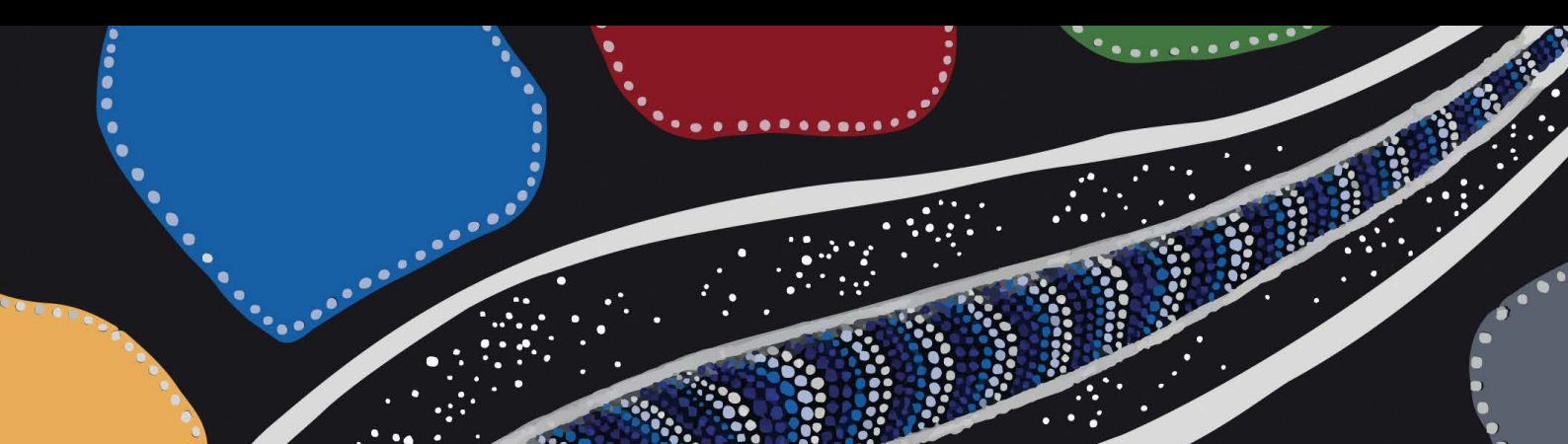


REPORT

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healthy Ageing & Aged Care Research Symposium

TUESDAY 27 JUNE 2023





The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healthy Ageing & Aged Care Research Symposium

On Tuesday 27 June 2023, Wardliparingga Aboriginal Health Equity hosted The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healthy Ageing and Aged Care Research Symposium at the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute, Adelaide. The [symposium](#) brought together national and state attendees including community members, Commonwealth and State government representatives, researchers, Aboriginal controlled healthcare organisations, health, aged care and community service providers.

Aunty Ros Coleman and Daniel Coleman welcomed us to Kurna Country. Aunty Ros talked about the importance of the Symposium's agenda for the day with relation to healthy ageing and aged care needs of elders and the need for research to inform policy and service delivery.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge that SAHMRI is located on the traditional lands of the Kurna people and pay our respects to the Kurna people, Elders past and present. We acknowledge their continuing connection to this land and thriving cultural practices and knowledge. We also pay respects to the cultural authority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from other areas of South Australia and Australia who attended the symposium.



ELDER INSIGHTS

Healthy Ageing, Wellbeing and Aged Care

The elders shared insights into healthy ageing, wellbeing, and aged care. The good aspects of getting older included acceptance of the ageing process, taking it day by day, making the best of it and spending time with family, particularly with grandchildren. A positive to growing older was about gaining wisdom and knowledge and being able to share that with the younger generation. The not so good aspects about getting older were not being able to do the things one could previously, because of age-related conditions. Keeping healthy through making healthy food choices, good sleep and being able to access services to cater to a range of needs was important. Maintaining cultural, social, emotional wellbeing and mental health was of equal importance as maintaining physical health.

“I want to be able to keep using my hands and legs for as long as I possibly can - eyesight as well”

Wellbeing for elders meant supporting the connection between body, mind, and soul. To support their wellbeing, the elders spoke about visiting Country as spiritually healing. Wellbeing was also supported by participation in group activities such as women’s or men’s groups for singing and visiting traditional lands where they could fish, which evoked happiness, connection, and good memories. The elders emphasised the importance of transport services and how it supported their wellbeing by facilitating community connections.

“Body, mind and soul. Making sure you’re in a good head space, taking care of your body, listening to your body. Healthy, I believe, is from the outside. Wellbeing is what’s going on in your body”

The elders’ perspectives of the aged care workforce were that all workers need to know how to support clients’ needs, be culturally safe, have compassion, empathy, and respect for the client. Individualised and flexible care was important and allowed an older person to stay in their own home for as long as possible. It was important to be considerate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander older people because many of the older generation include Stolen Generation survivors who have experienced institutionalisation and trauma and continue to suffer from that trauma.

“When you walk into my house, treat me with respect, and I need to respect you too. It works both ways”



KNOWLEDGE SHARING

Panel

Key topics discussed by the panel:

- Building the capacity of the Aboriginal workforce
- Progress on the current aged care reforms for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Evidence of home care support needs in rural South Australia
- Unique challenges that Aboriginal people face in accessing and receiving aged care services
- Engagement approaches that are culturally appropriate
- Culturally safe providers were important

“Aged care funding is like seagulls with a bag of chips!”

“We need to find ways to support the family who support the older person”



Panel (left to right): Mr. Kym Thomas, Ms. Elaine Kite, Mr. Mark Elliot, Ms. Lesley Nelson

GUEST PRESENTERS

Ms Lesley Nelson, CEO, Southwest Aboriginal Medical Service

Lesley showcased the recently launched first Aboriginal aged care service in Mandurah, Western Australia, for the Bindjareb community. The service provides social support, group activities, domestic assistance, basic home maintenance and transport through the Home Care Package Program and the Commonwealth Home Support Program to Aboriginal community members. Lesley's presentation highlighted key success factors for taking on aged care service delivery for the broader ACCHO sector to consider. These included:

- Introducing necessary changes in policies, technology, systems, processes, and workforce for launching the first phase of aged care services in the Peel region
- Engaging with community leaders, community-controlled organisations, aged care assessment team, local government, and parliamentary representatives to establish governance, organisational structures, workforce, training, and service delivery
- Collaborations with local and state-based stakeholders to undertake comprehensive community needs assessment and creating culturally appropriate discharge pathways to ensure the success of the SWAMS Transition Care pilot.

Ms Nikki Quirke, Acting Director, First Nations Aged Care Policy Branch, DEPT. Health, and Aged Care

Nikki's [presentation](#) described the role and activities of the engagement team within the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care and outlined the current supports and reform initiatives for First Nations elders and providers. The reforms will fund and support First Nations people to access work in aged care services. These will help improve the quality and cultural appropriateness of aged care services, supports to help make informed decisions, and upkeep the dignity and respect for Aboriginal elders. Nikki provided an overview of several programs relating to workforce development, aged care assessment, improving access to care for First Nations people.



RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

Wardliparingga Aboriginal Health Equity researchers, Jonathon Zagler and Adriana Parrella presented key findings of two research projects, “Designing Indigenous aged care with a ‘whole of community’ perspective” and “Prioritising social and emotional wellbeing in home-based aged care.” The research findings that were presented informed the round table discussions.

- Healthy ageing
- Informed choice
- Service integration
- Wellbeing
- Building of the workforce
- Culturally safe workforce
- Workforce training
- Best practice for working together



ROUNDTABLES

Responsive Service Design

- Older person is central to care and service delivery
- Holistic care to include family and community
- Agile, responsive, flexible to the needs of consumers
- Collaboration across sectors
- Innovative modes of communication
- Listening, hearing, and acting on consumers' voices in a timely manner
- Lack of service options

“Often there is not a choice – systems imposed”



Workforce Strengthening

- Training must include a holistic view of health and healthy ageing from Aboriginal perspectives
- Innovative training methods
- Aged care career pathways with flexible entry criteria
- Innovative recruitment strategies
- Aboriginal mentors to provide hands-on training and support
- Funding to deliver training
- Leadership commitment to workforce development

“Need to value different ‘knowledges’...best practice would enable this”

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Symposium Host:

Mr Clyde Rigney

Welcome to Country:

Aunty Ros Coleman and Mr Daniel Coleman

Insights from recipients of aged care by video vignette:

- Aunty Martha Watts, Arabana Elder
- Ms Natalie Warrior
- Mr Neil Baehnisch

Guest panel members:

- Mr Mark Elliot, Regional Coordinator, Aboriginal Community Services
- Ms Elaine Kite, Aged Care Workforce Implementation Project, Aged Care Workforce Remote Accord
- Ms Lesley Nelson, Chief Executive Officer, South-West Aboriginal Medical Service
- Mr Kym Thomas, Researcher, University of Adelaide

Invited speakers:

- Ms Lesley Nelson, Chief Executive Officer, South-West Aboriginal Medical Service
- Ms Nikki Quirke, Acting Director, First Nations Aged Care Policy Branch, Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care

Round table facilitators:

- Ms Tina Brodie
- Dr Anna Dawson
- Dr Greer Humphrey
- Ms Margaret McCallum
- Ms Kim Morey
- Dr Shwikar Othman
- Dr Adriana Parrella
- A/Prof Rachel Reilly
- Dr Yasamin Veziari
- Mr Jonathon Zagler

Research presentations prepared by:

- Dr Adriana Parrella (presenter)
- A/Prof Odette Pearson (presenter)
- Dr Yasamin Veziari
- Mr Jonathon Zagler (presenter)

Symposium coordination

- Ms Sarah Crossing

Attendees:

The symposium was attended by 70 attendees from almost 40 organisations in South Australia and nationally. Thank you to the Symposium attendees for your participation.



Research Partner Organisations:

Wardliparingga Aboriginal Health Equity (AHE) at the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute, partners with the Aboriginal community-controlled health sector, aged care service organisations, government agencies, regional and national stakeholders to conduct research aimed at supporting the ageing and care needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We wish to acknowledge and thank the following organisations who we have partnered with the research projects presented at the symposium:

- Aboriginal Community Services
- Moorundi Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services
- Pangula Mannamurna Aboriginal Corporation
- Port Lincoln Aboriginal Health Services
- Yadu Health
- Kura Yerlo
- Northern Adelaide Local Health Network

Funding:

- National Health and Medical Research Council Targeted Call for Research (NHMRC GNT: 1170496).
- Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS GNT: OG00094).

Please note: The term 'Elder' as utilised in this report, signifies a revered and respected individual esteemed as a community leader and custodian of knowledge within the community. The term 'elder' refers to an older member of the community, typically a person who is more advanced in age.

Suggested citation:

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENDANCE

To get in touch, please email us at wardliparingga@sahmri.com

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