

Building the trust: Using community networks to improve Aboriginal health outcomes

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Central Highlands Division

- ◆ Covers 6000 square km and 173, 000 people
- ◆ Rural fringe (25 - 75 minutes from Melbourne)
- ◆ Socio-economic extremes
- ◆ Only 1 per cent born in non-English speaking country
- ◆ Indigenous population estimated at 0.4 per cent

Background work

- ◆ Division contacted GPDV, who:
 - ◆ provided info about Koori services in our area
 - ◆ encouraged Division to build a relationship with Rumbalara

2001 - 2002 Heart Health Project

- ◆ One-off heart health checks in small rural towns using GP and two other health professionals
- ◆ Advice on reducing heart disease risks
- ◆ Unspent funds - approached Department re spending on Koori checks in Seymour

Engaging with Aboriginal health services

- ◆ January 2002 - unanswered letters, phone calls
- ◆ Department deadline
- ◆ Discussion re “Seymour agreement”
- ◆ Rang practices and services
- ◆ PERSISTENCE

Finding the Aboriginal community

- ◆ Located key community member with links to:
 - ◆ Berry St Victoria
 - ◆ Tjapukai Homework centre (8 - 12 students two days per week, volunteer tutors)
 - ◆ TAFE Koori Art and Design course

Bringing people together

- ◆ March 2002 meeting with Berry St and Rumbalara - plan clinics using community nominated GPs, Rumbalara's Aboriginal health workers and Community Health Centre dietician
- ◆ TAFE student designed and distributed posters for clinic

Heart health clinics

- ◆ Community members involved in recruiting to clinics May and June 2002
- ◆ Clinics facilitated connections
 - ◆ amongst service providers
 - ◆ between service providers and the community
- ◆ Established the Division's credentials and commitment to Aboriginal health - July 2002
Division invited to meeting to establish Aboriginal co-operative in Seymour

Now - the Division and Jaambi Neighbourhood Centre

- ◆ Monthly meetings
- ◆ Being there as part of the core group
(Committee members, Berry St, Department of Human Services, Division)
- ◆ COMMITMENT
- ◆ Integrating issues with relevant Division programs and funding submissions (eg. Better Outcomes in Mental Health Care)

Future goals

- ◆ Facilitate discussion between practices and Koori community to improve access to GP services
- ◆ Make relevant submissions for funding
- ◆ Explore funding of GP services from Jaambi when it has premises