

SHELab: Getting to Know Her Health

19 September 2024

A new initiative known as SHELab will provide an interactive health promotion program for women and girls living in regional, remote, and very remote areas of the Northern Territory (NT), northern Western Australia and northern Queensland.

This has been made possible through new funding announced last week from the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care's [Improving Health Outcomes for Priority Populations of Women and Girls – Health Promotion Activities Grant Opportunity](#). This awarded \$1.4 million to the SHELab team, led by Professor Heidi Smith-Vaughan and Nicole Boyd from Menzies School of Health Research (Menzies).

The team will work in partnership with some of the most isolated communities across northern and central Australia, where there is a pressing need for health education support.

The initiative will deliver a tailored program for women and girls that responds to the unique and evolving health priorities of each community. SHELab will build on the successful HealthLAB program, which is a co-designed, educational, interactive and mobile health laboratory that has operated for more than 10 years across the NT. HealthLAB works to increase awareness about the health impact of lifestyle choices, change behaviours when it comes to smoking, alcohol, physical activity and nutrition as well as improve the health and wellbeing of the community.

The SHELab program will deliver hands-on health activities targeted to women and girls, allowing participants to take their own health measures and learn about their health. The team will collaborate with women across regional and remote communities to support the development of tailored health resources, ensuring that messages are relevant and localised for each community they serve.

In the final year of the program, the team looks forward to working with national collaborators to develop an implementation-ready model to roll out SHELab across Australia.

Find out more about [SHELab via the Menzies website](#).

Quotes attributable to SHELab lead and Menzies Principal Research Fellow, [Professor Heidi Smith-Vaughan](#):

“SHELab will focus on empowering girls and women with knowledge to look after their health over their lifetime.

“Women play a vital role in shaping effective and equitable health systems. Through SHELab we will work with community health leaders and support the next generation of women leaders.”

Quotes attributable to Menzies Deputy Director Indigenous Leadership and Engagement, [Mark Mayo](#):

“Leadership from women and girls in health is vital for remote and rural regions of Australia, SHELab provides a platform for our future leaders in health to rise.

“Having women and girls deciding on the health messages and activities they would like delivered in their communities is essential for better health outcomes.”

ENDS

Media contact:

Phone: (08) 8946 8680 | Email: media@menzies.edu.au

Menzies School of Health Research

Menzies is one of Australia’s leading medical research institutes dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and a leader in global and tropical health research. Menzies continues to translate research into effective partnerships and programs in communities across Australia and the Asia-Pacific region.