

## **Contributions to mainstream practice: Reflections on mainstream and Aboriginal-controlled services**

Tye Hammersley<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ngwala Willumbong Cooperative

Presenter email: [tyehammersley86@gmail.com](mailto:tyehammersley86@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

This presentation will provide observations of differences between mainstream and Aboriginal-controlled AOD services, and how these impact on Aboriginal men. It will suggest how these insights can improve engagements by mainstream services with all men, irrespective of their culture.

I come with lived experience with addictions, and interactions with mainstream and Aboriginal services. The presentation will draw on my own experiences, and discussions with other Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal men.

Mainstream services often have more 'distant' relationships with peoples being supported, than with Aboriginal-controlled facilities. Men can feel that there is more of an emphasis on 'authority' within these relationships, including the role of formal education and training, than in Aboriginal services. Aboriginal-controlled services are more interested in Aboriginal culture than mainstream services, and are in a better position to restore connections with culture often missing in the lives of Aboriginal men due to colonisation.

Aboriginal peoples understand how meaningful and trusting relationships can form across boundaries of culture and social division. These insights can inform the work of mainstream services with all peoples. As worker in the early stages of my career, I am keen to implement these perspectives in future work with mainstream services, for the benefit of work with all cultures.