

A tale of two populations, syphilis and how inequity plays out in contemporary Australia.

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In 2011 an outbreak of infectious syphilis commenced in far north Queensland that has amassed more than 3000 cases, all among young Aboriginal people living in remote and regional communities spanning four jurisdictions. The scale of this outbreak has the potential to embed syphilis as an endemic infection that will resonate for decades to come. The rate of infectious syphilis diagnoses is currently 7 times the non-Indigenous rate, but it has also increased more rapidly in the Aboriginal population during the last 10 years than the non-Indigenous rate. This presentation will highlight why this might be occurring and approaches currently underway and some ways forward.