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Indigenous artwork celebrates reconciliation progress

Accomplished First Nations artist Riki Salam has designed striking new artwork for Brisbane North PHN to inspire the organisation's continuing reconciliation journey.

The artwork 'Flowing Knowledge, Healing Country' was commissioned to represent the PHN's vision for reconciliation and its launch marks the first anniversary of the endorsement by Reconciliation Australia of the PHN's Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Riki Salam, who runs Indigenous art, design and communications agency [We Are 27 Creative](#), said his work aimed to reflect the PHN's commitment to reconciliation.

"I had been invited to a workshop at which Brisbane North PHN staff came up with their vision for reconciliation and drew upon their ideas in creating my design," Riki said.

"What struck me most profoundly was the PHN's desire to make their networks and places of practice culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples," he said.

"The artwork depicts land and landscape between a body of water. Water flows through the centre.

"The depiction of the water represents the geographical river systems that are found throughout the Brisbane North PHN region.

"We are all connected by water. Metaphorically these bodies of water represent our stories and the exchange of knowledge – knowledge of the land, its people and its law.

"Through these connections, trade routes are established, the exchange of knowledge informs us of how we look after Country and how Country looks after us – sustaining us with food and water to survive and providing us with medicine to heal.

"The central symbol represents Brisbane North PHN. It is the hub and the main meeting place of health knowledge connected to Country.

"The two symbols either side represent both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and knowledges – where traditional meet with contemporary, two ways of living and learning.

"On different levels the three main symbols also represent, past, present and the future and the reconciliation directives of respect, relationships and opportunities," Riki said.

Brisbane North PHN Chief Executive Officer Libby Dunstan said staff had overwhelmingly embraced the artwork.

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“We can’t wait to use Riki’s designs in our corporate branding. They are just so beautiful,” Libby said.

“This is a significant moment in our reconciliation journey. Over the past year, our staff have been immersed in the RAP reflection process with support from our Board of Directors,” she said.

“Every team in our organisation has developed a statement on how they can contribute to reconciliation through their day-to-day work.

“The collective stories of our staff were critical to Riki’s creative process to craft his beautiful art for the PHN.

“We have diligently worked through the 50 actions identified in our RAP and are now preparing to move from a process of reflection to implementation.

“I am grateful for the continuing support we have received from Reconciliation Australia and look forward to working on our Innovate RAP in the near future,” Libby said.

The PHN’s Reflect RAP is available to view at <https://bnphn.org/RAP>.

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Editor’s note:

High definition images are available for print publications here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/w0xndnriekaslay/AAB-uBtp-bPJWnmDa7dNuDUna?dl=0>

About Brisbane North PHN

Brisbane North PHN is one of 31 Primary Health Networks nationwide and supports clinicians and communities within North Brisbane, Moreton Bay and parts of the Somerset region. The PHN covers approximately 4,100 km² of urban, regional and rural areas, with a population of over one million.

The key objectives of the PHN are:

- increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of medical services for patients, particularly those at risk of poor health outcomes, and
- improving coordination of care to ensure patients receive the right care in the right place at the right time.