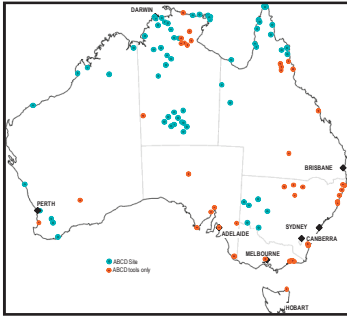




# Audit and Best Practice for Chronic Disease Extension (ABCDE) Project: Final Report Highlights

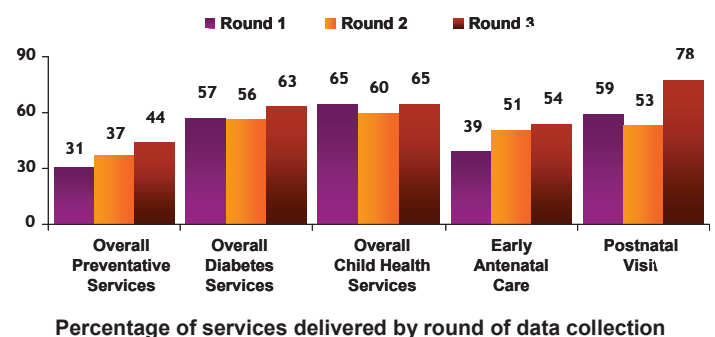


**A QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT ...** to enhance primary health care services and improve the prevention and management of chronic disease in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander communities. A total of 69 health services participated from four states/territories including Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander community-controlled, government and non-government organisations from remote, rural and urban settings.

**ACTION RESEARCH ...** The project provided direct support to health centres to undertake continuous quality improvement (CQI). Health centre staff actively participated in the design and implementation of clinical audit and system assessment tools aimed at increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of a variety of services, from diabetes to child and maternal health. In a collaborative approach, individual health centres shared their learnings and experiences with each other regarding the implementation of effective and sustainable quality improvement.

## QUALITY OF CARE ...

The percentage of scheduled services delivered generally increased over 3 annual cycles of quality improvement, indicating improved service provision and engagement with clients. For some organisations there were promising associations between the improvement in health services and intermediate health outcomes. However, across different regions and between individual health centres, there were large variations in quality of care. Understanding this variation is the focus of the next phase of research.



## LESSONS LEARNT...

The impact of quality improvement processes on improvements in service delivery depends on:

- involvement of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Health Workers in clinical care & quality improvement processes
- adequate staffing levels and stability of staffing
- clinical leadership and management support
- integrating CQI processes with other data collection and reporting obligations
- regional level collaboration and support (particularly for small health centres)
- dedicated funding from health authorities to support quality improvement initiatives



**INFLUENCING POLICY FRAMEWORKS ...** The ABCD Project informed the development of the Australian Government's **Healthy for Life** program aimed at improving Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander chronic disease care and maternal and child health services. Both the Queensland and Northern Territory Governments have widely implemented ABCD tools and processes across their primary health care clinics.

**NEXT STEPS ...** In response to requests from participating services, a National Centre for Quality Improvement in Indigenous Primary Health Care — **One21seventy** — has been launched to provide ongoing support to health centres to use the ABCD tools and processes. Best practice evidence from emerging research will continually be incorporated into new tools and refinement processes.

#### Steps in the ABCDE continuous quality improvement cycle



#### FUTURE RESEARCH PARTICIPATION... understanding variation in quality of care

One21seventy services have the opportunity to participate in research for the overall benefit of quality improvement in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander primary health care through the **ABCD National Research Partnership**. The Partnership builds on the collaborative relationships established through the ABCDE Project across the national network of primary health care centres committed to CQI.

Health centres enrolled in the Partnership will benefit through research that:

- contributes to the understanding of variation in quality of care between agencies and between regions
- identifies strategies that have been effective in improving clinical performance
- translates findings into effective and successful strategies to improve quality of care