



Introducing Clinical Yarning: why do we need an intervention to improve communication between clinicians and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients with persistent pain?

Christina M Bernardes, Stuart Ekberg, Stephen Birch, Renata Meuter, Andrew Claus, Matthew Bryant, Jermaine Isua, Paul Gray, Joseph Kluver, Daniel Williamson, Corey Jones, Kushla Houkamau, Marayah Taylor, Eva Malacova, Ivan Lin & Gregory Pratt

Introduction

Ineffective communication between healthcare clinicians and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients with persistent pain is an important barrier to pain management.

Research objectives

- To improve communication between clinicians and patients;
- To develop and deliver a communication training 'clinical yarning' to clinicians at three persistent pain services.
- To evaluate the impact of the training in terms of patient and family satisfaction and in relation to the cultural and communication competence of clinicians.

Methods

This is a single-arm, multicentre (2 metropolitan and 1 regional persistent pain service) intervention that will be evaluated using mixed methods. Consultation with key stakeholders will inform the development of the communication training package. Baseline data on the importance, knowledge,

ability and confidence of clinicians to communicate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients.

Preliminary Results

Sixty-four clinicians (71%) provided baseline data on the importance, knowledge, ability and confidence of to communicate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients. Overall, a large proportion of clinicians (88%) rated as 'high' the importance of communication training when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients. However, there was a much lower proportion of clinicians who reported as 'high' their knowledge, ability, and confidence to effectively communicate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients (Figure below)



Conclusion

This preliminary results highlighted clinicians' recognition of the importance of effective communication, as well as their perceived gaps in knowledge, ability, and confidence to communicate effectively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients. The findings underlie the importance of support strategies to improve communication skills.

