



Engagement and Impact 2018

The University of Western Australia

UWA (IN) - Impact

Overview

Title

(Title of the impact study)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities: health, wellbeing and suicide

Unit of Assessment

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research

FoR codes

(Identify up to three two-digit FoRs that relate to the overall content of the impact study.)

11 - Medical and Health Sciences

17 - Psychology and Cognitive Sciences

16 - Studies in Human Society

Socio-Economic Objective (SEO) Codes

(Choose from the list of two-digit SEO codes that are relevant to the impact study.)

92 - Health

95 - Cultural Understanding

97 - Expanding Knowledge

Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) Codes

(Choose from the list of two-digit ANZSIC codes that are relevant to the impact study.)

85 - Medical and Other Health Care Services

Keywords

(List up to 10 keywords related to the impact described in Part A.)

Indigenous suicide

Empowerment

Community

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Capacity building

Partnership

Local Knowledge

Policy

life expectancy

policy

Sensitivities

Commercially sensitive

No

Culturally sensitive

No

Sensitivities description

(Please describe any sensitivities in relation to the impact study that need to be considered, including any particular instructions for ARC staff or assessors, or for the impact study to be made publicly available after EI 2018.)

Science and Research Priorities

(Does this impact study fall within one or more of the Science and Research Priorities?)

Yes

Science and Research Priority	Practical Research Challenge
Health	Better models of health care and services that improve outcomes, reduce disparities for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, increase efficiency and provide greater value for a given expenditure.
Health	Better health outcomes for Indigenous people, with strategies for both urban and regional communities.
Health	Improved prediction, identification, tracking, prevention and management of emerging local and regional health threats.

Impact

Summary of the impact

(Briefly describe the specific impact in simple, clear English. This will enable the general community to understand the impact of the research.)

Indigenous suicide is a significant population health challenge for Australia. Suicide is a major cause of Indigenous premature mortality and is a contributor to Indigenous health and life expectancy gaps. Two national projects undertaken by UWA researchers - the National Empowerment Project (NEP) and The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Evaluation Project (ATSISPEP) - have contributed significantly to the knowledge base on how to address this health challenge and have influenced Government policy. These projects have increased awareness in community based and Indigenous led solutions, as well as informing policy changes at the Federal level.

Beneficiaries

(List up to 10 beneficiaries related to the impact study)

Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander people

all Australians

The Australian Government

Primary Health Networks

National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation

Indigenous Allied Health Australia

Black Rainbow Indigenous LGBTI

Suicide prevention agencies and support agencies: Beyond Blue, Suicide Prevention Australia, Supportlink National, Black Dog Institute

Details of the impact

(Provide a narrative that clearly outlines the research impact. The narrative should explain the relationship between the associated research and the impact. It should also identify the contribution the research has made beyond academia, including:

- who or what has benefitted from the results of the research (this should identify relevant research end-users, or beneficiaries from industry, the community, government, wider public etc.)*
- the nature or type of impact and how the research made a social, economic, cultural, and/or environmental impact*
- the extent of the impact (with specific references to appropriate evidence, such as cost-benefit-analysis, quantity of those affected, reported benefits etc.)*
- the dates and time period in which the impact occurred.*
- where relevant, evidence of how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ethical research guidelines were integrated into the research activities and processes detailed in the impact study*

NOTE - the narrative must describe only impact that has occurred within the reference period, and must not make aspirational claims.)

Indigenous suicide is a significant population health challenge for Australia. Suicide is a major cause of Indigenous premature mortality and is a contributor to Indigenous health and life expectancy gaps. In 2014 it was the fifth-leading cause of death among Indigenous people with an age-standardised suicide rate around double the non-Indigenous rate.

Two national projects undertaken by UWA researchers - the National Empowerment Project (NEP) and The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Evaluation Project (ATSISPEP) - have contributed significantly to the knowledge base on how to address this health challenge and have influenced Government policy. There have been two significant impacts arising from this research:

1. An increase in awareness within Indigenous communities and Government that solutions to address Indigenous social and emotional wellbeing and suicide are possible by drawing from Indigenous knowledge and using culturally appropriate tools; and
2. Informing policy decisions made by the Federal Government in relation to Indigenous health strategies and suicide prevention programs.

The NEP project was an Australia-wide research project which began in 2012 and concluded in early 2017. The project developed a nationally applicable Aboriginal led Empowerment, Healing and Leadership Program to promote social and emotional wellbeing and reduce community distress and suicide in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The findings from the NEP consultations represent a significant body of knowledge about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social and emotional wellbeing and mental health. The findings make a substantial contribution to the evidence base about the issues impacting communities and have been acknowledged in a several Government policy responses.

The ATSISPEP project evaluated the effectiveness of existing suicide prevention services and programs over a three-year period. The ATSISPEP final report summarises the evidence base for what works in Indigenous community-led suicide prevention and presents tools to support Indigenous suicide prevention activity.

Increase in awareness through NEP is achieved and demonstrated by considerable engagement:

- Consultation of more than 450 Aboriginal people across 11 national sites
- Development of a national network of 11 community sites and partner organisations
- Upskilling more than 40 Aboriginal community co-researchers
- Delivery of eight national training workshops
- Delivery of social and emotional wellbeing workshops at 11 community sites
- Development of a comprehensive Cultural, Social and Emotional Wellbeing (CSEWB) Program
- Establishment of a strong, mutually beneficial partnership with the Queensland Mental Health Commission and Ngoonbi Community Services Indigenous Corporation to support and monitor a 12-month pilot of the CSEWB Program at two sites in Queensland
- Trialling and delivery of CSEWB program at two community sites with a total of 168 participants
- Establishment of an evidence base for Aboriginal cultural, social and emotional wellbeing

Increase in awareness through ATSISPEP is demonstrated by:

- Twelve Indigenous community suicide prevention roundtable consultations that took place across Australia 2015-2016 (ATSISPEP)
- Participation of Indigenous people in the inaugural National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference held in Alice Springs May 2016, that brought together experts and members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the wider community (attendees by state: 37% WA; 18.5% NT; 14% NSW; 12.5% QLD; 7.5% ACT & Victoria; 3% SA). In total 370 delegates attended the Conference (ATSISPEP).

Impact through informing Government policy decisions is demonstrated through:

- The ATSISPEP Report informs and provides the foundation for the Federal Government's policy response to the Indigenous suicide crisis, which has claimed 680 Aboriginal lives between 2011 and 2015.

- Indicating the Government’s intention to use ATSIPEP research to inform decisions, Nigel Scullion, Senator for the Northern Territory and Minister for Indigenous Affairs stated, “This is not a report that is going to be on a shelf gaining dust, I assure you.”
- Former Health Minister Sussan Ley confirmed the Government had worked closely with the report’s authors to ensure recommendations could be quickly implemented on the ground. “The report’s findings will also inform future funding decisions for suicide prevention and mental health programmes and how best to deliver them for Indigenous communities. The Coalition Government has committed to trialling the community-led approaches recommended in the report. This is reflected in our election commitment to invest \$192 million in mental health and suicide prevention, which includes the establishment of 12 suicide-prevention trial sites, including one in the Kimberley.”
- At the Kimberly suicide prevention roundtable held in October 2016 it was agreed that the recommendations of the ATSIPEP Report should form a blueprint for the suicide prevention trial. It was also agreed that the ATSIPEP Evaluation tool should be used to guide the Primary Health Networks and Kimberley Suicide Prevention Trial site. Outcomes from the roundtable will help plan and inform the design of the trial, local suicide prevention activity, and inform the design of strategies in the national trial.
- Decisions by the Australian Government to establish the 12 suicide-prevention trial sites have been informed by ATSIPEP research.
- The NEP research project led funding from the Queensland Mental Health Commission to Ngoonbi in order to trial the CSEWB Program at two Queensland community sites. Queensland Mental Health Commissioner Dr Lesley van Schoubroeck said “the National Empowerment Project, with the local support of Ngoonbi Co-operative Society, has made a positive difference in these communities in less than two years.”

Associated research

(Briefly describe the research that led to the impact presented for the UoA. The research must meet the definition of research in Section 1.9 of the EI 2018 Submission Guidelines. The description should include details of:

- what was researched*
- when the research occurred*
- who conducted the research and what is the association with the institution*
- details of any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people or communities who were consulted throughout the research.)*

The UWA School of Indigenous Studies is focused on researching Indigenous mental health and wellbeing and specifically on Indigenous cultural, social and emotional wellbeing and suicide prevention. The two significant research projects undertaken from 2010 to 2016 which have informed the impacts are the National Empowerment Project (NEP) and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Evaluation Project (ATSIPEP). The NEP and ATSIPEP projects have evaluated the effectiveness of existing suicide prevention services and programs and have delivered a number of tools and recommendations. This research has substantially contributed to the understanding of Aboriginal cultural, social and emotional wellbeing as well as informing decisions on the national Indigenous suicide prevention agenda. The research was funded by a series of grants; including funding from the Department of the Prime Minister and Department of Health totalling almost \$4 million. The research has built on the expertise of the research team and was undertaken from 2010 to 2016. The research was led by UWA Professor Pat Dudgeon, a leading expert in Indigenous social and emotional wellbeing and suicide prevention, and was undertaken in partnership with researchers from the Telethon Kids Institute, community partner organisations and local communities.

FoR of associated research

(Up to three two-digit FoRs that best describe the associated research)

17 - Psychology and Cognitive Sciences
11 - Medical and Health Sciences
16 - Studies in Human Society

References (up to 10 references, 350 characters per reference)

(This section should include a list of up to 10 of the most relevant research outputs associated with the impact)

Cox, A., Dudgeon, D., Holland, C., Kelly, K., Scrine C., & Walker, R. (2014), Using Participatory Action Research to Prevent Suicide in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities. Australian Journal of Primary Health.

Dudgeon, D., Cox, A., Walker, R., Scrine, C., Kelly, K., Blurton, D., et al. Voices of the Peoples: Research Report 2015. National Empowerment Project

Dudgeon, P., Scrine, C., Cox, A., & Walker, R. Policy Brief. Voices of the People: The National Empowerment Project, Promoting cultural, social and emotional wellbeing to reduce distress and prevent suicide in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, November 2014. (Policy Brief)

Dudgeon, P., Cox, A., Kelly, K., Walker, R., Scrine, C., Blurton, D., Boladeras, J., et al (2014). Voices of the People: National Empowerment Project Promoting Cultural Social and Emotional Wellbeing to Reduce Distress and Suicide and in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.

Dudgeon, P., Milroy, H., & Walker, R. (2014). Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice (2nd edition). Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.

Gee, G., Dudgeon, P., Schultz, C., Hart, A. & Kelly, K. (2014). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social and Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health. In Dudgeon, P., Milroy, H. and R. Walker (Eds.). Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice (2nd ed., pp.55-68).

Zubrick, S., Shepherd, C., Dudgeon, P., Gee, G., Paradies, Y., Scrine, C. & Walker, R. (2014). Social Determinants of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social and Emotional Wellbeing. Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice (2nd ed., pp. 93-112).

Milroy, H., Dudgeon, P., & Walker, R. (2014). Community Life and Development Programs: Pathways to Healing. In Dudgeon, P., Milroy, H. and R. Walker (Eds.). Working Together: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles and Practice (2nd ed., pp. 419-436). Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.

Duffin, W., Riley, B., Grogan, G., Butorac, A., Cox, A., Dudgeon, P., & Swift, S. (2013). The National Empowerment Project Kuranda. Canberra, ACT: Commonwealth of Australia. (Community Site Report Publication: as example with Duffin, Riley and Grogan as community co-researchers and co-authors)

Skinner, T., Bick, J., Coffin, J., Dudgeon, P., Forrest, S., & Morrison, D. (2013). Comparative validation of self-report measures of negative attitudes towards Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders. Rural and Remote Health 13: 1959. (Online) 2013. Available: <http://www.rrh.org.au>

Additional impact indicator information

Additional impact indicator information

(Provide information about any indicators not captured above that are relevant to the impact study, for example return on investment, jobs created, improvements in quality of life years (QALYs). Additional indicators should be quantitative in nature and include:

- name of indicator (100 characters)*
- data for indicator (200 characters)*
- brief description of indicator and how it is calculated (300 characters).)*