

## Sustainable Funding Domain

### Project 3: Understanding the unique characteristics and value of Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations' Primary Health Care

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#### Introduction

Discussions with the CREATE Leadership Group during 2015 identified research on the unique characteristics and value of Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) Primary Health Care (PHC) to inform appropriate financing mechanisms and resourcing for the sector as a priority. This project is one of three CREATE Funding Domain projects responding to this sector-identified need.

#### Aim

To provide evidence that informs funding and other initiatives that strengthen the capacity of ACCHOs to deliver unique comprehensive PHC that meet the complex physical and social needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

#### Objectives

**Objective 1-** To conduct 3 systematic evidence reviews

The questions to be addressed in the evidence reviews are:

1. How do Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients, their family members and PHC providers experience or perceive:

- the characteristics and meaningfulness/value of PHC provided by ACCHOs; and
- how the characteristics and meaningfulness/value of PHC provided by ACCHOs differ from the characteristics and meaningfulness/value of PHC provided by other Australian PHC providers (including mainstream and state controlled Aboriginal Medical Services)?

2. What are effects of ACCHOs' PHC programs/services on:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' access to PHC ;
- social determinants of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' health; and
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' health status?

And how do these effects compare with those of other Australian PHC providers?

3. How do costs of providing PHC programs/services in the ACCHO setting(s) differ from those in other Australian PHC provider settings?

4. What are the perceived limitations of financing arrangements for ACCHOs and the views about potential options for addressing them?

The first review addresses question 1 using the available qualitative evidence. The second review uses the available quantitative evidence (audit and program evaluation) on ACCHOs PHC to answer question 2. The third addresses questions 3 & 4 using economic and expert opinion evidence. All three reviews consider studies published between 1971-April 2015.

**Objective 2** – To widely disseminate the findings of the three reviews and raise awareness amongst government decision makers about ACCHOs unique nature, value and needs.

**Objective 3** - To convene a workshop with representatives from the Aboriginal health sector focused on developing recommendations from the reviews for government decision makers and health care providers.

## Progress to Date

- **A Protocol has been published** in the JBI Library of Systematic Reviews & Implementation Reports (2015 vol.13; 6:139-167)
- **The search of available evidence for all three reviews has been completed.** An end-note library with 3589 study records identified from databases, hand searches, and conversations with expert researchers as potentially meeting the inclusion criteria for the 3 reviews has been created. It is being used to select studies for each review.
- **The first review is nearly complete.** Eighteen studies, assessed using the JBI critical appraisal tool as good and high quality, have been identified. The results offer rich findings about the characteristics and meaningfulness of ACCHOs PHC and how ACCHOs PHC and its value differ from other PHC providers. They are currently being extracted and synthesised.
- **An abstract for a conference presentation** on the findings of the first review has been submitted (for Health Services Research and Policy Conference, Dec 7-9 in Melbourne).

## Next Steps

| Activity                                                                                                           | Timeframe                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Review 1 - Complete synthesis, share with CREATE Leadership Group and develop paper/write up                       | To be completed by 30 Aug 2015 |
| Review 2 – Study selection, critical appraisal, synthesis, sharing with CREATE Leadership Group and paper/write up | To be completed by 31 Oct 2015 |
| Review 3 - Study selection, critical appraisal, synthesis and paper development (by 31/12/15)                      | To be completed by 31 Dec      |
| Workshop                                                                                                           | Feb or March 2016              |
| Dissemination activities                                                                                           | September 2016 – June 2016     |

## Expected Outcomes

- Three papers (one for each review) published in journals that are widely read/influential
- Three evidence summaries - one for each review disseminated via CREATE Website Portal
- Two briefs, one for health policy makers, one for health care providers summarising the reviews' findings and recommendations
- List of studies /endnote library on ACCHOs characteristics, value/impact and financing
- One workshop with sector representatives
- Identification of priority questions for future secondary and primary research relating to inform more appropriate funding mechanisms and resourcing of ACCHOs