaping and influencing policy that advances the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our Values.

Winnunga is a member of the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) and we adopt their values.

Our values are:

◆	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Control
◆	A holistic, comprehensive primary health care approach
◆	A ground-up approach to planning, policy development and implementation
◆	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural integrity
◆	Coordinated and integrated activity
◆	Strategic partnerships and alliances
◆	Proactive and responsible action
◆	Respect and loyalty
◆	Equity
◆	Quality

Our Strategies for Action.

The implementation of this plan will be led by the CEO with the support of the Senior Management Team according to the following strategic goals. All achievements against the goals will be aligned to the broad outcome measures and monitored through agreed systems of clinical and corporate governance.

Strategic Goal 1: Enhance Client Experience.

STRATEGIES FOR ACTION	BROAD OUTCOME MEASURES
1.1: Provide quality client experiences, with a focus on cultural and psychological safety.	a) High levels of feedback that indicate positive client experiences.
1.2: Assessment of client experience to identify clinical health and wellbeing outcome improvement strategies.	b) Quality improvement activities that focus on clinical and wellbeing outcomes.
1.3: Listen to the 'voice of client', ensuring it is utilised to support relevant service planning and development.	c) Evidence confirming the organisation has responded to the voice of the client / community.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in the ACT was estimated to be 9,525 peoples in 2021. With a growth rate of 2.3%, it is estimated the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population will grow to 11,900 peoples by the year 2031. Hearing and understanding client and community needs is critical for supporting culturally safe service development that is based on the experiences of the diverse client groups who access our service.

Winnunga's active clients represent approximately 50% of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of the ACT. We will capture and utilise client experiences as a building block and future blueprint to address the social determinants of health. This will guide primary and preventative health and social health team-based solutions at our multiple primary health and wellbeing settings across the ACT and surrounding regions, including our prison health program and residential care facility.

Strategic Goal 2: Expand and Improve services to meet rising demand.

STRATEGIES FOR ACTION	BROAD OUTCOME MEASURES
2.1: Establish a Residential Rehabilitation Unit at Watson and implement culturally safe models of care.	a) Effective, culturally safe rehabilitation, clinical health and wellbeing services are being provided.
2.2: Plan and implement services available to those at risk, including clinical health and wellbeing outreach services.	b) Flexibility and accessibility in services, e.g. flexible opening times, telehealth services and quality full cycle of care systems are evidenced in models of care.
2.3: Strengthen the focus on quality services through systems of quality management and clinical governance.	c) Evidence of regular, ongoing planning of services and health and wellbeing outcome quality reviews.
2.4: Provide health and wellbeing services closer to our clients' homes.	d) Winnunga comprehensive primary health care services are established and operating from the suburbs of Gungahlin and Tuggeranong.
2.5: Health and wellbeing service types are fit for purpose for our children, their parents and the grandparents.	e) Enhanced options for gender and age specific support services and treatment, including availability of social, emotional and psychological supports for child, youth, adult and older persons.

Winnunga will enhance prevention and management of specific health and wellbeing conditions, particularly chronic diseases and mental health issues to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Our focus will be to regularly plan and review service models, ensuring service demands of individual patients' can be tailored, are culturally safe and that chronic disease, mental health, residential health and wellbeing services are available and accessible for our clients. We will increase delivering full cycles of care, including social health and wellbeing supports, screening, regular reviews and follow ups to the relevant client and patient cohorts.

Strategic Goal 3: Attract, develop and retain an appropriate workforce.

STRATEGIES FOR ACTION	BROAD OUTCOME MEASURES
3.1. Strengthen the capabilities of Winnunga with a focus on enhancing professional skills, increasing collaboration and enabling excellent management.	a) Systems, policies and practices to develop capabilities across Winnunga (as an organisation) are fit-for-purpose, responsive to changing organisational needs and show positive results.
3.2: Develop and implement a Workforce Strategy with a sound Employee Value Proposition.	b) Employee engagement and other workforce measures trend upwards.

Winnunga workforce security and increased capacity to attract, recruit and retain staff will be enshrined in a Winnunga Employee Value Proposition. We will address the future demand for workforce through effective health needs analysis and an evidenced based approach to support growth in culturally safe chronic disease management and mental health care. All existing and new workforces will be supported through effective learning and development plans that focus on a whole-of-practice, multidisciplinary team-based approach to Winnunga's comprehensive primary health models of care.

Strategic Goal 4: Diversify funding to meet the future health needs.

STRATEGIES FOR ACTION	BROAD OUTCOME MEASURES
4.1: Develop and implement strategies to satisfy long-term sustainability and delivery of culturally safe comprehensive primary health care.	a) Strategic funding and investment priorities to diversify funding and meet current and future demand for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culturally safe comprehensive primary health care.
4.2: Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander strategic health data partnerships with government and non-government agencies to analyse data, identify gaps in funding and support investment.	b) Funding partnerships are established with relevant agencies to explore per capita health funding parity and opportunities to address health disparity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
4.3: Strengthen Medicare claiming and reinvest self-generated income.	c) Medicare revenue is utilised to drive workforce and health and wellbeing service development.
4.4: Facilities and asset management planning that recognises our primary health care infrastructure growth throughout the ACT.	d) A Facilities and Asset Management plan that prioritises financial risk tolerances and risk ownership for maintaining new and existing primary health care infrastructure.

Tackling the underlying health and wellbeing disadvantages experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will require securing health funding parity and is a necessary first step to meet the current and future primary health infrastructure demands in the ACT and surrounding region. This will require further investment in capital infrastructure, enhanced operating budgets and resources that are achieved through detailed co-design, planning and workforce development with Commonwealth and ACT governments.

We seek partnerships with these funder providers to secure funding that amounts to the average ACT primary health care cost per capita amount and advance health and wellbeing, education, and health promotion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We will also partner with private and not for profit agencies who have shared interests and alignment with our strategic priorities and research charter.

Winnunga will prioritise optimisation of Medicare income to be clear on what is claimable for individual clients as they are encouraged to complete their full cycles of care and treatment. As we expand our service footprint, we will ensure our facilities are appropriately resourced and enable Winnunga clients, patients and staff to enjoy the delivery of world class, culturally safe health and wellbeing care and treatment.

Strategic Goal 5: Grow influence to shape the agenda for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.

STRATEGIES FOR ACTION	BROAD OUTCOME MEASURES
5.1: Review and develop our governance mechanisms that target the delivery of our strategic actions.	a) Participation in approved systems of clinical and corporate governance that target the development and delivery of strategic and operational business plans.
5.2: Build a research capacity and evidence base to shape policy and undertake advocacy.	b) Winnunga informs a culturally safe, health and wellbeing research agenda, advocating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination and a health system free from racism.
5.3: Strengthen systems to enable Winnunga to influence health and wellbeing policy, funding and governance.	c) Winnunga is involved in jurisdictional health and wellbeing policy development, decision making and governance.
5.4: Provide jurisdictional leadership and collaboration to promote health system change consistent with the Closing the Gap Priority Reforms.	d) Increased confidence and investment that supports the growth of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations.

Winnunga applies a multi-pronged approach to achieving good governance at every level within the organisation. It is built upon developing strong leadership that fosters evidence based best practice health service and treatment options. It also includes identifying research opportunities and evidence gathering to identify barriers and improvement strategies for increasing positive Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes in the ACT and surrounding region. This means influencing a research charter that guides our levels of participation, that values community-controlled health and wellbeing and prioritises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership, self-determination, truth telling and partnerships with government agencies, peak bodies and other relevant approved research partners.

Strategic Goal 6: Culturally competent systems and services.

STRATEGIES FOR ACTION	BROAD OUTCOME MEASURES
6.1: Organisational cultural competency is achieved by leadership, governance and investment.	a) Winnunga Board and Senior Management approval and implementation of a Cultural Capability Action and Implementation Plan.
6.2: Design Winnunga health systems that prioritise culturally safe care and treatment for clients and community.	b) Winnunga policy and procedures, including staff performance reviews are utilised to shape healthcare and treatments that are free from racism.
6.2: Client and community cultural needs are met when visiting Winnunga.	c) Cultural safety is embedded in client / patient and family centred health and wellbeing assessments, planning, coordination and reviews.

The Winnunga Board recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competency as integral for addressing health inequities and racism experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Winnunga management will continue to consult and engage client and staff on what is needed to deliver a fit for purpose Winnunga Cultural Capability Action and Implementation Plan. We will focus on development of internal systems that prioritise culturally safe care and treatments, ensuring they are available and provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who access Winnunga services.



Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health and Community Services
2025

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