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| **Title of Research Presentation:** Aboriginal children, women’s health and housing: a Gudaga inside story |
| **Background/Objectives**As anyone working in the health sector knows housing is a determinant of health. Australia’s Close the Gap policy, established under coalition of government (COAG) agreement in 2009, aims to reduce child mortality as a key measure. One of this measure’s indicators is birthweight. We asked the question: ‘How does the changing physical and policy landscape in housing impact on the decisions Aboriginal women make for themselves and their children?’ of The Gudaga suite of studies, set in the Tharawal community in Campbelltown in South Western Sydney following Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from birth to 9½ years, and internationally unique in an urban location in a major settler-nation metropolis, is that maternal vulnerability had a cumulative impact on birthweight.It is a big picture look at the landscape that the Gudaga studies inform and are informed by and contributes to an understanding of why Australia is failing to achieve the measures it set itself to Close the Gap in life expectancy between Aboriginal people and the rest of Australia and what housing support is required for mothers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.**Methods**The data were collected from the ‘GUDAGA study” – a birth cohort of n=149 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children recruited in 2005-2007. Through best practice methods for research in an Aboriginal community, using semi-structured interviews with an Aboriginal project officer, carer provided information about Housing and its related issues. Data was analysing using SPSS. **Results**The housing market has been experiencing major instability for vast numbers of people in western economies. By the Close the Gap policy deadline in 2031, the housing undersupply in New South Wales is projected to be 91,000 dwellings if current conditions prevail. That’s a little more than a decade from now. The Gudaga children will be in their early 20s. The Gudaga data shows that households with Aboriginal children are in a precarious situation in a market-driven, volatile economy: birth rates at younger age, unfinished education, high unemployment, high smoking prevalence as a contributor to low birth weight, high mobility (moving house) and the biggest complaint: repairs and maintenance**Discussion**A clear sustainable plan needs to develop for housing policy for improving health and health related well-being indicators. **Keywords**Housing, Indigenous, smoking, health and wellbeing |