

We Care NSW

Nyumbah Garihma Strategy

June 2025



Introduction



Acknowledgement of Country

We Care NSW acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the country on which we work and live, especially the Wonnarua, Awabakal, Worimi, Gumbaynggir and Bundjalung Nations. We recognise the strong and ongoing connection with the land and water ways. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and Elders both past and present.

The **Nyuhmba Garihma Strategy** establishes the basis on which We Care NSW will support the recruitment, development and retention of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.

Nyuhmba and Garihma are Bundjalung words. Nyuhmba meaning “show, guide or teach” and Garihma meaning “take care of” or “care for”. These two words embrace the intention of the strategy.

The strategy outlines the commitment We Care NSW has to employing, developing (Nyuhmba) and caring for (Garihma) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within We Care.

We Care NSW has a service provision footprint in Bundjalung, Gumbaynggir, Wonnarua, Awabakal and Worimi country. This strategy has been named to honour the language of the Bundjalung and Gumbaynggir people.

Director's Message

As the owner and Director of We Care NSW and a proud Wonnarua man I recognise the need for a strategy targeted to a broad range of support mechanisms that encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to seek employment in both the disability and out of home care sectors.

The Nyuhmba Garihma Strategy is needed to enable We Care NSW to provide safe, trusted and culturally appropriate services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who as a population,

- have a higher rate of disability than non-Aboriginal people in NSW with the nature of the disability being more complex often including psycho-social challenges or multiple health issues
- are at a greater risk of experiencing problems accessing disability services and
- are over represented in out of home care with this on the rise

The Nyuhmba Garihma Strategy aims to fulfill:

- Our Dream for a community where each individual is empowered to have choice and opportunity to achieve their goals and participate fully across all aspects of their lives and
- Our Belief in supporting our staff to develop and share their expertise and to build the capacity of staff, participants, stakeholders and the community.



Director, We Care NSW

Why a targeted workforce strategy



As an Aboriginal owned and operated organisation providing services to the most vulnerable, children, young people and adults in our communities it is essential that We Care NSW is equipped to deliver programs and services that reflect the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and adults in our care.

The unique skills of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are needed to ensure that We Care services and programs are delivered in culturally appropriate ways. These unique skills also assist We Care to respond appropriately to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are often expected to continually switch between cultures while in the workplace which can be overly demanding on them as employees, so support strategies are essential for ensuring employee wellbeing and avoiding burnout.

A strategy that embraces employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and includes actions targeted at support, development and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff as well as the development of cultural capability for non-Aboriginal staff, is key to enabling the best outcomes for Aboriginal children, young people and vulnerable adults in our care.

The Nyuhmba Garihma Strategy also provides a mechanism for building the We Care Values into actions that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. In particular the values of Respect and Empowerment in which we honour voice, choice and identity to enable people to be leaders in their own story.

Strategic Focus Areas



01

Attracting and recruiting a talented Workforce

To support the development of a strong and sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce across all levels and services within We Care NSW

02

Creating inclusive and respectful workplaces

To support the embedding of culturally safe work practices that provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees with a safe, supportive work environment

03

Supporting career growth and professional development

To foster opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to pursue their career aspirations in a supportive workplace



Our Guiding Principles

Inclusion

The We Care workplace is inclusive, free from racism and a place where all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees are treated with respect.

For us Respect is an attitude of honouring ourselves and others as people of value, and caring for the dignity of all individuals.

Value

Recognise and value the perspectives and lived experiences Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees bring to our organisation, and the support of children young people and vulnerable adults we care for.

Self determination

Honouring voice, choice and identity to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to be leaders in their own story.

We value empowerment and enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to voice their ideas and concerns and participate as equal partners in decision making.

Cultural Safety

Create an environment where everyone listens without judgement and gives 100% to creating and maintaining a workplace that supports the physical, cultural and psychological wellbeing of all.

Objectives

Objective 1

Provide access to employment through vocational traineeships and internship opportunities at We Care NSW

Objective 2

Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to 50% of the total workforce at We Care NSW

Objective 3

Provide access to development programs and opportunities to support staff retention and career progression

Objective 4

Provide consultative mechanisms to give a voice to the perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff

Objective 5

Create and maintain a culturally sensitive and capable workforce to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and the children, young people and vulnerable adults we care for.



OBJECTIVE 1 Supporting Actions

Provide access to employment through vocational traineeships and internship opportunities at We Care NSW

Anti-Discrimination Board Exemption to enable targeted advertising of vacant positions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people.

Exemption in place until October 2031

Targeted selection for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants for Certificate III and IV Traineeships in Community Services / Individual Support / Business Administration

Ongoing targeted recruitment advertising for vacant positions at all levels, across all services

Internships targeted for Aboriginal Provisional Psychologists to complete their supervised training with a view to an offer of employment upon full registration

2 x Scholarships for Aboriginal Psychology students at Newcastle University at Masters and Degree level together with placement opportunities with We Care NSW

OBJECTIVE 2 Supporting Actions

Increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to 50% of the total workforce at We Care NSW

Objective supported by actions outlined in objectives 1 and 3-5

OBJECTIVE 3 Supporting Actions

Provide access to development programs and opportunities to support staff retention and career progression

Targeted recruitment advertising to attract Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants

Provision of ongoing development opportunities through vocational education qualification programs at the Certificate IV and Diploma level in Community Services / Youth Work to support retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees

Behaviour Support Practitioner(BSP)-in-Training and Junior BSP development programmes for 3rd year+ degree psychology students

Higher duties opportunities advertised internally to support opportunities for career development

OBJECTIVE 4 Supporting Actions

Provide consultative mechanisms to give a voice to the perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff

Aboriginal Advisory Group established to provide mechanism for consultation and collaboration regarding organisational decision making, policy development and cultural considerations

Consult on the use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Frameworks as a basis for identifying capabilities required to support respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees

OBJECTIVE 5 Supporting Actions

Create and maintain a culturally sensitive and capable workforce to support both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and the people we serve

Develop and deliver Aboriginal Cultural Awareness e-learning program as mandatory education for all non-Aboriginal employees

Utilise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Frameworks to establish expectations for all staff regarding respectful and appropriate behaviour and build into people management activities including Yarnin' for Growth Discussions

Identify and utilise Aboriginal language where appropriate when developing strategic documents and internal employee related programs to honour Aboriginal language and support the inclusion of such language into mainstream usage

Display Aboriginal artwork in all workplaces to support a culturally safe work environment

Promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural events and actively encourage non-Aboriginal staff to attend such events

All team leaders, managers and corporate staff develop their own personally meaningful Acknowledgement of Country and are comfortable delivering the Acknowledgement at any meeting or event

Monitoring and Evaluation

3 year Strategic Plan and Operational Plans

The supporting actions for the five objectives outlined in this plan are incorporated in the We Care Strategic Plan which is reviewed on an ongoing basis and updated annually. Actions identified in the Strategic plan are then added to the annual operational plans of the relevant service area. Operational plans are monitored and reported on monthly to track progress of identified actions.

Your Voice Staff Survey

The Your Voice Staff Survey is a key mechanism for staff feedback. This survey is conducted every 18 - 20 months and includes specific questions related to our values, cultural safety, support and engagement of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.

Aboriginal Advisory Group

The Aboriginal Advisory Group is a small group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees who meet on a semi regular basis to:

- provide feedback about the experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees with We Care,
- contribute a cultural perspective to organisational decision making, and
- provide input to proposed organisational strategies and contribute to decision making

Measures

- Proportion of all We Care employees who have identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander progressively increasing to 50% over 5 years
- eLearning Cultural Awareness Program implemented in 2025 as mandatory training for all non-Aboriginal staff
- 2 x Aboriginal targeted Scholarship places filled each year
- Number of Aboriginal scholarships, internships and Psychology job placements transitioning to employment with We Care



We Dream

for a community where each individual is empowered to have choice and opportunity to achieve their goals and participate fully across all aspects of their lives.



We Deliver

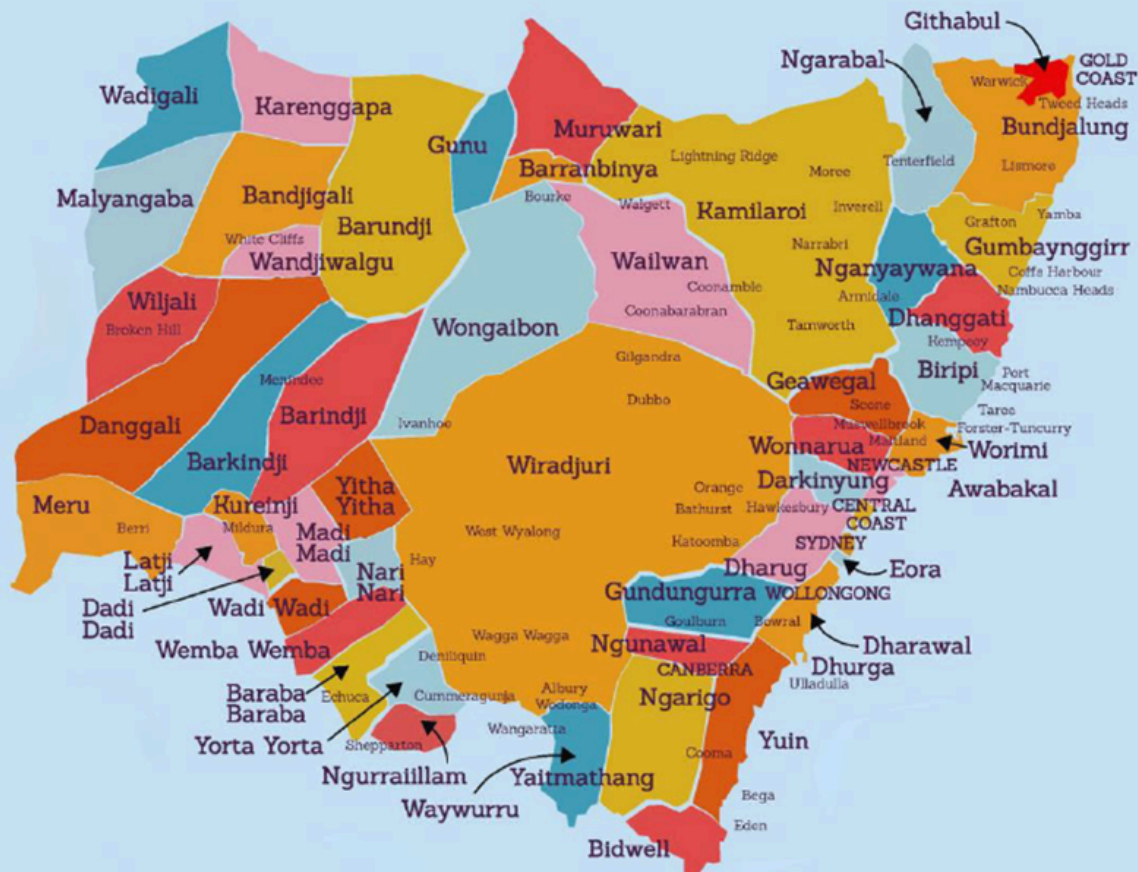
trauma-informed and person-centred supports within a culturally sensitive environment.



We Believe

in supporting our staff to develop and share their expertise and to build the capacity of staff, participants, stakeholders and the community.

ABORIGINAL NATIONS/LANGUAGES IN NSW & ACT





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