Interwoven 2014
© Jessica Birk

*Interwoven* illustrates the services that HealthShare NSW provides to the NSW public health system while simultaneously representing the Aboriginal methods of service: caring for country and people.

The tessellated panel along the left side represents the **diversity** of New South Wales’ Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal inhabitants – our different nations, languages and families.

The centre panel illustrates the varied landscape of the State from the sharks and pipi shells found on the coast to the goanna and berries found inland. The message stick represents **communication** and the songlines weave everything together, representing the importance of **collaboration**.

On the right, the mountain ranges and rivers represents **unification** of land, sky and water and the importance of the people of the State **working together**, while the silhouetted eagle flying purposely overhead represents **leadership** and **direction** and illustrates HealthShare NSW’s commitment to Closing the Gap in Aboriginal employment.

**HealthShare NSW acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this land and the many Aboriginal tribes of New South Wales.**

**We pay our respect to Elders past and present and acknowledge Aboriginal people’s connection to country, culture and heritage.**

Jessica Birk, born in 1984 on the Northern Beaches of Sydney, is a proud descendant of the Yaegl people from The Clarence Valley in the Northern Rivers region of NSW. Through her art Jessica asserts herself as a contemporary storyteller of the Yaegl people and more personally as an Aboriginal woman living off country.

Jessica has a strong connection to both Northern Sydney, where she grew up, and the Northern Rivers region of NSW from where she is descended. For Jessica, the notion of belonging is an abstract one and she aims to develop a visual language that enables her audience to grasp the implicitly rich understanding of a landscape where belonging means knowing your country intimately. As such, every component of her images has a meaning where the colours, the patterns and the forms all combine to visually articulate the ‘holistic’ experience of the landscapes.

Jessica graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the College of Fine Arts at the University of New South Wales in 2007.
Overview

The HealthShare NSW Aboriginal Employment Strategy identifies key initiatives to increase employment of Aboriginal people across the organisation. Committing to increasing employment of Aboriginal people creates the opportunity for HealthShare NSW to contribute to helping to Close the Gap.

The Aboriginal Employment Strategy is the action plan to ensure HealthShare NSW achieves the benchmark set by the NSW state government of 2.6% of employees being of Aboriginal background by 2015. HealthShare NSW currently employs around 7,000 staff. Our Aboriginal workforce represents around 1.8 per cent of the total.

Three key actions form the basis of our strategy:

1. We will work with Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal employment agencies to **seek people with the skills** we need to join our teams.

2. We will improve the ways we guide and support our current Aboriginal staff, using **career planning and training to strengthen skills** and provide opportunities.

3. We will continue to **enhance our knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal culture**, customs and heritage through the ‘Respecting the Difference’ Aboriginal Cultural training.

Leadership and commitment will be crucial to our success. We have set ourselves an ambitious goal but these three actions are clear and simple.
Our State

New South Wales has the largest Aboriginal population of the States. In 2011, an estimated 172,621 Aboriginal people were living in NSW, comprising 2.5% of the total population of the state and 31.5% of the total Aboriginal population in Australia. The Aboriginal population of NSW is young, with approximately 36% of the population under 15 years of age, compared to 19% of the non-Aboriginal population.

In 2011 in NSW, the labour force participation rate for the Aboriginal population aged 15-64 years was estimated to be 54%, with 15% of the Aboriginal labour force unemployed. In comparison, the labour force participation rate for non-Aboriginal population was 78%, with 5% of non-Aboriginal people unemployed (ABS 2011).

Definition of Aboriginality

Within this document the term ‘Aboriginal’ refers specifically to Aboriginal people of NSW. The definition of Aboriginal person, as defined within by the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 (NSW)* is a person who:

1. is of Aboriginal descent,
2. identifies as an Aboriginal person, and
3. is accepted by the Aboriginal community in which he or she lives.

It is important for HealthShare NSW to continue to improve the collection of employment data allowing staff to identify in order to measure the effectiveness of employment and recruitment activities under the Strategy.

Relevant legislation

- *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 (NSW)*
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)*
NSW Health Aboriginal Strategic Framework

Good Health – Great Jobs

The Aboriginal Employment Strategy sits beneath the NSW Health Aboriginal Workforce Strategic Framework 2011–2015. The key priorities of the Framework are to:

- Increase the representation of Aboriginal employees by 2.6% across the NSW public health sector;
- Increase the representation of Aboriginal people working across all professions;
- Develop partnerships between the health and education sectors to deliver real change for Aboriginal people wanting to enter the health workforce and improve career pathways for existing Aboriginal staff;
- Provide leadership and planning in Aboriginal workforce development;
- Tap into the increasing pool of Aboriginal university graduates undertaking health courses; and
- Build a NSW Health workforce which closes the gap in health outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, providing culturally safe and competent health services.
# Healthshare NSW Workforce Profile

## As at January 2014

### HealthShare Aboriginal Workforce

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Directorate/Business Unit by Employment Type</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information Services</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enable</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food &amp; Hotel Services</td>
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<td>97</td>
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<tr>
<td>Linen Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service Centre – Finance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service Centre – Procurement &amp; Logistics</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Centre – Recruitment &amp; Employee Transactions</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workforce</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>35</strong></td>
<td><strong>90</strong></td>
<td><strong>125</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### HealthShare NSW Aboriginal Workforce

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Type</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Casual</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Permanent Full-time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Permanent Part-time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Temporary Full-time</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Part-time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HealthShare NSW Aboriginal workforce data as at January 2014.
Framework of the Strategy

Our Three Goals

1. We will work with Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal employment agencies to seek people with the skills we need to join our teams.
2. We will improve the ways we guide and support our current Aboriginal staff, using career planning and training to strengthen skills and provide opportunities.
3. We will continue to enhance our knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal culture, customs and heritage through the ‘Respecting the Difference’ Aboriginal Cultural training.

1. Our Commitment to new Aboriginal employees

HealthShare NSW is committed to increasing the overall representation of Aboriginal employees to exceed the benchmark of 2.6%.

We also need to improve employment across our business lines. Currently most of our Aboriginal employees work in Food Hotel Services and Linen Service areas which are key business lines of the organisation. New Aboriginal employment opportunities will focus on Aboriginal people gaining employment in our Service Centres and in our Corporate Office teams.

Goal 1 – Key Activities

1.1 Develop and implement an advertising strategy to promote HealthShare NSW to key Aboriginal media and across Aboriginal community services, i.e. Aboriginal Land Councils, Aboriginal Medical Services and Employment Services.
1.2 Develop and establish partnerships with employment services so we regularly identify potential employees.
1.3 Ensure our recruitment process are culturally appropriate to maximise opportunities for Aboriginal people to gain employment.
1.4 Develop an Employment Resource Toolkit for Aboriginal job seekers.
1.5 Work in partnership with employment services and Aboriginal Education Training units to develop and implement an employment pathway program.
1.6 Work with universities to raise our profile and establish a pathway for graduates to consider employment with HealthShare NSW.
1.7 As part of the employment pathway program, provide Aboriginal students recruited to HealthShare NSW with a Mentor to ensure students are supported and guided during the first 12 months of employment.
Aboriginal Identified and Targeted positions

HealthShare NSW will ensure there are a number of positions for Aboriginal community members to apply for. A number of mainstream positions will be targeted to recruit Aboriginal people.

Targeted positions are mainstream positions that are filled using advertising and recruitment strategies designed to maximise applications from Aboriginal people. Aboriginal culture knowledge is not an essential occupational qualification and therefore is not compulsory requirement of an applicant.

Our Identified positions will remain limited. Identified positions are those in which Aboriginality is a genuine occupational qualification. Identified positions work directly with Aboriginal people and are involved in developing and/or delivering services and programs which have an impact on Aboriginal people and/or deal with the Aboriginal community.

The Aboriginal Employment Resource Toolkit

Our Toolkit focuses on clear, culturally appropriate advice to guide Aboriginal job seekers and our Managers.

The Toolkit features Factsheets:
• Overview of HealthShare NSW
• How to apply for a job
• Sample job applications addressing common generic selection criteria
• A step by step guide to applying for a job
• Tips on the interview process
• Career pathway planning
• What is an Identified position
• What is a Targeted position
• Confirmation of Aboriginality
• EEO Data Collection
• NAIDOC Leave
• Welcome to Country

Recruitment Procedures

Pre-Interviews
A register of interest will be established where interested job seekers can submit their Resume to our Workforce team. Pre-interviews will be undertaken throughout the year. Job seekers through this process can be considered for recruitment to a Targeted position based on experience.

Advertising Positions
When advertising vacancies efforts will be made to engage Aboriginal media units and key Aboriginal services, these include the Koori Mail, Aboriginal Employment agencies, key Aboriginal organisations and Aboriginal Education units at both universities and TAFE Campuses.
Selection Panels
To provide greater awareness of cultural communication during an interview all Aboriginal Identified positions will require an Aboriginal person to participate on the panel.

During recruitment to Targeted positions, the Convenor of the selection panel needs to ensure an Aboriginal person participates on the panel, if an Aboriginal person is not available all panels members must have completed ‘Respecting the Difference’ Aboriginal Cultural Training.

2. **Our commitment to our Aboriginal Workforce**

Our key approach to supporting our existing Aboriginal employees is to use career planning and training to build skills and enhance opportunity.

**Goal 2 – Key Activities**

2.1 Always have an HR Business Partner to work with our Aboriginal workforce

2.2 Work with Managers to ensure all Aboriginal employees have a Performance Development Review and career plans.

2.3 Encourage Aboriginal employees to identify career development opportunities through career plans.

2.4 Create opportunities for informal and formal mentor support

2.5 Encourage and motivate Aboriginal staff to identify by implementing an internal identification promotional campaign to encourage EEO reporting for Aboriginal employees.

2.6 Establish and maintain support networks for HealthShare NSW staff to attend.
3. **Our commitment to building workplaces in which Aboriginal culture is valued and respected**

HealthShare NSW is committed to continuing to promote Aboriginal culture and heritage within the organisation.

**Goal 3 – Key Activities**

3.1 Continue to deliver ‘Respecting the Difference’ Aboriginal Cultural training across business lines.

3.2 Ensure Aboriginality and diversity is reflected in HealthShare NSW corporate documents

3.3 Promote key Aboriginal events, including NAIDOC Week, National Sorry Day, Close the Gap Day and Reconciliation Week.