Research Objectives

1. Develop in consultation with Indigenous women, a health promotion program aimed at improving Indigenous women’s diabetes wellness.

2. Evaluate the willingness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to undertake a health promotion program designed by and for them (IWWP).

3. Undertake a pilot study to evaluate the feasibility of yarning as a methodology for collecting the health status of Indigenous women.

4. Evaluate the wider community and participant responses to the IWWP.

5. Evaluate and identify barriers that might impact on the effective delivery of the IWWP.

Research Aim

Explore and develop a diabetes health and wellness program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders that is effective and culturally safe.
Indigenous Women’s Wellness Study

Bunyabilla Inc
Focus Groups
Brisbane North

Diabetes Study
Brisbane North and Cherbourg

Wellness Study and Program Development

Implementing Indigenous Women’s Wellness health summit model
| Phase 1 | Stage 1: Focus groups conducted with Indigenous women to examine the factors and barriers highlighted within the research objectives.  
Stage 2: Collate and analyse the data and re-approach community  
Stage 3: Designing a culturally appropriate questionnaire in conjunction with community. |
| Phase 2 | Stage 4: Develop an Indigenous women’s health promotion model/program in conjunction with the research and Indigenous women’s input.  
Stage 5: Implement the proposed design by undertaking a pilot of the program.  
Stage 6: Evaluate the pilot program by re-approaching community and participants. |
| Phase 3 | Stage 8: Implement the evaluated changes to the program and re-run the pilot.  
Stage 9: Re-evaluate the program for confirmability and effectiveness.  
Stage 10: Exploring avenues of assuring continuation of the Indigenous women’s wellness program. |
Variables discussed within the Research
Methodology

A mixed-methodology approach addresses this research
112 women attended the IWWP

Qualitative data collection – Yarning /Action Research
• Thematic analysis

Quantitative data collection - Questionnaire (through Yarning)
• Chi square nonparametric one sample statistical testing
  and base line mean average
What did we find

Research Themes

A thematic analysis was undertaken from the focus groups to identify the textural data’s major themes that emerged from the yarning processes. The major themes consisted of.

1) What is wellness
   a) What creates wellness?,
      i) Strength, ii) Support

2) Wellness and Health Services
   a) Autonomy b) Indigenous women being heard, c) historical factors, d) Indigenous women’s group development and continuation.

3) Access to services
   a) Transport b) Place and space

We then implemented these changes into a diabetes focused health and wellness program for the women.

“Tiddahood (sisterhood) in health”

“We want to come together, we learn best together, so we should improve our health together............”
Walker, Fredericks, Anderson, 2012

Indigenous Women’s Wellness

“Indigenous women’s wellness is the connection combinations and interactions that are intertwined to create wholeness within an individual. Health or wellness becomes the by-product of this organic internal connection”.
Walker, Fredericks, Anderson, 2012
Diabetes pilot results

With Aboriginal people six times more likely to develop type 2 diabetes (mellitus) than the rest of the Australian population, participant’s blood sugar levels were tested. Only participants who tested over > 7.8mmols were included in the following calculations of Brisbane North women who had high blood sugar levels regardless of fasting or non-fasting indications. This was undertaken to ensure that there could be no discrepancy (eating/cup of tea) with being indicated as having high blood sugar levels. 41.2% of Indigenous Brisbane North women were found to have blood sugar levels that were outside normal ranges however only 29.4% had been diagnosed with diabetes and or endocrine abnormalities. These findings highlight that at minimum 11.8% of participants have signs indicating that they may have undiagnosed diabetes or pre diabetes juxtaposed to unacceptable endocrine levels compatible with health and wellness.

11.8% possible diabetes type II

It must also be noted that individuals may indeed have diabetes however present with normal BSL levels. This research did not and does not intend to diagnosis individuals.
Physical activity

43% of Indigenous Brisbane North women do not currently participate in moderate physical activity for at least 30 min, 3 times a week. 87% of these women stated that they did not plan on doing it when asked. We are now implementing walking groups and aqua aerobics to these communities.

Of concern 43.7% of these women reported feeling downhearted or blue “a good bit of the time or more”. 14.3% of these individuals reported feeling downhearted and blue “all of the time” and 57.2% reported feeling downhearted or blue “most of the time” while 14.3% reported “a good bit of the time or more”.

Wellness and Wellbeing
Wellness and Wellbeing

Walker, Frederick, Anderson and Sanders, 2012
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