



NATIONAL RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP

CQI + Research + Change Advocates = Improvements in Primary Health Care

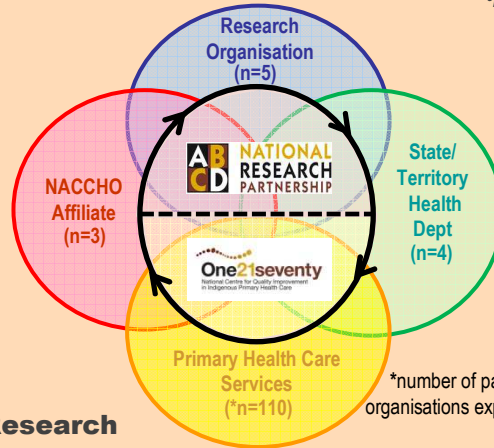
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Background

ABCD projects that used a CQI approach to improve quality of care in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander primary health care services showed:

- improvements in health service systems & intermediate health outcomes
- evidence of variation in quality of care between health services and regions



*number of participating organisations expected in 2012

Our aim is to

- understand variation in quality of care between health centres & regions
- identify strategies that have been effective in improving the delivery of care
- work with partners to disseminate findings & translate findings into effective & successful strategies

Methods: Participatory Research



Current strategies

Challenges

Forward Strategies

Collaborative and equitable partnerships

- national and regional structures
- build local & Indigenous research capacity
- Project Co-ordinating Centre facilitating national & regional processes
- differing stakeholder interests & experience
- support for developing researchers
- geographic spread & diversity of partners
- support for local & Indigenous researcher involvement
- connect with Indigenous study units in universities
- flexible communication

Build on existing strengths

- ABCD research project reputation
- diverse knowledge & experience of partners
- organisational commitment to quality improvement
- individual CQI advocates
- unfavourable perceptions about research & CQI
- data sharing reservations
- using diversity to fullest potential
- changing organisational priorities
- communicate success stories widely
- facilitate locally driven research that builds on local knowledge, experience & relationships
- research is relevant & transferrable

Engage in research that is cyclical and iterative

- partners jointly identify research priorities
- documented research processes reflect cyclical & participatory approach
- cyclical approach meets partners needs e.g. differing timeframes & contexts
- engaging service providers throughout the cycle
- new research builds on previous findings
- dissemination & translation of findings in timely manner

Invest in long term relationships

- influence partners / policy makers to recognise the value of collaborative research
- establish processes that facilitate sustainable networks
- staff turnover
- competing agendas
- time limited project funding
- creating environment where the partnership approach is widespread
- demonstrate benefits of collaborative CQI research
- enhance connections between researchers & services
- building relationships at multiple levels with a diverse range of stakeholder organisations

Conclusion Building an effective research partnership is challenging. The principles of participatory research provide a sound foundation for a partnership that should be sustainable beyond the life of the current research project. Consultation, participatory planning, clear communication between diverse stakeholders and meaningful engagement with health services have underpinned success to date.

Reference: a) Schmittiel J A et al. (2010) System-Based Participatory Research in Health Care: An Approach for Sustainable Translational Research and Quality Improvement. Ann Fam Med. 8(3):256-259

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