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James Cook University

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Workforce Development Manager
Indigenous Allied Health Australia
We would like to show our respect and acknowledge the Larrakia nation, the traditional custodians of this land, of elders past, present and emerging.
Northern Australia

- Burden of disease and injury → disproportionately high
- Disabling consequences of disease and injury → disproportionately high

Prevent

Prevent disabling consequences

Manage disabling consequences
Disabling consequences of disease & Injury

Children - FASD

Adults - Stroke, amputation, visual impairment

Ageing - Dementia

With families

With individuals within families

With communities to support individuals and families with disabling health conditions

Lifestyle services
Rehab and Lifestyle Services

• Workforce
  • Increase in allied health professionals in public systems including Indigenous Allied Health
  • Fewer in ACCHOs - difficult to make it pay

• Services
  • Patchy, fragmented, difficult to sustain
  • Incongruent with needs → acute care model → need lifestyle services
  • NDIS - opportunity or nightmare??
Northern Australia Research Network

• Stakeholders from NT, WA, Qld - supported by GNARTN
• AH Executives, PHNs, University researchers & NGOs, ACCHOs, consumers, clinicians, IAHA

• Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Pathology, Psychology
• Dietetics, Podiatry, Social Work, Medical Specialist, Business,
• Aboriginal Allied Health Assistants, Community Research Partners

• Meetings via Zoom + 2 Workshops in Darwin - in-person + Zoom
• PHN Funding for Research Coordinator - .1 FTE for 1 year
Objectives

• **Build research capacity**
  - Indigenous researchers - community research partners → PhDs, Post Docs
  - Researchers - clinicians, PhDs and Post Docs

• **Build an evidence base** for services in Functioning, Disability and Health in northern Australia.

• **Respond to needs** of northern Australians, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

• Embed allied health professionals into the broader health research arena.
Key challenges

Research capacity

• Few allied health researchers across northern Australia - all stretched
• Even fewer Indigenous allied health researchers
• Research pathway in infancy → risk that PhD graduates will ‘go down the escalator’

Secretariat

• Orphaned at a young age
• Researchers need to be researching
• Need enough $$ to make difference
• Cross jurisdiction/sector/profession..........................? How hard is it to organise a meeting!!
HOT North & NARN - nature of relationship?

• Northern Australia
• Building research capacity
• Good health for all northern Australians
• Particular focus on health for & with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people

HOT North
Strong researchers, strong track records
Indigenous governance committee
Secretariat + money to make a difference
Parent organisation - recognisable
Great name

NARN
Partnership with Indigenous peak body
Stakeholders from across the health sector
Stakeholders from along the research pathway
Health system strengthening