



The MECSH Evaluation Project

The MECSH evaluation project is funded by the Northern Territory Government Department of Health from 2019-2024 and includes researchers at Menzies/CCDE and the College of Indigenous Futures, Arts and Society (CIFAS) at Charles Darwin University.

MECSH is an evidence-based program of sustained nurse home-visiting intended for mothers from pregnancy through their child's third year. It is being implemented by four remote Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services, Miwatj Aboriginal Health; Katherine West Health Board; Sunrise Health Aboriginal Corporation and Anyingingyi Health Aboriginal Corporation. It is a complex program involving development of systems of nursing practice, collaboration with social care workers and Aboriginal community-based practitioners and the formation of partnerships between practitioners, parents and their families.

The evaluation project will investigate a number of areas of the MECSH program and maternal and child health services, including the implementation and delivery of MECSH services, the long- and short-term outcomes for children, the perspectives of mothers and their families and the cultural context of delivery of a safe and effective service. The evaluation aims to develop reports and methods that can contribute to ongoing quality assurance initiatives for use by health services.

Parents' perspectives on child development, parenting and care: the social and cultural context of maternal and infant care in remote communities

CENTRE FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

PhD

The MECSH program of nurse home-visiting is being implemented for Aboriginal mothers in remote communities. The Evaluation will investigate determinants of outcomes of care for mothers and their babies in the social and cultural context of remote NT communities. This project will involve qualitative or mixed methods of investigation to understand the social and cultural context and determinants of parenting and its contribution to children's development and early learning. The project will involve work with community-based research associates in multiple communities. It will study experiences of remote Aboriginal mothers during pregnancy and childbirth, their use of maternal and child health services, understandings of child development and social and cultural influences on parenting. Mixed methods using formal questionnaires, exploratory focus groups or structured interviews are proposed.

Prof Gary Robinson

gary.robinson@menzies.edu.au

Supporting maternal and infant health in remote communities: Capacity building for improved outcomes

CENTRE FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

PhD

MASTER BY RESEARCH

This project will be located within the framework of the evaluation of the MECSH program of sustained nurse home-visiting for Aboriginal mothers and their infants in remote communities. It will investigate determinants of processes of capacity building to support the MECSH program in remote NT communities and the development of specific elements of the model of care: for example, the roles of MECSH Nurses, Social Care Practitioners, and Aboriginal Community practitioners in engagement and delivery of quality services. It will involve qualitative or mixed methods of investigation of the outcomes of training and support for practitioners and the determinants of successful engagement of remote Aboriginal mothers during pregnancy and after the birth of their children.

Prof Gary Robinson

gary.robinson@menzies.edu.au

Epidemiological study of outcomes of maternal and infant healthcare in four remote regions of the NT

CENTRE FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

PhD

This project will be located within the framework of the evaluation of the MECSH program of sustained nurse home-visiting for Aboriginal mothers and their infants in remote communities. It will be responsible for quantitative investigation of outcomes of the implementation of the MECSH program in remote NT communities utilising health services and administrative data from multiple sources. It may contribute to mixed methods investigation of specific components of the MECSH program evaluation. Depending on timing of commencement, there are opportunities in at least two study areas:

1. Study of the first years of MECSH implementation (2020-2023), investigating program implementation, participant characteristics, health service utilisation, and key indicators of maternal and child health outcomes;
2. Data linkage study of medium- and longer-term outcomes of maternal and child healthcare before and during implementation of the MECSH program from 2013-2023.

Prof Steve Guthridge

steve.guthridge@menzies.edu.au



Eligibility: The successful applicant will meet the eligibility criteria for admission to a Master by Research or Doctor of Philosophy degree at Charles Darwin University.

Scholarship Provisions:

Candidates will be encouraged to seek Research Training Program (RTP) scholarship funding through Charles Darwin University. Further information about RTP scholarship application process, eligibility criteria and key dates can be found on this [CDU webpage](#)

A successful candidate who is a recipient of a primary scholarship such as RTP will be eligible to apply for a Menzies top-up scholarship to the value of \$10,000 per annum for up to 3.5 years. Successful candidates will receive \$3,500 per annum for up to 3.5 years to cover direct costs of the research.

Application Process

Applicants should submit the following:

- Brief summary of why they want to complete the project
- Current CV
- Copies of certified academic transcripts
- Proof of Residency (not required for Australian citizens)

Applications close on 30th September 2021. For more information please contact MECSH Evaluation Project Coordinator, Danielle Aquino Danielle.aquino@menzies.edu.au