

RESEARCH BASED TEMPLATE

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Intergenerational equity starts here: Investing in youth health and wellbeing

Abstract

Title:

Youth-driven accountability: Transforming health systems for all children and young people

Authors:

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Background:

This project partnered with young people to define, investigate, design and test mechanisms to support researchers, managers and policy makers to embed accountability to young people in their organisations.

Young people's health needs are often unrecognised or poorly managed. Navigating to the right health service at the right time is compromised by a confusing system, cost, lack of accessible services and clinicians. This is compounded by intersectionality, low health literacy and high stigma as well as feeling discriminated against or misunderstood. Current conditions reveal an urgent need for accountability to young people to transform health systems to promote health-enabling information and services.

Methods:

The project used a youth co-research and participatory design. Young people with significant experience of health services led the study with university and NGO researchers.

Nine young people took part in 3 iterative participatory workshops culminating in a final design-thinking workshop with a further 14 young people. Participants came from the Greater Sydney area and were aged 14 - 17 years.

Results:

Young people reported that the health system is more than just services - it is the broader ecosystem of institutions, settings and products that shape young people's experiences and opportunities for health. These include educational, online and corporate settings such as schools, social media and insurance. While these settings are regulated, they are not accountable to young people: resulting in poor health, insufficient care and limited service accessibility. The concept of 'youth-driven

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'transformative accountability' and a process for embedding accountability in organisational governance were developed.

Conclusion:

Transformative accountability mechanisms are needed to realise the right of young people to health in the present and future. These include co-creating services such as school wellbeing practices, intergenerational approaches to monitoring in each healthcare sector and making services safe and accessible in terms of cost and practice.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

Western Sydney University and Accountable Futures Collective recognise the considerable contribution that industry partners make to professional and research activities. We also recognise the need for transparency of disclosure of potential conflicts of interest by acknowledging these relationships in publications and presentations

Biography of Research Team

Phillippa Collin

Professor Collin is an interdisciplinary social scientist researching youth experience, digital technologies, mental health and wellbeing, and social change. She has an extensive track record in child, youth-centred and intergenerational research, program design, evaluation and advocacy using realistic evaluation, program logic, participatory and co-design approaches.

Jae Charlton

Jae is an experienced youth and disability advocate. Jae has experience leading and facilitating multiple participatory projects.

Andrew Kellett

Dr Andrew Kellett is an early career academic and has worked at Western Sydney University since 2014 in a variety of teaching and research roles. He has multidisciplinary teaching experience in psychology and public health, including health psychology, youth mental health and the social determinants of health.

Jean Lewis

High school graduate, currently studying a Bachelor of Social Science (majoring in Sociology). Experience with research at a high school and university level.

Tasha Ritchie

Tasha holds a Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of International Relations. Tasha is the CEO of Accountable Futures Collective and has significant professional experience leading and facilitating participatory projects with young people.