

Using Co-Creation to Develop Culturally Appropriate Alcohol and Other Drug Resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

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Background: This co-creation project responded to a need identified by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and services regarding a lack of culturally appropriate alcohol and other drug (AOD) information resources. The project aimed to meet this need and help 'Close the Gap' by meaningfully involving community throughout the resource development process.

Description of Model of Care/Intervention: The project used a co-creation model, engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders in all stages—from concept development to final dissemination. The process followed a four-stage approach: conceptualisation (identifying needs through stakeholder consultations), planning (scoping content with community representatives), execution (collaborative content development via an advisory group), and finalisation (sharing refined resources). This collaborative approach ensured cultural relevance and community ownership.

Effectiveness/Acceptability/Implementation: Co-creation ensured that the language and artwork used was appropriate, that partnerships with community were developed and maintained, and that resources were disseminated through the appropriate organisations within community. Some challenges were experienced with recruitment and ongoing engagement but were mitigated by relationship building, regular communication and having strong key partnerships. Lessons learned and future recommendations will be discussed.

Conclusion and Next Steps: The project resulted in a set of culturally appropriate, relevant and sensitive AOD resources resulting in 8,630 downloads and 50,000 printed resources distributed in 12 months. Next steps include evaluating their effectiveness and impact through ongoing feedback and using measurable data. Future projects aim to develop resources for other groups within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, identified by the co-creation participants as: family and friends, young people, and, people engaged in the law and justice.

Implications for Practice or Policy: This project demonstrates the importance of co-creation in developing effective health resources for First Nations peoples, promoting better outcomes and to 'Close The Gap' through culturally appropriate, relevant and sensitive community-driven interventions.

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