



NATIONAL RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP

Improving practice through research

»»»» What is the ABCD National Research Partnership? ««««

The Partnership aims to improve the quality of care in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary health care settings. The Partnership works together to develop and test measures of quality, identify best ways to collect, compare and communicate information on quality, and share information about the most effective strategies for improving quality of care.

The **partners** in each participating State or Territory include Aboriginal community controlled organisations, regional and State/Territory primary health care services or agencies, and at least one research organisation. Participating health services help decide what research will be done.

How is the Partnership organised?

In each participating State/Territory there is a Steering Committee, comprised of representatives of the partners and project researchers, and led by a Regional Project Leader. There may be a regional research officer in each State/Territory who works directly with health services. The overall project leader is Professor Ross Bailie, supported by a coordinating team at Menzies School of Health Research.

Benefits for health services participating in the Partnership

Being in the Partnership can provide many benefits. The Partnership will:

- Assist services to bring their priority issues to the attention of regional and national decision-makers
- Identify and share successful strategies to improve the quality of care
- Promote better understanding of factors that support delivery of high quality care and how to build on these strengths
- Develop a deeper understanding of barriers to delivery of good health care and how to overcome these barriers
- Provide specialised support for health services to plan and implement strategies for the delivery of best practice care

Benefits for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities include improved:

- Quality of primary health care services
- Health outcomes
- Information for health service management and community health boards
- Information to inform policies and strategies in primary health care

»»»» How have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health services benefited from previous research about quality in primary health care? ««««

The Partnership project builds on the work of the Audit and Best Practice for Chronic Disease (ABCD) project. By December 2009, more than 130 primary health care services around Australia had used the tools and processes developed in the project since it began in 2002. These Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) processes have been used by health services to improve quality of care and organisational systems.

Many participating services achieved:

- Improvements in intermediate health outcomes such as achieving target HbA1c levels amongst clients with Type 2 diabetes
- Greater understanding of what is required to improve quality of care in their services and concrete actions to achieve this
- Increase in delivery of guideline-scheduled services.

The ABCD project influenced the development of the Healthy for Life program, and its CQI processes have been used by many health services to help inform management decision-making, increase accountability within the service, and focus on specific areas for improvement. Data generated through the project was used for advocacy with health care funders. One21seventy CQI tools and processes were developed from this research.



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›››› Who can participate in the Partnership? ‹‹‹‹

All health services that use One21seventy processes are invited to be part of the ABCD National Research Partnership. Participation in the research is optional and will not impact on the One21seventy process.

One21seventy is a service support organisation that was set up to help health services implement CQI. It provides tools and processes, including training, to support primary health care providers to carry out CQI using clinical audits, systems assessment, web based data analysis and reporting to inform goal setting and action planning.

›››› What is required from the health service? ‹‹‹‹

To be involved in this project, a health service will need to:

- actively participate in One21seventy processes
- agree to the use of health service data from the One21seventy website in the research

A health service may participate without incurring any additional workload. However services may express interest in research activities that address issues of local priority. This may then involve optional activities such as interviews and observations. A local research officer may be available to assist health services in these other research activities.

›››› Is information collected in the Partnership confidential? ‹‹‹‹

- Control and ownership of data remains with the health service
- No individuals will be identifiable from the data presented in reports or from electronic systems used by the project
- Each participating health centre, or its governing board, decides on the level of data sharing that is appropriate for their service. Participation in the Partnership means that health centres allow their de-identified data to be combined with data from other participating services to answer key questions of relevance to policy and practice
- All research will have ethics committee approval to ensure projects are consistent with ethical research standards

›››› How do health services get involved? ‹‹‹‹

Health services need to contact their State/Territory project leader as listed below. Health services will sign an agreement to participate in the Partnership project.

More Information :

To find out more about the Partnership contact the following:

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| • National: | Prof. Ross Bailie | ross.bailie@menzies.edu.au | |
| • Far West NSW: | Dr Hugh Burke | maarimaact@bigpond.com | (02) 6295-3165 |
| • Northern Territory: | Prof. Tricia Nagel | tricia.nagel@menzies.edu.au | (08) 8922-8196 |
| • Queensland: | Mr Dallas Leon | dallasleon@qaihc.com.au | (07) 3328-8500 |
| • South Australia: | Dr David Scrimgeour | david.scrimgeour@ahcsa.org.au | (08) 8273-7200 |
| • Western Australia: | Prof. James Semmens | James.Semmens@curtin.edu.au | (08) 9266-1856 |

For other enquiries contact the ABCD National Research Partnership Project Manager (email : ABCD@menzies.edu.au)

You can also visit our website at www.menzies.edu.au/abcd

The ABCD National Research Partnership is a Menzies School of Health Research project funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council (ID No.545267) with supporting funding from the Lowitja Institute. Financial and in-kind support has been provided by participating partners. Ethics approval has been granted by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Northern Territory Department of Health and Families and Menzies School of Health Research.