



“Culture Makes You Stronger”
Aboriginal women’s voices from the
South Coast of NSW

Presented by Marlene Longbottom, Institute for Urban Indigenous Health (IUIH)

On behalf of Waminda and the research partners:

Professor Bronwyn Fredericks, Professor Juanita Sherwood, Dr Reuben Bolt, Professor Rick Speare, Professor Kim Usher,
Associate Professor Petra Buettner, Professor Komla Tsey, Dr Jenni Judd

Waminda is a partner organisation to the National Indigenous Researchers and Knowledges Network (NIRAKN)

I acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land where this presentation is being made.

I acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land where this project took place.

All pictures in this presentation are utilised with signed, prior informed consent.

Purpose

- Provide preliminary results of the qualitative results wellbeing and wellness component of the Shoalhaven Koori Women's Study (SKWS).



South Coast Women's Health and Welfare Service, Waminda

- Established in 1984.
- Responds to the need for culturally safe and secure services for Aboriginal women and their families.
- Rapid expansion in service delivery.
- Over 35 staff, 16 different programs.





Service ready for research

- Planning day 2010 identified the need to evaluate service delivery and conduct research to identify community need.
- No preconceived ideas-worked through to develop a research program.
- Research Coordinator.
- Build capacity from within.
- Write grants.
- Guide and support staff, and mentor.
- Strategic advice.
- Critique documents, policies, and participate in policy forums.

Shoalhaven Koori Women's Study (SKWS)

- Lead by an Aboriginal woman with Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers as part of the research team.
- Based within a Aboriginal community controlled women's service.
- Supported by Waminda Board, CEO, staff and community members.
- Service readiness for research is vital.



Map source: Google maps





Capacity building

- Data collection system and analysis.
- Program planning and evaluation.
- Publishing – parallel publishing concept (others do this and so can we, we can make it effective for our needs).
- Presentations and conferences.
- Research protocols for Waminda.



Picture source:

Flickr – Waminda Open Day 27th March 2012

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/abcopensouthcoastnsw/6983959685/in/set-72157629588649235/>



SKWS components

Studies	Components
<u>Study one:</u>	<u>Needs analysis – community questionnaire; target 300 women*</u>
Study two	In-depth interviews ; target 15-20 women
Study three	Client and non-client focus groups
Study four	Focus groups with service providers regarding Aboriginal women accessing services in the Shoalhaven
Study five	Waminda service data audit
Study six	Oral history project; target 15-20 women
Study seven	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Waminda service delivery frame work evaluation2. Research project evaluation

* Our initial target was 300 women, due to a delay in receiving ethics and funding we interviewed 30 women.



Research Team

Research Team	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Ethnicity</u>
Waminda Board	Waminda	Aboriginal
Faye Worner	Waminda (CEO)	Non Aboriginal
Marlene Longbottom	Formerly at Waminda, now based at the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health (IUIH).	Aboriginal
Lauren Crook	Waminda (Research Assistant)	Non Aboriginal
Professor Bronwyn Fredericks	Central Queensland University (CQUni)	Aboriginal
Professor Juanita Sherwood	University Technology Sydney (UTS)	Aboriginal
Dr Reuben Bolt	University of New South Wales (UNSW)	Aboriginal
Professor Rick Speare	James Cook University (JCU)	Non-Aboriginal
Professor Kim Usher	James Cook University (JCU)	Non-Aboriginal
Professor Petra Beuttner	James Cook University (JCU)	Non-Aboriginal
Professor Komla Tsey	James Cook University (JCU)	Non-Aboriginal
Dr Jenni Judd	James Cook University (JCU)	Non Aboriginal



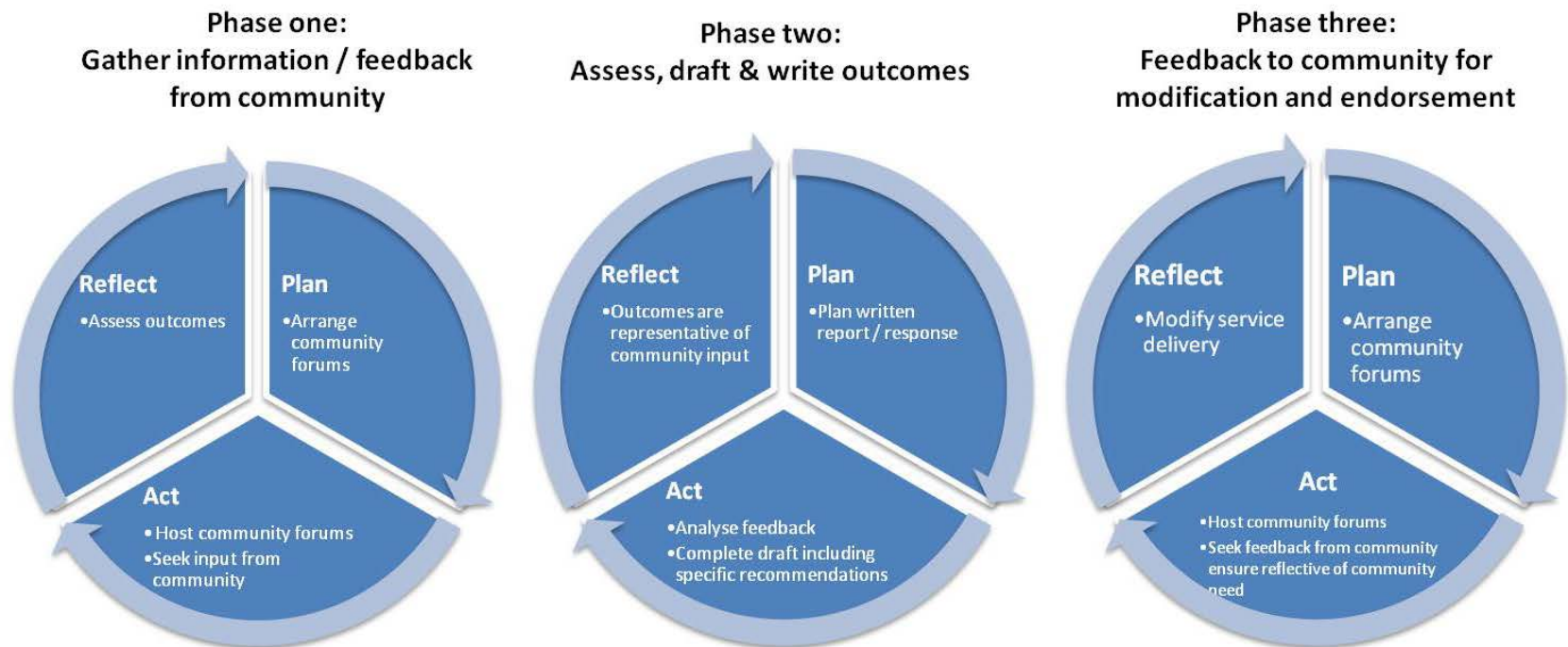
Methodology and methods

- Mixed method study.
- Critical Indigenist approach, with theoretical underpinnings of critical and feminist theories^{1,2}.
- Aboriginal paradigm including yarning and Dadirri^{3,4}.



Community engagement

Cyclical community engagement using an action research process



Sources:

Horner B, Stringer E. 2008. Facilitating organisational development through the action research process. ALAR Journal. Vol 13 (1) pp.65-85
Stringer E. 2007. Action research (3rd ed.) London: SAGE. Pp. 8



Strength of Aboriginal women

- *“Strong network, working Indigenous women”.*
- *“Draw strength from each other to work towards change”.*
- *“Strong determination, strong will”.*
- *“Strength to talk about what they’ve been through instead of being scared/shy”.*

Insert pic here



Resilience of Aboriginal women

- *“Survivors...Make the best of what they’ve got at the time, many are willing to change for the better”.*
- *“They know what they want and they fight for it, they see the issues, not scared to get help”.*
- *“Show you it’s not the end of the world. Knowing is growing”.*



Perceptions of *Wellness*

- *“State of self – personal state, as healthy physically, emotionally mentally”.*
- *“Not only being physically healthy but happy, feel good. Not physically, but about myself; where I am and what I’m doing. That I’m coping. Links the physical”.*
- *“Surrounding oneself in positive environments; family and friends. Educating oneself, growing, learning and not forgetting where I come from”.*



Perceptions of *Wellbeing*

- *“Making sure your health is good. If you’re not well you can’t help the community”.*
- *“Holistic in ones life, broad, emotional, spiritual, holistic view”.*
- *“Process of getting to wellness, process to become well”.*



Summary

- Aboriginal women of the South Coast believe they are 'strong and resilient'.
- Have a clear understanding of their perception of wellness and wellbeing and the process of being well.



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Waminda publications:

1. *Crook, Lauren; Longbottom, Hayley; White, Kim; Thompson, Marlene; Worner, Faye and Board, Waminda. Waminda: Mums and bubs program [online]. Aboriginal and Islander Health Worker Journal, Vol. 36, No. 2, June 2012: 17-19.*
2. *Firth, Willow; Crook, Lauren; Thompson, Marlene; Worner, Faye and Board, Waminda. Waminda's Wellbeing program [online]. Aboriginal and Islander Health Worker Journal, Vol. 36, No. 2, June 2012: 20-23.*



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3. Fredericks B, Adams K, Finlay S, Fletcher G, Andy S, Briggs L, Briggs L, Hall R. 2011. Engaging the practice of Indigenous yarning in Action Research. *Action Learning Research Journal*. 17 (2): 8-20.
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6. Stringer E. 2007. *Action research (3rd Ed)*. London: SAGE . Pp8