

SUPPORTING ABORIGINAL RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATION SERVICES TO MEASURE TREATMENT OUTCOMES

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Introduction / Issues:

This project is being done in partnership with the seven Aboriginal residential rehabilitation services in New South Wales. It aims to improve their ability to measure treatment effectiveness and define what is a good outcome. There is very little evidence on outcomes in residential rehabilitation services across Australia. This also means there is poor data to guide quality improvement initiatives. What defines a good outcome is not limited to alcohol abstinence, but should also mesh with Indigenous priorities.

Method / Approach:

Based on pilot work conducted at Orana Haven (NSW), this study will be expanded to include all seven Indigenous residential alcohol rehabilitation settings in NSW (four in urban areas and three in rural/regional NSW). The first stage of this research will be to conduct a literature review to ascertain what evidence exists about the effectiveness of Indigenous residential treatment services internationally.

Key Findings:

This talk will present preliminary findings from a literature review conducted internationally of what aspects of treatment appear most effective both from the perspective of the client and of the Indigenous residential rehabilitation sector.

Discussion and Conclusions:

This project is the first of its kind to provide a structure for Aboriginal rehabilitation units to document their programs, and to develop and apply culturally relevant outcome measures.

Implications for Practice or Policy (optional)

This study will increase clinician's evaluation skills and will result in practical tools to assist Aboriginal residential rehabilitation units to measure outcomes on an ongoing basis. It will support continuing quality improvement.