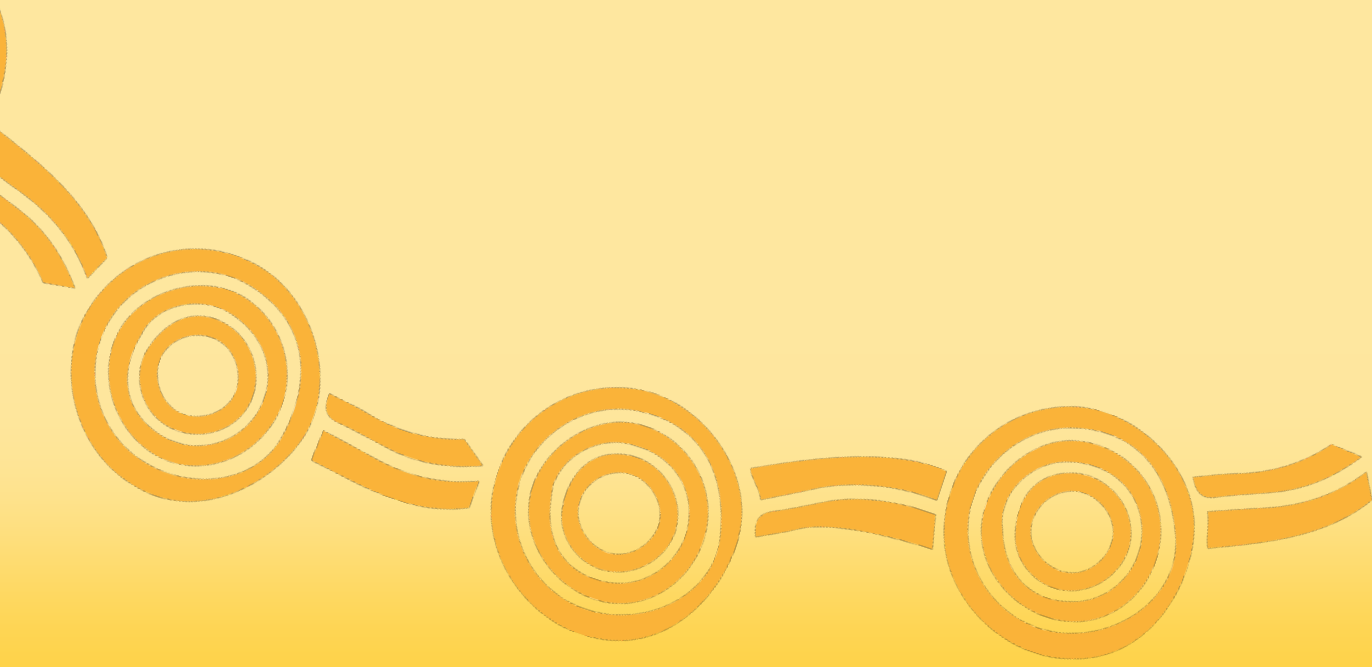


LOOKING FORWARD

MOVING FORWARD

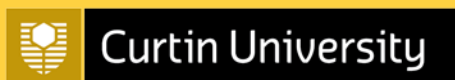
2017 REPORT



**Suggested Citation**

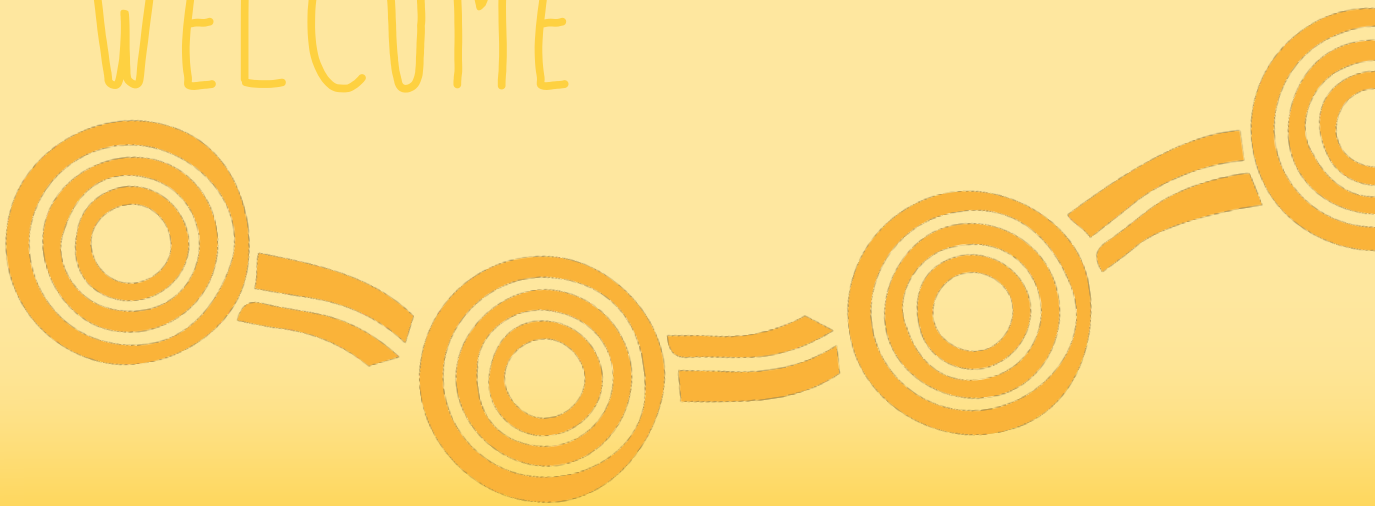
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# KAYA

# WELCOME



## WADJUK NYOONGAR BOODJA

We pay our respects to the Wadjuk Nyoongar people on whose land we undertake this project and acknowledge their Elders past, present and future.

The Looking Forward Moving Forward Project is based in Perth, Western Australia, Wadjuk Country on Nyoongar Boodja. Wadjuk is one of fourteen clan groups that make up the Nyoongar Nation in Western Australia's southwest.

# WHAT'S INSIDE?

The **Looking Forward Moving Forward Project** is excited to share our 2017 Report. In this report, you will find stories about the year to date, our project workshops and initiatives, the outcomes, and our plan for the coming year.

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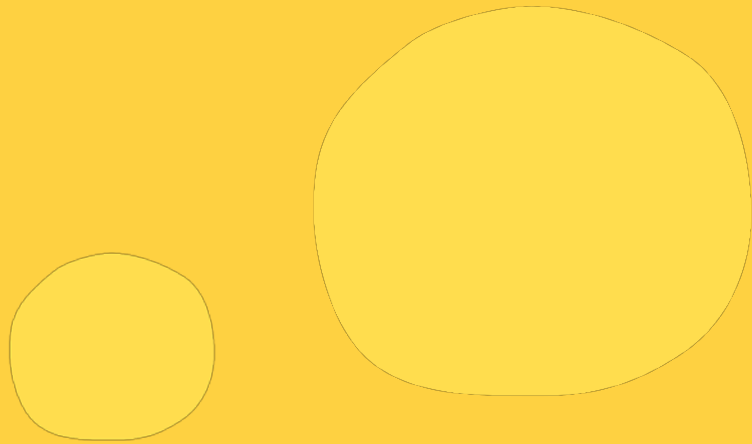
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# THE PROJECT



# INTRODUCTION

Aboriginal people do not access mental health and drug and alcohol services at a level that corresponds with their need, despite their clear need for support.

Community concerns have been raised regarding the adequacy of mainstream mental health services to respond appropriately to the needs of Aboriginal people. Through a process of co-design with Aboriginal Elders and Service Partners, the aim of the Looking Forward Moving Forward Research Project is to implement and evaluate the *Minditj Kaart-Moorditj Kaart* Framework, a culturally secure systems change framework to alter the way in which these services work for and with Aboriginal people. The systems change framework is the result of extensive formative research into what is required for culturally responsive and accessible mental health and drug and alcohol service provision.

The evaluation scheduled to begin in 2018 and will measure the implementation of the framework and assess its impact on:

- the relationships between Aboriginal clients and their families, and mental health and drug and alcohol service providers; and
- the health and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal people.

The project represents direct translation of research into policy, practice and service delivery and continues established partnerships between researchers, Aboriginal Nyoongar Elders, six Service Partners, three peak bodies and the Western Australian Mental Health Commission. The research will generate new evidence on ways to engage with Aboriginal people, to ensure the mental health and drug and alcohol sector responds in culturally competent ways to meet the needs of Aboriginal clients and their families.



# MINDITJ KAART—MOORDITJ KAART FRAMEWORK

The Framework is held by an Aboriginal (**Nyoongar**) worldview.

It demonstrates how Aboriginal Elders guide Service Partners to better **understand** Aboriginal culture and the impact of colonisation, and build Service Partners' **capacity** to work with Aboriginal people in a **culturally secure** way.

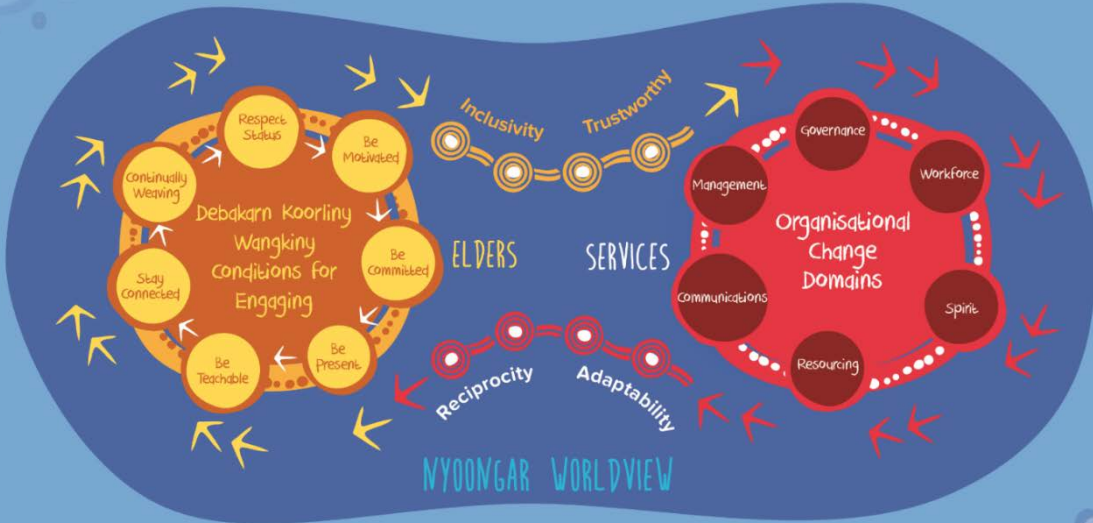
The Framework sets out the conditions for working together, and steps out the **preparation** required for the Service Partners to engage with Elders in the first instance. These are: be motivated; be committed; be present; be teachable; stay connected; respect status; and continual weaving.

This work is held together through relationships. Attributes for meaningful relationships are: Inclusivity, trustworthiness, reciprocity and adaptability.

Six **organisational change** domains show where services can make changes according to their learnings from the Elders. This is because change at a systems level, as well as an individual level, is necessary to make a real difference to the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal families.



# SHARED INTENTION



RESPECT

RELATIONSHIPS

TRUST



## MINDITS KAART - MOORDITS KAART FRAMEWORK

# AIMS OF PROJECT



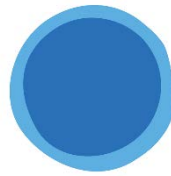
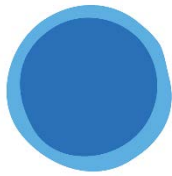
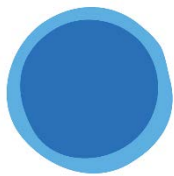
Implement the *Minditj Kaart–Moorditj Kaart* Framework in ten Service Partner mental health and drug and alcohol organisations across Western Australia;



Co-design and implement an evaluation of the *Minditj Kaart–Moorditj Kaart* Framework within the Service Partner organisations, including the health and economic impact of its application; and



Co-design and implement an appropriate evidence-based translation strategy that will maximise the utilisation of the *Minditj Kaart–Moorditj Kaart* Framework and set a reform agenda for policies and practices across the health and social services sectors in WA.

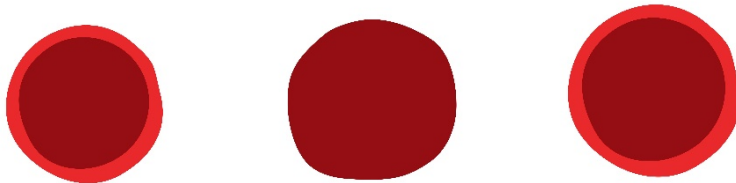


WORKING  
TOGETHER  
OBJECTIVES

Service partners, Elders and researchers are working together to effect changes that will have both a positive and sustained impact that improves the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people.

Working together strategies will impact on three levels:

- 1 Shared learning and mutual support between Service Partner organisations;
- 2 Shared experiential learning that will be integrated across each Service Partner organisation; and
- 3 Using each Service Partners collective expertise and authority to translate the findings of the project to the broader sector.



RESEARCH  
GOVERNANCE

A research governance structure has been established to ensure clear processes for communication and decision-making. This will ensure meaningful participation and engagement from this large and diverse group of partners in order to achieve the project objectives.

### → Research Leadership Group

This Group will include the Chief Investigators, Associate Investigators and two local Elders. The role of the Group is to drive the vision of the project and advise on and have overall responsibility for delivery of the outcomes of the project. The Group will oversee all aspects of the project, give advice on the involvement of the partners and stakeholder groups and the methodological basis on which this occurs, and monitor project progress.

### → Project Team

The Project Team will operationalize the vision set out by the Research Leadership Group. This Team will coordinate and support partner organisations and stakeholder groups in the co-design, implementation, evaluation and translation efforts. They will manage the ethical requirements, development and implementation of research protocols, data collection, analyses and project reporting.


### → Policy and Governance Group

This Group will comprise two Elders and representatives with policy decision-making capacity and sector-wide advocacy roles, i.e. WA MHC, WA Association for Mental Health, WA Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies (WANADA), WA Council of Social Services, chief executives from all other partner organisations, the CIA, the WA Mental Health Commissioner (CID), Economic Analyst (CIE), and Project Team members. This Group will take carriage of the policy, governance and economic implications of the research, disseminating and translating the findings into policy and governance settings across the sector. Members will meet annually to discuss their individual policy changes and the relevance of these for wider implementation to set the statewide reform agenda.

### → Management and Practice Group

This Group comprises two Elders, program managers and team leaders from the partner organisations, i.e. St John of God Health Care Midland, MercyCare, Ruah Community Services, Richmond Wellbeing, Hope Community Services and Palmerston Association, Project Team members, CIs and AIs. They will implement the *Minditj Kaart-Moorditj Kaart Framework* at the organisational level and assist in the project engagement process in collaboration with the Project Team. This Group will disseminate and translate the findings into other practice and management settings and share their individual learnings from the evaluation.



The background is a solid red color. It features a repeating pattern of stylized, hand-drawn elements. Each element consists of three concentric circles, with the innermost being the smallest and the outermost being the largest. These circles are connected to each other by short, curved, double-lined segments, creating a chain-like or network-like structure. The overall style is simple and graphic.

WHO'S  
INVOLVED?

# PROJECT TEAM



MICHAEL WRIGHT  
Chief Investigator



HELEN LETTE  
Research Fellow



EMMA GARLETT  
Project Coordinator



MARGARET O'CONNELL  
Research Fellow



ASHLEIGH LIN  
Research Fellow



TIANA CULBONG  
Research Assistant



## OUR ROLE

- We **bring** the service providers and Elders **together** and **facilitate relationship building**;
- We coordinate project **activities** using a participatory action research approach;
- We **capture the conversations** in meetings, workshops (audio recording, transcribing, and **analysing** the group conversations) and **relay** the **themes** to progress the next steps in the research;
- We capture the **baseline data** through interviews with service providers and Elders;
- We conduct thorough research on this topic, adapting and implementing the findings into **practical framework and policies** to support the systems change work; and
- We report on the outcomes and findings of the project.





The Services Partners participating in the project are the Mental Health Commission, three peak bodies, two drug and alcohol agencies and four mental health service providers.

In recognition of the Elders' cultural status as the *Budiyas* (leaders) of their communities, it is expected that the executives and senior managers of each Service Partner organisation will work directly with the Elders.

Service Partners ensure they engage their key staff members in the Project, which includes board members, clinical managers, and Aboriginal staff members.

Throughout the year, Service Partners have been encouraged to step back from conventional and corporate business interactions and connect at a more personal level. There is a focus on building relationships through being present and sharing portions of self.

"WE HAVE SHOWN THAT IT IS ACTUALLY POSSIBLE TO TRANSFORM AN ORGANISATION IF YOU ENGAGE WITH ELDERS"

(Service Partner)

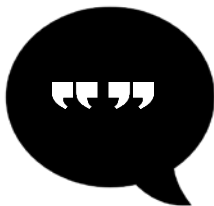


I could call one of their Executives and we know them and if we talked about partnering together we would automatically know what the unwritten ground rules are of how we work and there's all these you know, these rules that we live by in *wadjella* culture that they're known and agreed. But when we're working with the Elders on new projects that we're really **expanding and thinking differently**, we don't know, there's not this strict set of unwritten ground rules of how we interact and what you can say and do that is, is known and embedded in *wadjella* culture. (Service Partner)





We have a better understanding now about **Aboriginal needs**, which are different. I'll just give you an example. We had, we have an Indigenous guy at the moment whose uncle has passed away and so very important for him to attend the funeral. So a two week time out because it was away in the country but it took a very long time to get all the family and all the relatives and all the friends involved so it's, it's, the time now is extended. ...**it's this understanding of how important it is and how long it does take to bring the mob together that's educated us to not be so rigid with our rules** and to go, this is okay, this is normal. He rings in everyday, tells us what he's doing and you know, so that's a **shift in how we manage.** (Service Partner)



“I think the services, the space we work in are **over-represented by Aboriginal people that we don't meet their needs.** ...So yes, there is an energy, but there is also I think a dawning reality that **we don't have a right to be in this space unless we're doing it DIFFERENTLY**”

(Service Partner)

THE ELDERS



The Looking Forward Moving Forward Project involves twenty Nyoongar Elders. The Elders work directly with the individual Service Partners as Cultural Consultants.

The project would not exist without the Elders – they are the key to its success. The Elders in their role as Cultural Consultants conduct the following with the individual Service Partner:

- act as cultural educators by assisting staff to develop a greater understanding and awareness of a Nyoongar world-view and the generational impact of colonisation;
- assist to build staff capacity and cultural awareness to allow staff to work confidently and competently with Nyoongar families;
- establish steps to increase service effectiveness in working with the community through generating ideas and addressing community needs; and
- assist in the engagement of new Aboriginal clients and retaining current clients.

The Elders are pivotal in the development and implementation of new strategies, policies and procedures within the service providers. No service partner meeting, translation session or co-design meeting occurs without at least two Elders to witness the process, and to provide input and authority to any decision made.

“

Well since being involved with the Looking Forward Project I sort of started coming out of my shell and talking more, not like before I used to be in the background of, yeah. Now I can speak you know

(Elder)

”



“So getting to know who they are, they getting to know us and we understand each other, they have a better understanding. And the more we, more we communicate, the more the trust is, the stronger the trust is. So um, yeah there’s nothing between us now, we’ve become, we’re like family, we’ve become family. That’s the best way I can describe it”

(Elder)





THIS YEAR



Met and yarned to over 200  
people across **Perth**

THE MAJORITY OF ELDERS PARTICIPATING IN THE PROJECT  
FEEL LISTENED TO, RESPECTED AND EMPOWERED IN THEIR  
WORK WITH THE SERVICE PROVIDERS

Partnered with **TEN** organisations across the state of  
Western Australia including peak bodies and the Mental Health  
Commission



# RESEARCH FINDINGS

## What did we mean by “baseline data collection”?

Baseline data collection involves the activity of gathering information from key stakeholders, partner organisations and Elders for the purpose of identifying a starting point for the project; importantly, where each partner organisation is located at the beginning stage of the project.

Most of the Service Partners have been involved with Looking Forward Project since 2013, and have made considerable and transformative progress in their internal processes through their engagement with Elders. Those others who have recently joined are now commencing on their journey of change and are at the beginning of their engagement with the Elders. The project is not engaging in a comparative process across the service partners, but rather measuring impact across the ten partners and its impact on the sector/s. setting a baseline enables the project team to:

- measure change within each service organisation across time, at three points, baseline, mid and end, over the five years of the project; how each and collectively organisations are implementing the *Minditj Kaart-Moorditj Kaart* Framework and how this is having a positive impact on Aboriginal clients.
- assess the alignment on the where individual services are at in their change process, and if it is the same for the Elders, and how the change process is of benefit to the community; and
- record these results, which will then enable us to develop a sector-wide strategy for reform.

The Looking Forward Moving Forward project is a complex systems evaluation with multiple variables, in which we want to capture changes occurring in the participating organisations both systematically and purposefully.

It is an iterative process, and how we measure the implementation of the Framework may change as we move through the process. As part of our Participatory Action Research methodology, we are learning and reshaping as we go.

This research is applied and practice-led, not descriptive, so it is also an intervention in its own right. The reflective and experiential nature of this work are evident in the fact that after the interviews, the questions that have been raised and topics explored have stimulated or affirmed changes some Service Partners have made in the way they engage with Aboriginal clients, Elders, staff members (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) or the local Aboriginal community.



## WHAT WE'VE DONE SO FAR

- Baseline interviews with **every partner organisation**. In most cases the baseline semi-structured interviews were audio recorded, with a supplementary set of supporting documents provided by relevant organisation. Initial baseline interviews with newly partnered organisations were exploratory and not audio recorded.
- **Baseline interviews were conducted with all Elders** that are currently in an ongoing relationship with a Service Partner. These interviews were also audio recorded, and explored with the Elders what the most significant changes they had experienced since their engagement with the Service Partner.
- Continuing and **deepening the conversations** with the entire group of Elders associated with this project.
- Meeting with all the Service Partners following their baseline interviews, **and providing preliminary feedback** about key themes emerging from their and the Elders' interviews with the research team.
- Commenced baseline data analysis with **preliminary analysis identifying several key themes**. Ongoing analysis of the baseline data is planned for early 2018

**Each Service Partner selected which of their staff represented in the group that responded to the baseline interviews.**

In many instances, at least eight staff members from each Service Partner attended. The questions were provided to respondents prior to the interview. Guiding qualitative questions focusing on aspects of the *Minditj Kaart – Moorditj Kaart* Framework were addressed during the interview. Relevant staff members later supplied more quantitative material such as numbers and lengths of stay of Aboriginal clients, numbers and roles of Aboriginal employees, what types of psychometric measures were used in the service and what outcome measures were required by their funders. **A considerable amount of data was collected.** A document analysis is currently being conducted, which includes a gap analysis to determine the extent to which baseline expectations have been adequately met.

# THEMES WHERE THERE'S ALREADY GOOD ALIGNMENT



ELDERS

SERVICES

## Feeling Respected

Great satisfaction and growing confidence for Elders on a personal level, arising from feeling respected and truly heard by Executive management in the Service Partners.

## Expressed Deep Respect

Services that had ongoing relationships with Elders expressed a deep respect for Elders, and a sense of how the relationship with Elders had increased their confidence in working within Aboriginal communities.

## Acknowledging Appreciation

We saw moments of delight when Service Partners realised how appreciated they were by the Elders, or Elders realised how much they were valued by the Service Partners.

## Concerns about Sustainability

Once these Elders are no longer in a position to work with the Service Partners, who will be their successors and how will that handover take place? If the current CEO or key contact people for the Elders move on, how can that relationship with the Service Partner be kept alive? How long can the trust last? What needs to be embedded in formal structures and how is that done? How can the Elders' role be deepened over time?



It's really, really great to hear it from your perspective and its surprised me really, I'd say, how important the relationship's been for you and really great that it has been. 'Cause for us and for my team it's been, it's been a really important relationship so it's really great to hear it from your point of view that it has been as well. (CEO speaking to Elders, in Elders' baseline interview)

KEY THEMES:

SERVICES



## Culturally Safe Governance

Partner organisations are committed to exploring more creative ways to ensure a more practical and meaningful approach to their current governance structures, so as to ensure that Aboriginal concerns are acted upon within their organisations.

## Dealing with Complexity

Being effective in dealing with the layers of complexity within organisations is critical. The majority of partner organisations have complex structures including multiple sources of funding and complex outcome and output measures and impact. Questions have arisen on key issues, like 'what outcomes and impact measures can services apply without too much added burden?' 'Will they be applied to the whole service or only to certain areas or programs?' These varied and unique complexities require strategies that will be evaluated, both for their effectiveness and limitations.

## Aligning Worldviews on Cultural Security

There are a range of theoretical approaches being explored and considered defining cultural security, competence and confidence. These theoretical approaches will be investigated for the evaluation, and they will include;

- Elders' attitudes and views of the cultural security of a service partner;
- Service providers' attitudes and views of their responsibility to ensuring cultural security;
- How an Aboriginal (Nyoongar) world view of culture is respected and acknowledged;
- How direct relationships between, service providers, Elders and Aboriginal people are managed.

KEY THEMES:

ELDERS



## Open Lines of Communication

**Consistency and frequency of contact with the Service Partner are critical for it is a key component** for meaningful engagement and trusting relationships, to enable Elders to prepare and focus, and to know enough about the Service Partner to be able to give useful feedback.

## Action Orientated

**Identifying mechanisms to develop shared communication strategies for feedback of the research outcomes to the Aboriginal communities.**

## Importance of Elders

**Elders having an ongoing and very visible presence within an organisation is essential. Elders offer and provide cultural legitimacy for an organisation** and their authority in transmitting local culture, knowing all the local kinship connections, and vouching for a service is both unique and invaluable.

OUTCOMES

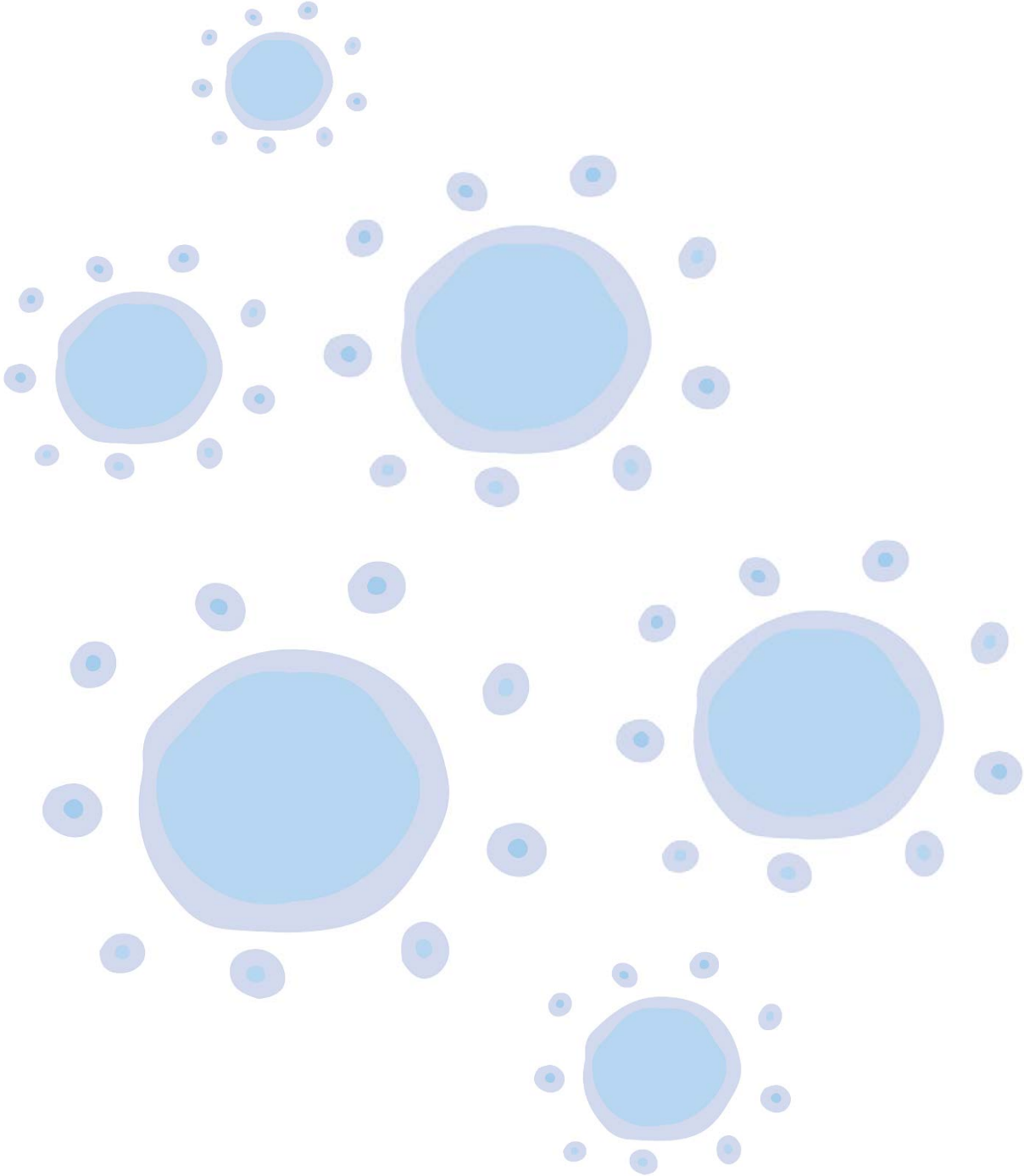
## Research Governance: Management and Practice Group

Two key outcomes emerged from the three Service Partner meetings held in 2017. The first, was the endorsement and commitment of a *Statement of Intent* (see appendix 1) for the duration of the Project by senior management from each partner organisation. The second was to establish three working sub groups, to commence in 2018, to work on three key themes, governance, cultural security and workforce that emerged from the preliminary baseline data analysis. Each of the subgroups will provide advice that will provide direction for the research and the evaluation. They will also provide the necessary communication and feedback pathway between the researchers and service providers so as to ensure the smooth systematic collection of data and translation and dissemination of research data results.

It is acknowledged that the roles of the three peak bodies, WAAMH, WANADA and WACOSS and the MHC are different from organisations delivering front line services. While they have, all expressed an interest in attending the working groups because the topics are all important to them, they have suggested setting up a separate working group to concentrate on aspects unique to their own roles in the sector. This separate peak body group will also provide a necessary overlap to the translation group (scheduled to meet mid-December) and thus present a two-way communication between Service Partners and the translation group.

Potential for additional working groups with participation from other interested organisations have already been raised, and these will likely to be established once the current groups are confident and satisfied that they have moved forward sufficiently.


# WORKING GROUP THEMES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS




# GOVERNANCE

The formation of this sub group arose from discussions on topics where it was thought that sharing ideas and strategies may enhance each service's capacity to adapt or design governance structures and processes to best meet the needs of the Aboriginal community. Service leaders expressed a desire to explore the following questions about governance:


- What governance structures best support and represent interests of Aboriginal clients and staff, and how can it be arranged for Elders and/or Aboriginal board members to best contribute at a governance level?
- How are the formal and informal aspects of the relationship between service leadership and Elders managed, to ensure that the service is accountable for what it commits to on behalf of the Aboriginal community?
- How can service leadership educate their existing Board on any changes to its membership, processes or priorities that are required in order to build better relationships with the Aboriginal community?
- How can organisations balance the accountability to financial and risk-management imperatives against the aspects of the service's mission that relate to engaging better with Aboriginal clients, workers and community?
- What is the role of peak bodies in terms of governance? How might they model the process with changes in their own governance? What training and/or other resources could be made available to their members?




*We're gonna go out and deal with some really tricky stuff and there's no, there's no safety net to that. That's challenging and the Board's going, whoa is this going to hurt us as an organisation, how we gonna survive this? What are the risks we're taking? All of that. So managing this challenge in governance is, what's our adherence to this, this strategic direction? What is our obligation to Elders in the community? And not failing those twin, those twin aims. 'Cause you can't bring Elders to the table and then fail them. (Service Partner, baseline interview)*




*What happens in ... the formal minuted meetings, it never happens that the Elders come and just land a bomb on the table in the meeting and say they want to do this. They'll have conversations with Exec or CEO, or other staff around the table and we'll nut out what would that look like, could it be feasible – especially because we're working in a space where we're trying some really unique innovative things. They'll often have a chat with me beforehand then after our, our formal meetings, I always go out for lunch with them to have a debrief about how it went so, a lot of the kind of agenda, a lot of the things we're doing this year have really been set just over, out having a coffee with the Elders, having lunch with them and then they go into the formal structured meetings there's a way that we are actually accountable to them. 'Cause obviously I can go out and have a coffee with them and promise them the world but it wouldn't mean anything. (Service Partner, baseline interview)*




*One of our future challenges is succession planning because we've had, how many people have joined our teams since we did the original project and in ten years' time who knows if any of the existing people will still be with [the organisation] and if the Elders move on how can we still retain all the good stuff that isn't reliant on just the individuals here today that are currently the carriers of that culture. If we all disappeared tomorrow there wouldn't be a lot that's hardwired in... (Service Partner, baseline interview)*



*It's really about that really at that level of you know respect and relationship and trust at that highest level of governance has certainly for [the organisation] has been a bit hit and miss in the last couple of years, but the conversation with the other partner members about whether there are other ways might be because I'm trying to think something through and you still come up with the same answer. (Service Partner, baseline interview)*



*That's where we want to get to as an organisation where we're actually accountable to the Aboriginal people where the Elders feel they have a strong enough relationship with us so they can come to us and say " this isn't good enough we want you to do this". (Service Partner, baseline interview)*



*Right and what we're trying to do is educate the Board to a view that the connection strategy means that for every one of us, half our world is not about the economic process, it's about being cared for in community, right? Where we live, who we live with, how we're living. So the point being that the connection, the connection issue is about acknowledging that half our world is all about what we're often ignoring. Which is, if it's not economic we don't touch it. So the market process isn't resolving some of that so for us the challenge for [us] is how to make reciprocity a vehicle for our involvement in community. (Service Partner, baseline interview)*

# CULTURAL SECURITY

Questions arose throughout baseline interviews about cultural security, that services thought might be better discussed with their peers than dealt with as an internal organisational issue. There was strong alignment with the comments made by Elders about what might constitute cultural security and who decides whether an organisation is culturally secure:

- What exactly is cultural security? What does it mean? What does it look like? What are the key ingredients? Who's qualified to say if it exists in an organisation?
- What are some of the indicators of cultural confidence, cultural competence, and cultural capacity within an organisation? How can we measure it, and what do we recognise as being an acceptable level of competence?
- How important is the *budiya* - *budiya* relationship to the cultural security of an organisation? How that relationship is maintained and nurtured, and how is conflict or divergence recognised and managed?
- Are there aspects of this that are specific to the peak bodies?



[client in a residential service was reported as saying] *"It feels like I'm in prison, I'm isolated from my family", so when they see they old fellas coming in it's family visiting. Part of our way of healing is being part of family. To be still connected to family but this process is detaching them from family so when they see the Elders come in they see family come in.*  
(Elders' baseline interview)



*Talking about us building confidence and capacity and competence ... I'm just wondering about okay, I can build a certain amount of confidence, etc., but the core essence of me says, "but I'm always not Aboriginal", so therefore there will always be a limit and a need for humility in working alongside or walking alongside Aboriginal people... So I stop and think, well the amount of confidence has to be somewhat limited and for me part of the importance there is always having the humility to be able to ask or to talk about or to say "am I doing the right thing?"*  
(Service Partner, baseline interview)



*One of the things [CEO] says to [Elder], when you come here everything's confidential so you're not allowed to ask for people's names and details. So [Elder] sits down he says "what's your name?" And [CEO] is looking at [Elder] and he's like "go away [CEO]. This is my family, I'm allowed to ask these questions".*  
(Elders' baseline interview)



*As a wadjella woman to experience the acceptance of Elders and the confidence that that brings when you go and work with community is really important and so I think we can go out now and talk with people and sit with people in a way that's different to before and that means you connect in different ways.* (Service Partner, baseline interview)

# WORKFORCE

There are many ways in which services are seeking to increase the number of Aboriginal staff in their workforce, and using these workers' skills to help the service become more relevant to Aboriginal people. Questions that arose in baseline interviews, either with services or with Elders, and sometimes in both, included:

- Is there an optimal number of Aboriginal workers at which they are in varied enough roles throughout the organisation to support each other, and to create a critical mass within the service to drive organisational change? What would we need to measure to determine that optimal number, and who would decide?
- What are the mechanisms within the organisation that enable Aboriginal workers to feel connected to the organisation, and to other Aboriginal workers within the organisation? What mechanisms help Aboriginal workers negotiate ways to reconcile their cultural knowledge with other, perhaps conflicting, work expectations, and do those mechanisms work to keep them feeling culturally secure in their workplace?
- How is the crossover of Aboriginal workers' roles as community members valued? Therein what ways are their extra obligations within the community acknowledged and supported, and their roles and way of working altered to suit?
- How does the organisation differentiate between roles for workers and roles for Elders?
- Are Aboriginal workers relied upon as the holders of cultural knowledge? Or what structures or practices occur within the organisation that allow non-Aboriginal workers' relationships with Aboriginal workers to increase their understanding and confidence, and introduce the non-Aboriginal workers to the Aboriginal community.
- When is it better to collaborate with an ACCHO than to increase numbers of your own Aboriginal staff? What would that collaboration look like? How can it be used to educate an organisation's non-Aboriginal workers on more systemically rather than on a client-by-client basis?



*We were about to take on two Aboriginal trainees and it kind of went from 0-60 and I just had to say “actually we need a written plan in place, we need to work out who’s going to supervise, where they’re going to be placed, what the day-to-day work schedule is”, so we’ll put that in place over the next month and then we’ve got something concrete to offer somebody instead of this good idea. (Service Partner, baseline interview)*



*They took on Aboriginal workers but then in taking on Aboriginal workers we see ... there’s been a drift away from the Elders... (Elders’ baseline interview)*



*Relationships that staff build with individuals within the team, with Aboriginal individuals within the team whose families have lived the local trauma, who have that history, there’s the opportunity to make that, make that real for the other staff around them and make it, put a personal understanding to what’s actually happened. And I think that the, one of the key components to translating understanding and learning into the genuine compassion that I think is required to build the meaningful relationships is the personal connection. So I think when an Aboriginal staff member who’s been able to have that sort of impact in the team, I think when that person moves on they leave behind something crucial to the ongoing skill development to the rest of the team, and I think it’s that personal connection to the stories. (Service Partner, baseline interview).*



*Sometimes X comes and talks to me as an employee who’s at this level in his JDF and sometimes X comes and talks to me as a leading member of the Aboriginal community in the same way that [other Aboriginal employees] might do that. I have different types of conversations with them where they have different hats on. (Executive Director, Service Partner, baseline interview)*

RESEARCH  
LEADERSHIP  
GROUP

**The Research Leadership Group drives the vision of the Project.** The Leadership Group oversees all aspects of the Project, advising on the involvement of the partners and stakeholder groups and advises on the methodological basis on which this occurs.

Dr **Michael Wright**, Research Fellow, Curtin University WA and Head, Aboriginal Mental Health and Wellbeing, Telethon Kids Institute, University of Western Australia.

Professor **Alex Brown**, Deputy Director, Aboriginal Research Program Leader, South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute.

Professor **Pat Dudgeon**, Fellow of the Australian Psychological Society (APS), Research Fellow in the School of Indigenous Studies, University of Western Australia.

Mr **Timothy Marney**, Commissioner WA Mental Health Commission.

Professor **Elizabeth Geelhoed**, Professor in Health Economics, School of Population Health, University of Western Australia.

Professor **Steve Allsop**, National Drug Research Institute, Curtin, Director, World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre for Prevention of Substance Abuse.

Dr **Ashleigh Lin**, NHMRC Early Career Fellow, Telethon Kids Institute, University of Western Australia.

Professor **Fiona Stanley**, Patron, Telethon Kids Institute, University of Western Australia, Distinguished Research Professor, University of Western Australia, Vice Chancellor's Fellow, University of Melbourne.

Mr **Glenn Pearson**, Head Aboriginal Health, Institute Leadership Team, Telethon Kids Institute, University of Western Australia.

Associate Professor **Geoffrey Smith**, Neuropsychiatric Epidemiology Research Unit, School of Population Health University of Western Australia, the North and South Metropolitan Health Services, Department of Health (WA).

NEXT STEPS

# CO-DESIGN

The next phase of the project is the co-design phase. In this phase we will determine the evaluation components, measures and overall approach. The co-design phase is when the Service Partners work with the Elders to co-design the outcome measures in order to assess the impact of the *Minditj Kaart-Moorditj Kaart Framework*. That is, is our work making a difference for Aboriginal clients?

Additionally, they will co-design fidelity measures to evaluate the implementation of the Framework within the Service Partners. That is, is the Framework being used in the way it is intended?

Orientation and training will occur during this phase. It is critical to the success of the project that the final selection of valid and reliable instruments, including economic measures, is based on a co-design approach so that we align with the priorities of the Aboriginal community and with participating organisations.

## 2018 Co-design Workshops

Three co-design workshops will be conducted in early 2018 to review and adapt the outcome measures required to assess client access to and satisfaction services provided by the Service Partners. The baseline data collected in 2017 will inform the review and adaptation of these measures, based on the current reporting requirements of organisations and their therapeutic approaches, methods or practices.





# TRANSLATION GROUP

The Looking Forward-Moving Forward Project, the Building Bridges Project and the *Ngulluk Koolunga Ngulluk Koort* Project ('Our Children, Our Heart'), have joined together to form a Translation Group.

The Translation Group will act as a governing body for all three projects. The group will lead the translation of research findings into broader practice and policy settings to ensure maximum utilisation and impact of the *Minditj Kaart – Moorditj Kaart* Framework across all relevant services sectors in Western Australia. The translation strategy will be co-designed by the group, and the process will be inclusive, guided and held by Aboriginal knowledge through the Elders. It is envisaged that the group will meet bi-annually throughout the projects.

As well as Nyoongar Elders, the translation group includes senior representatives from:

- Mental Health Commission;
- Commissioner for Children and Young People;
- Western Australian Association for Mental Health;
- Western Australian Council of Social Services;
- Western Australian Network of Alcohol and Drug Agencies;
- Western Australian Primary Health Alliance;
- Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia;
- Mental Health Advisory Council;
- Department of Education;
- Department of Communities;
- Child and Adolescent Health Service;
- Western Australia Police Force;
- Telethon Kids Institute;
- Healthway; and
- Participating mental health, drug and alcohol, and early childhood development services.

Collectively, this group has great potential to lead sector wide change in improving the mental health, drug and alcohol, and early childhood development service outcomes for Aboriginal people living in Western Australia.



# ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

## Cultural Security and Organizational Cultural Competence

The implementation of the *Minditj Kaart-Moorditj Kaart Framework* will build the capacity of organisations to be flexible, confident and competent in responding to the specific needs of Aboriginal people, leading to a greater utilisation of services by Aboriginal clients.

## Sector Reform – Translation into Policy and Practice

The significance of the project will be the reform it brings about within the partner organisations that will influence the sector state wide. This reform is likely to result in the adjustment of:

- 1 key performance indicators for all organisations funded through the WA MHC;
- 2 professional development initiatives;
- 3 accreditation indicators; and
- 4 governance and policy structures.

# PROPOSED TIMELINE

2017

### Getting started

- ✓ Establish Project Team
- ✓ Set up project governance structures
- ✓ Conduct preparation meeting with Elders' stakeholder group
- ✓ Engage Service Partners + set up Statement of Intent
- ✓ Conduct baseline interviews with Elders + service staff
- ✓ Establish Translation Group
- ✓ Commence baseline data analysis + literature review

2018

### Co-design the *Minditj Kaart-Moorditj Kaart* Framework evaluation

- Complete baseline data analysis + literature review
- Co-design the evaluation (outcome and fidelity measures) with Elders + partner organisations
- Co-design the evaluation implementation strategy + conduct training + orientation with service staff + Elders
- Implement the evaluation in partner organisations

2019

### Evaluate the Framework's implementation + impact

- Measure how well the Framework has been implemented in the partner organisations
- Measure the impact of the Framework through the evaluation phase
- Evaluate community perceptions of service access + responsiveness
- Evaluate organisational change + cultural competence

2020

### Analyse the data + develop findings

- Undertake data analysis + develop findings
- Share the findings with the community + partner organisations

2021

### Report on, disseminate + translate the findings

- Collate and report on the evaluation results
- Assess the implications of the findings for the broader Aboriginal community in WA
- Assess the implications of the findings for the WA mental health + drug and alcohol sector

# THE PROJECT

# THANKS...

The Looking Forward Moving Forward Project team appreciates the valuable contribution from the Nyoongar Elders and Service Partners who are actively working together throughout the study. The involvement, input, feedback and progress made this year has set the project in an excellent position to build on our baseline in the New Year.

The project team recognizes that throughout 2017 there have been a range of diverse experiences, as such, we have attempted to share your stories and progress as accurately as possible.

Importantly, thank you to our funders, the National Health and Medical research Council, the Mental Health Commission of Western Australia, and Service Partner organisations. We are indebted to you for making this study possible.

A special thank you to the Nyoongar community for entrusting us with this work. Now is the time where the engagement and access to services for Aboriginal people needs to be improved.

# FUNDING

The Looking Forward Moving Forward Project is funded by a National Health and Medical Research Council Partnership Project Grant with financial and in-kind support also committed by the 10 service partners.



**Australian Government**  
**National Health and Medical Research Council**

# SERVICE PARTNERS





# ETHICS

The Looking Forward Moving Forward Project has been approved by the Western Australian Aboriginal Health Ethics Committee (772) and the Human Research Ethics Committee at Curtin University (HRE2017-0446).

## FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT

If you would like to know more about the Looking Forward Moving Forward Project, please contact Dr Michael Wright, Chief Investigator on 08 9266 1637 or via email at [m.wright@curtin.edu.au](mailto:m.wright@curtin.edu.au).

30 JUNE 2017

# STATEMENT OF INTENT

## *The Looking Forward Moving Forward Project*



Chief Investigator, Dr Michael Wright, on behalf of the Looking Forward Moving Forward project team commits to this Statement in collaboration with the senior leaders of the following Service Partners:

Hope Community Services  
 MercyCare  
 Palmerston Association  
 Richmond Wellbeing  
 Ruah Community Services  
 St John of God Health Care Midland  
 Western Australian Association for Mental Health Services  
 Western Australian Council Of Social Services  
 Western Australian Network of Alcohol and Drug Agencies  
 Western Australian Mental Health Commission

Contact Michael Wright, Curtin University  
[m.wright@curtin.edu.au](mailto:m.wright@curtin.edu.au) | 0404 055 435

### THE PURPOSE OF THIS STATEMENT

This statement is an affirmation of the partners' five-year commitment to working actively together to enhance and build meaningful relationships to improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people living in Western Australia.

### WORKING TOGETHER OBJECTIVES

Service partners and researchers will work together to effect changes that will have both a positive and sustained impact that improves the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people. Working together strategies will impact on three levels:

- Shared learning and mutual support between partner organisations;
- Shared experiential learning that will be integrated across each organisation;
- Using their collective expertise and authority to translate the findings of the project to the broader sector.

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## The working together intentions

Together, the partner organisations will:

- Commit to the Working Together Objectives by being prepared to:
  - engage in experiential learning and for these learnings to be integrated across each organisation;
  - share ideas and provide support to each other;
  - identify strategies (including mapping spheres of influence) for wider impact.
- Acknowledge that as service partners their relationship with Aboriginal people has not been working, and a change is needed.
- Acknowledge that as service partners the key to building trust with Aboriginal people is to gain respect and establish meaningful relationships.
- Expect that all members of the group are here because they care and are committed to working for change.
- Keep the focus of the work on having a tangible impact at the grass-roots level.
- Commit to staying with the process over the time of the project.
- Commit to taking responsibility to ensure the membership of the group remains consistent (i.e. being proactive about succession planning within each organisation).
- Respect confidentiality of issues that arise within the group.
- Listen deeply, explore others' viewpoints, and be prepared to compromise to accommodate the views of others and note that all viewpoints matter.
- Accept that group decisions may not be universal, but that dissenting or alternative views will still be included in the record of the meeting.
- Bring service delivery issues and feedback to the group for discussion, and take insights and recommendations from the group back to their respective service for integration and implementation.



The Looking Forward Moving Forward Project is a research partnership between service providers in the mental health and drug and alcohol sector and the Looking Forward Moving Forward Project research team.

The Project aims to make services more accessible and responsive to Aboriginal families.







**LOOKING  
FORWARD**  
MOVING FORWARD



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