

Position Description

First Nations Workforce & Development Lead

Classification:	HS 5
Business unit/department:	First Nations Health & People & Culture
Work location:	Austin Hospital ☒ Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital ☒ Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre ☒ Other ☐ (please specify)
Agreement:	Victorian Public Health Sector (Health and Allied Services, Managers and Administrative Officers) (Single Interest Employers) Enterprise Agreement 2021-2025
Employment type:	Part-Time
Hours per week:	32 negotiable
Reports to:	First Nations Director & Diversity & Inclusion Manager
Direct reports:	N/A
Financial management:	Budget: Nil
Date:	October 2025

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which Austin Health operates, the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

As this is an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait designated position, only applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples will be accepted. We acknowledge the deep and enduring connection that First Nations Peoples have to this land, and we honour their strength, resilience, and leadership. We are committed to creating a culturally safe and supportive workplace where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices are heard, valued, and empowered.

About Austin Health

Austin Health is recognised for high-quality, person-centred care. We're renowned for our specialist work in cancer, transplantation, infectious diseases, obesity, sleep medicine, intensive care medicine, neurology, endocrinology, mental health and rehabilitation.

We're the largest Victorian provider of training for specialist physicians and surgeons, and internationally recognised as a centre of excellence in hospital-based research.

Our services are delivered to patients across four main sites in Melbourne, in locations across our community, in people's homes, and within regional hospitals across Victoria.

We aim to provide an inclusive culture where all staff can contribute to the best of their ability and strive to develop further. We recognise that our people are our greatest strength. We want them to thrive, be their best selves and feel engaged, safe and empowered. To achieve this, diversity and inclusion is essential to our culture and our values.

Position purpose

The First Nations Workforce & Development Lead plays a pivotal role in advancing Austin Health’s commitment to reconciliation, cultural safety, and Aboriginal workforce development. This role provides end-to-end support across the employee lifecycle for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff – from attraction and recruitment through onboarding, retention, career development, and progression.

Working in partnership with the Director of First Nations Health and the People & Culture team, the role leads initiatives aligned with the Aboriginal Employment Plan and Cultural Safety Plan. It designs and delivers culturally safe recruitment strategies, builds trusted relationships with Aboriginal communities and stakeholders, and fosters inclusive pathways into healthcare careers.

The Workforce & Development Lead supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff through mentoring, coaching, and advocacy, ensuring they feel safe, valued, and empowered in their roles. By embedding cultural safety into workforce practices and strengthening internal capability, the role contributes to improved health outcomes, workforce diversity, and organisational transformation.

This role offers a meaningful career trajectory for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professionals passionate about workforce development, cultural safety, and leadership. Potential career progression includes senior leadership roles within People & Culture, Diversity & Inclusion, or First Nations Health portfolios. Opportunities also exist to transition into strategic advisory positions, policy development, or executive roles focused on Aboriginal health equity and organisational transformation.

About the First Nations Health Unit

The First Nations Health Unit at Austin Health is a strategic department established to lead and coordinate efforts that improve the health, wellbeing, and cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Led by the Director of First Nations Health, the Unit drives key initiatives including the implementation of the Cultural Safety Plan, Aboriginal Employment Plan, and oversight of the Ngarra Jarra Aboriginal Health Service.

The First Nations Unit’s core responsibilities include embedding cultural safety across all services, supporting Aboriginal workforce development, leading cultural education programs, and strengthening engagement with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations. It plays a central role in truth-telling, reconciliation, and improving institutional understanding of the historical and ongoing impacts of racism and colonisation on health outcomes.



Organisational Context

The First Nations Workforce & Development Lead is a dedicated role within Austin Health's First Nations Health Unit, which operates under the leadership of the Director of First Nations Health. The Unit is responsible for driving strategic initiatives that improve cultural safety, Aboriginal health outcomes, and workforce development across the organisation.

This role is jointly positioned within the First Nations Health Unit and the People & Culture team, enabling a dual focus on strategic cultural safety and operational workforce practices. The Workforce & Development Lead contributes to these goals by supporting the attraction, recruitment, retention, and career development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, and by embedding cultural safety into employment pathways and organisational culture.

The role works closely with Aboriginal community stakeholders, Traditional Owners, and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) to co-design culturally safe workforce initiatives. It also partners with internal teams to ensure First Nations perspectives are integrated into recruitment, onboarding, staff development, and retention strategies across Austin Health.

The Workforce & Development Lead is a key enabler of Austin Health's Aboriginal Employment Plan and Cultural Safety Plan, and contributes to broader organisational strategies led by the Director of First Nations Health, including reconciliation, truth-telling, and community engagement.

Position responsibilities

Role Specific:

To perform this role, it is essential that the incumbent is an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person. It is therefore a genuine occupational requirement under section 25 of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991.

- Lead the design and delivery of culturally safe recruitment, onboarding, and retention strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff across Austin Health.
- Support the implementation of the Aboriginal Employment Plan and Cultural Safety Plan, in partnership with the Director of First Nations Health and People & Culture.
- Provide end-to-end support across the employee lifecycle, including mentoring, career development, and progression pathways.
- Strengthen relationships with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), Traditional Owners, and community stakeholders to co-design employment pathways.
- Collaborate with internal teams to embed cultural safety into workforce practices, policies, and systems.
- Monitor and report on workforce KPIs including recruitment outcomes, retention rates, staff engagement, and career progression.
- Contribute to strategic initiatives that improve staff wellbeing, cultural capability, and organisational responsiveness to First Nations workforce needs.
- Support the Aboriginal Employee Network and facilitate culturally safe dialogue between staff, leadership, and community.
- Promote Austin Health as an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through targeted outreach and engagement.

Education

- Design and deliver culturally safe education and onboarding programs that support Aboriginal staff



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development and retention.

- Provide mentorship and coaching to First Nations staff, fostering career progression and confidence in the workplace.
- Collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to develop learning resources and address cultural and environmental barriers to effective learning.

Research

- Promote and apply evidence-based practices that improve cultural safety and workforce outcomes.
- Support and participate in research projects that address gaps in Aboriginal workforce development and retention.
- Share insights and outcomes through presentations, forums, and internal reporting to inform continuous improvement.

Support of Systems

- Embed cultural safety and Aboriginal workforce priorities into organisational policies, procedures, and strategic initiatives.
- Lead and support quality improvement activities using data, audits, and feedback to inform workforce strategies.
- Build capability in the use of clinical and workforce systems to monitor progress and support First Nations staff.

Professional Leadership

- Champion culturally safe leadership practices and support others to develop communication and leadership skills.
- Facilitate feedback, goal setting, and professional growth for Aboriginal staff across all career stages.
- Model adaptability, emotional intelligence, and inclusive leadership to foster a safe and empowering workplace culture.

Selection criteria

Identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander position. NB applicant's race is a genuine occupational qualification and is authorised by Section 14d of the New South Wales Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 and the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 Special measures section.

- Demonstrated experience in designing and delivering culturally safe workforce initiatives, including recruitment, onboarding, retention, and career development for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.
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- Proven ability to mentor, coach, and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees across all career stages, fostering wellbeing, engagement, and progression.
- Strong understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural values, employment barriers, and community expectations, with experience in co-designing workforce strategies with ACCOs and Traditional Owners.
- Ability to embed Aboriginal perspectives into workforce policy, planning, and organisational development, aligned with Austin Health's Aboriginal Employment Plan and Cultural Safety Plan.
- High-level interpersonal, communication, and emotional intelligence skills, with the ability to influence senior leaders and build trusted relationships across diverse teams.
- Experience in monitoring and reporting on workforce KPIs, and contributing to strategic planning, evaluation, and continuous improvement processes.
- Sound understanding of relevant regulatory frameworks, strategic priorities, and government



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directions related to Aboriginal employment and cultural safety.

Desirable but not essential:

- Demonstrated high level organisational and administrative skills and an ability to work effectively with others
- Postgraduate qualification or working towards one in Human Resources, Public Health, Leadership, or a related field.
- Experience in public sector workforce development, recruitment, or diversity and inclusion.
- Sound understanding of information technology including clinical systems and Microsoft Office suite

Quality, safety and risk – all roles

All Austin Health employees are required to:

- Maintain a safe working environment for yourself, colleagues and members of the public by following organisational safety, quality and risk policies and guidelines.
- Escalate concerns regarding safety, quality and risk to the appropriate staff member, if unable to rectify yourself.
- Promote and participate in the evaluation and continuous improvement processes.
- Comply with the principles of person-centered care.
- Comply with requirements of National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards and other relevant regulatory requirements.

Other conditions – all roles

All Austin Health employees are required to:

- Adhere to Austin Health's core values: *our actions show we care, we bring our best, together we achieve, and we shape the future.*
- Comply with the Austin Health's Code of Conduct policy, as well as all other policies and procedures (as amended from time to time).
- Comply with all Austin Health mandatory training and continuing professional development requirements.
- Provide proof of immunity to nominated vaccine preventable diseases in accordance with Austin Health's immunisation screening policy.
- Work across multiple sites as per work requirements and/or directed by management.

General information

Equal Opportunity Employer

We celebrate, value, and include people of all backgrounds, genders, identities, cultures, bodies, and abilities. We welcome and support applications from talented people identifying as Aboriginal and/or



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Torres Strait Islander, people with disability, neurodiverse people, LGBTQIA+ and people of all ages and cultures.

Austin Health is a child safe environment

We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. Austin Health has zero tolerance for any form of child abuse and commits to protect children. We take allegations of abuse and neglect seriously and will make every effort to mitigate and respond to risk in line with hospital policy and procedures.



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