

My Life, My Lead

Implementation Plan Advisory Group (IPAG)

Consultation Notes

Launceston – 4 May 2017

A range of face to face consultations, coupled with an online submission process, were established to hear from stakeholders and community on how to best address the social determinants and cultural determinants of Indigenous health.

The thirteenth and final consultation was held in Launceston, Tasmania on 4 May 2017, and opened by the Minister for Aged Care and Indigenous Health, the Hon Ken Wyatt MP. Outcomes from the forum are below.

Session One:

Small group discussions on social and cultural determinants

Session Two:

Open microphone discussions

Key Observations:

Racism

- In Tasmania, racism exists both within the community and towards the community.
- There is a perception within the non-Indigenous community that “no Tasmanian Aboriginals” exist in Tasmania today.
- Cultural capability needs to improve across all services and communities.
- Embed cultural safety and reconciliation in all policies and practices of organisations.
- Need a mechanism to check if policies that are in place are working.
- Racism is a barrier to accessing services and jobs.
- Community controlled services that are inclusive assist more people in need through access to and provision of their services.

Connection to family community, country, language and culture

- Aboriginal people who are not recognised within their communities are excluded from participating in cultural practices.
- Connection to country is a main driver of mental and physical health for Aboriginal peoples.
- Need to strengthen and invest in programs that promote and protect culture.
- Need to celebrate, promote and normalise culture.
- Youth have been denied cultural revival.

Access to services and transport

- Transport is difficult between communities especially to the north west of the state and the Flinders and Cape Barron islands.

- Due to differences in the Tasmanian law and the national law regarding identification, there are thousands of Aboriginal people living in Tasmania who are not able to access services.

Interaction with Government Systems and Services

- HIPPY program – Tasmania did not get Government funding for the program. All funding went to mainland.
- The communities in Tasmania's North West are an ideal size for government to pilot programs.
- Funding longer-term, direct source – 12-18 month contracts don't attract the best qualified staff
- Frequent tender processes don't work – take the tender out to remove the competition.
- Services focus on provision of stage of care service - not covering all bases. Remove competition between service providers and encourage collaboration to provide holistic, wrap around care to clients.

Funding and Contracts

- Mainland model is not applicable in Tasmania. Unlike the mainland, the largest populations of Aboriginal people live in the North West not in the cities.
- There are inadequate services available in the North West and due to the insufficient access to public transport, services in cities are out of reach to Aboriginal people in these communities.
- Funding targeted to family unit would lead to better outcomes.

Education

- Participants were concerned that there is a large group of Aboriginal adults in Tasmania who are illiterate. This impacts on their daily lives, in particular their health and safety e.g. unable to read dosage instructions on medicine.
- Young people are leaving school illiterate.
- Career education needs to equip young people with skills, aspirations and pathways that lead to meaningful careers.
- Better coordination of Aboriginal health systems and resources is needed.
- Schools and other services supporting young people to attend and engage in education need to be able to work together holistically.

Families

- Services need to support the family unit by working together for the best outcomes for the family.

Health

- The community need to know the existing MBS and PBS items.
- Aboriginal Liaison Officers are needed across all hospitals.
- Need a career structure for Aboriginal health workers as there is currently no training or workforce strategy

Law and Justice

- Individual and family support is essential in both keeping people out of the prison system and rehabilitating once released. There are established programs which are already working within the community:
 - Indigenous Justice Program – delivered by Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation funded through IAS
 - XCELL – Salvation Army Prison Support Service. Salvation Army is also investigating possibilities to implement a justice reinvestment model.
 - Community Justice Program
 - Lifestyle Solutions specialises in providing support to people living with intellectual and other cognitive disability who have had ongoing contact with, or are at risk of entering, the criminal justice system.

Housing

- Housing costs for both rent and purchase have increased greatly in the last 10 years.

Transport

- Public transport across Tasmania is insufficient to meet needs. Public transport services are more limited in the Central and North West Coast regions.
- It would help to supplement a service for Aboriginal community members, to be able to access the services they require.
- Use of technology to deliver virtual health services or court hearings via video conferencing could be used as supplementary but should not replace transport services – personal interactions are important. Video conferencing facilities are already available in some communities for use by the Magistrate's Court (eg: Flinder's Island)

Alcohol and Drugs

- *There is a gap in treatment:* After care service rehabilitation and withdrawal – insufficient services and transport.
- Aboriginal community services need Aboriginal Liaison Officers based in each to advocate and support Aboriginal people and to make connections to other services the person needs in the provision of holistic wraparound. This can be critical in rehabilitation.

Food Security

- Apart from locally grown produce (potatoes, apples and meat) groceries are substantially more expensive in Tasmania, while the average wage is low.
- Funding for Community gardens to encourage people to grow their own fruit and vegetables, assist in rehabilitation, teach life skills to young people and educate the community about healthy eating, as well as provide choices.
- Native foods need to be included and Aboriginal people need to be the protectors of native food.
- Dieticians / nutritionists have limited knowledge / recognition of native foods.
- More Rangers would be beneficial as their work is connected to food and health.
- Many Aboriginal health workers and services are promoting healthy food but they are not recognised for their work.
- Food security should be included in the Implementation Plan.

Case studies referred to at the consultation forum:

- **Housing:** [Intensive Tenancy Support Services \(ITSS\)](#). People who are under threat of being evicted from their rental property due to excessive rubbish build up inside or outside of their property, clutter which interferes with living spaces and is a potential fire hazard or non-payment of rent.
Referrals can be made through your housing officer at Housing SA, your landlord or Real Estate Agent.
The service is based in Whyalla and is available to tenants in that area.
- **Connection to Culture and Community: Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation (CHAC):** [Circular Head Aboriginal Corporation](#)
The majority of programs are funded by Federal Government Departments. These programs work because they are inclusive. They are able to be accessed by all community members regardless of whether they have their certificate of Aboriginality. The programs encourage inclusion through relationship building, which in turn leads to strong links in the community and trust.
- Wheels to Go is a bus which is hired out to the community at competitive rates. All programs within CHAC utilise the bus to take groups on day excursions, camps and workshops.