**A tool for assessing Indigenous* primary health care systems support for health promotion**

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Why a Systems Assessment Tool?

- Comprehensive primary health care matters for health improvement and empowerment - Health promotion is key.
- No systematic approach to assist Indigenous primary health care services reorient towards health promotion.

What is the Systems Assessment Tool?

- Building on ABCD Systems Assessment Tool, based on WHO Innovative Care for Chronic Conditions Framework and modified for health promotion.
- The four Domains in the Tool are:
  1. Delivery System Design: To support staff to do health promotion.
  2. Information Systems and Decision Support: To support staff to plan, monitor and evaluate health promotion.
  3. Organisational Environment: To create a culture and supportive environment for health promotion.
  4. Integration and Adaptability: How well health centre systems respond to emerging issues and function as a whole.

What have we learnt?

- The systems assessment has given a picture of what health promotion systems might look like in the context of Indigenous primary health care.
- Ongoing challenges relate to workforce capacity and acute care demands.
- Through the systems assessment, health centre teams have dedicated time and space to talk about health promotion. This has helped to develop a shared understanding and language for health promotion and the role systems play in supporting effective practice.
- Locally appropriate information systems for documenting health promotion appear fundamental to monitor health promotion effectiveness and for quality improvement purposes.

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*The word Indigenous is capitalised in keeping with current practice, to indicate its specific use to apply to Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.*

Our approach to systems assessment

Together we are talking and walking, listening, understanding, doing and learning.

The message stick - is a form of communication traditionally used by Indigenous Australians. The etchings on these message sticks are:

- depicts the research and health centre teams sitting together and talking about how health centre systems support health promotion.
- depicts the information sharing between the research and health centre teams.
- depicts the meeting place at the health services.
- depicts the journey and approach to the Health Promotion Systems Assessment Tool.

How does the Systems Assessment Tool work?

- Implemented as part of a systems oriented continuous quality improvement (CQI) intervention in health promotion.
- Through facilitated workshops:
  - health centre teams explore strengths and weaknesses of their health centre systems.
  - arrive at consensus scores ranging from 0-11 (the higher the score the better the state of system development).
- Results are analysed using simple descriptive methods and spider plots are used to illustrate the scores for system domains.
- Health centre teams develop practical strategies for health centre systems change and development.

**Domain 1** Delivery System Design

- Program and Services
  - Chronic Conditions Framework and modified for health promotion

**Domain 2** Information Systems and Decision Support

- Systems and Information
  - Locally appropriate information systems for documenting health promotion and the role systems play in supporting effective practice

**Domain 3** Organisational Environment

- Organisational Culture and Leadership
  - To create a culture and supportive environment for health promotion

**Domain 4** Integration and Adaptability - How well health centre systems respond to emerging issues and function as a whole

- Access and Cultural Competence
  - Reorient towards health promotion

**Spider Plot**

- Depicts the meeting place at the health services
- Depicts the journey and approach to the Health Promotion Systems Assessment Tool

References

1. Menzies School of Health Research
2. La Trobe University