



# Acknowledgement of Country

## Policy and Guidelines

### 1. Introduction

Activity to fulfil the mission of the Advanced Pharmacy Australia (AdPha) is bound by policies and procedures that promote equal opportunity, access, treatment, quality use of medicines and respect regardless of race, religion, age, national origin, language, sex, sexual orientation, or mental or physical ability.

In 2018 the AdPha Board of Directors endorsed the [Uluru Statement from the Heart](#), which seeks to enshrine a representative First Nations Voice within the Australian Constitution.

In 2023 the AdPha's Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) was endorsed by Reconciliation Australia.

AdPha is committed to meaningful actions that contribute to a reconciled Australia. As part of the commitment given in the Reflect RAP, AdPha undertook to increase staff's awareness of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.

### 2. Purpose

Incorporating Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country into meetings, gatherings, and events shows respect by upholding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols.

Taking the time to Acknowledge Country, or including a Welcome to Country at an event, reminds us that every day we live, work, and dream on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands.

### **Welcome to Country**

Protocols for welcoming visitors to Country have always been a part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. Boundaries were clear, and crossing into another group's Country required a request for permission to enter.

When permission was granted the hosting group would welcome the visitors, offering them safe passage and protection of their spiritual being during the journey. Visitors had to respect the protocols and rules of the land owner group while on their Country.

Today, while these protocols have been adapted to contemporary circumstances, the essential elements remain: welcoming visitors and respect for Country.

Welcome to Country is delivered by Traditional Owners, or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have been given permission from Traditional Owners, to welcome visitors to their Country<sup>1</sup>.

### **Acknowledgement of Country**

An Acknowledgement of Country is an opportunity for anyone to show respect for Traditional Owners and the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Country.

An Acknowledgement of Country can be offered by any person and like a Welcome to Country, is given at the beginning of a meeting, speech or event.

There is no specific wording for an Acknowledgement of Country, just be sincere and, if possible, do some research on the Country you are acknowledging<sup>2</sup>. Wording that is personalised or localised can make the Acknowledgement more meaningful.

## **3. Policy**

AdPha will offer a Welcome to Country at all formal events. Formal events include:

- National gatherings (for example a Medicines Leadership Forum)
- Medicines Management Conference

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<sup>1</sup> Reconciliation Australia <https://www.reconciliation.org.au/reconciliation/acknowledgement-of-country-and-welcome-to-country/> Accessed 15 December 2023

<sup>2</sup> Reconciliation Australia <https://www.reconciliation.org.au/reconciliation/acknowledgement-of-country-and-welcome-to-country/> Accessed 15 December 2023

AdPha will offer an Acknowledgement of Country at all formal meetings. Formal meetings include, but are not limited to:

- Board Meetings
- Branch Committee Meetings
- Leadership Committee Meetings
- CPD Events and seminars
- All Hands staff meetings

First and subsequent speakers may acknowledge country during the program or event.

Acknowledgement of Country will also be attached to any formal printed collateral, including, but not limited to:

- Websites
- Annual Reports
- Pharmacy Forecast

And utilised in opening slides for all AdPha Education and events, including formal presentations given outside the organisation.

Meetings of staff (with or without guests) that occur on a regular, routine or day-to-day basis are not expected to commence with an Acknowledgment of Country, however staff are welcome to include one if they wish.

## 4. Guidelines

The following guidelines outline appropriate approaches for preparing and verbally delivering Acknowledgment of Country for events, gatherings and meetings associated with any AdPha Secretariat or AdPha Branch business.

Information in this document has been collated from two primary sources:

- National Indigenous Australian Agency (NIAA) of the Australian Government, through [indigenous.gov.au](http://indigenous.gov.au)
- Reconciliation Australia (non-government not-for-profit) through [reconciliation.org.au](http://reconciliation.org.au)

AdPha's Acknowledgment of Country Guidelines are endorsed by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Leadership Committee (version 1: September 2020).

### Welcome to Country

Protocols for welcoming visitors to Country have been a part of Aboriginal and Torres

Strait Islander cultures for thousands of years. Welcome to Country involves request and permission for one group to enter another's Country, through which the hosting group welcomes the visitors, offers them safe passage and protection of their spiritual being during the journey. Welcome to Country sees the visiting group respect the protocols and rules of the land owner group while on their Country<sup>3</sup>.

Traditional protocols have been adapted to contemporary circumstances. A Welcome to Country can take many forms including singing, dancing, smoking ceremonies or a speech in traditional language or English.

*If a Traditional Owner is not available to do a Welcome to Country, an Acknowledgement of Country can be delivered instead.*

### **Templates for Acknowledgment of Country before AdPha business**

An Acknowledgement of Country should be delivered as part of Welcome and/or Housekeeping across all AdPha meetings, events and activities. If Acknowledgement of Country is to be delivered, it is important this occurs before business begins.

Three options for Acknowledgment of Country format are advised by the NIAA: generic, specific and general (national).

#### **4.1 Generic**

The generic template should be used if the name of the people on whose land the meeting, event and/or activity is being held is not known, or if multiple Aboriginal peoples identify as Traditional Custodians for that area:

*'I would like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we <gather/meet> today and pay my respects to their Elders past and present. I extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples here today.'*

#### **4.2 Specific**

The specific template should be used if the name of the people on whose land the meeting, event and/or activity is being held is known:

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<sup>3</sup> Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country', Reconciliation Australia, accessed online 23 July 2020.

*'I would like to begin by acknowledging the <name of people> people, Traditional Custodians of the land on which we <gather/meet> today and pay my respects to their Elders past and present. I extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples here today.'*

#### **4.3 General (national)**

The general template should be used if Australia-wide Acknowledgment is required, or the Acknowledgement precedes or accompanies seminar, webinar, recorded or printed material:

*'In the spirit of reconciliation AdPha acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respects to their elders past and present, and any First Nations peoples present today.'*

For more information and further examples please see Welcome to Country or Acknowledgement of Country on the NIAA website ([www.indigenous.gov.au](http://www.indigenous.gov.au)).

\*remember, an Acknowledgement of Country can be offered with any wording, provided it is sincere and respectful