

# LOOK AFTER YOUR BLOOD – DEVELOPING A BLOOD-BORNE VIRUS SOCIAL MARKETING CAMPAIGN FOR YOUNG ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

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## Background/Approach:

Aboriginal people are disproportionately affected by blood-borne viruses (BBVs) than non-Aboriginal people. In Western Australia (WA) in 2016, hepatitis C Aboriginal to non-Aboriginal rate ratios for newly acquired and unspecified infections were 29:1 and 9:1 respectively, and five Aboriginal people were notified with HIV.

Further, the Kirby Institute reports from 2012-16, more newly diagnosed HIV infections were related to injecting drug use in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people than in the Australian-born non-Indigenous population (14% vs 3%).

In 2016, the WA Department of Health developed '*Look after your blood*' – a BBV social marketing campaign targeting young Aboriginal people.

## Analysis/Argument:

The WA Aboriginal Sexual Health and Blood-borne Virus Strategy 2015-18 advocates Aboriginal-specific and Aboriginal-inclusive social marketing for BBV prevention messages.

It was recognised that involving Aboriginal people in developing and executing the campaign would be essential to its success, particularly because the primary risk factor for BBVs (injecting drug use) can be a sensitive issue to address.

The campaign was developed in consultation with Aboriginal people including an Aboriginal Reference Group of health professionals, the Aboriginal Health Council of WA Youth Committee and young Aboriginal actors from the WA Academy of Performing Arts.

## Outcome/Results:

'*Look after your blood*' launched in September 2016. Campaign channels include statewide radio and regional television, and digital advertising including social media.

Feedback from Aboriginal healthcare workers indicates that the concepts are culturally appropriate, the key messages are clear, and the adverts are catchy and graphically interesting.

The campaign has achieved strong engagement, achieving over 171,000 video views online alone since launch and generating more than 7,857 comments, likes, shares or reactions.

## Conclusions/Applications:

Engaging young Aboriginal people in developing and delivering strong, culturally sensitive messages about BBV prevention, testing and treatment to their peers is a Western Australian first and provides a base for future campaign development.

**Disclosure of Interest Statement:**

The authors have no conflict of interest to declare.