



THE UNIVERSITY OF
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Let's CHAT Dementia Newsletter

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BPG aims to embed cultural principles in the translation of clinical evidence into recommendations on health promotion and prevention, detection and management of cognitive impairment and dementia, including recommendations about end-of-life care and carer health and wellbeing. The Guide is informing the implementation activities and forms the basis of the workshop content. It was developed based on current accepted international and national guidelines relating to dementia and cognitive impairment, and provision of culturally appropriate health care with expert clinical, academic and cultural oversight. A modified Delphi process was undertaken to reach a consensus on specific cultural and clinical content. The Project Management Group, Translation Working Group and Indigenous Reference Group of the project have all reviewed the guide and provided feedback. Additionally, feedback and endorsement are currently being sought from peak health bodies, including peak Indigenous health bodies.

Our new logo!

We are very proud of our beautiful new logo, created by Maar Nation-Gundijmara artist, Sherry Johnstone. Sherry designed the logo to represent the Let's CHAT study, as follows: "The design has 12 smaller circles in the bigger circle in the middle to represent the 12 ACCHS working together. The four message sticks in the middle circle also are to pass on the

information and awareness. The four people around the middle circle are listening to the CHAT. The dots in between the people represent the different tribes/ nations, etc. The stitch-like lines between the writing in the circle represent the different journeys people with dementia and cognitive impairment are on, trying to manage their condition."



Figure 1. Let's CHAT Dementia logo, designed by Indigenous artist, Sherry Johnstone

Best-practice guide for dementia care of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples

The *Best Practice Guide to Cognitive Impairment and Dementia Care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People Attending Primary Care* (BPG) has been developed in draft form and is now being rolled out to our co-researching ACCHSs as they enter the implementation phase of the study. The

Welcome to our new research staff

2019 has seen the addition of several new staff on the Let's CHAT (Community Health Approaches to) Dementia team – at least one in each state, in fact! Let us introduce you to them:



Harry Douglas is a proud Gunnai man with over 20 years' experience working with Elders and in Aged Care. He is based in Melbourne and is working with our co-researching partners, BADAC and Wathaurong in Victoria.



Belinda Ducker is a Bidjigal-Kalkadoon woman based at NeuRA in Sydney who is working closely with our co-researching partner Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation Aboriginal Medical Service, carrying out data collection and facilitating implementation of the Let's CHAT model of care.

Kate Fulford has joined the project to facilitate the implementation phase of the Let's CHAT project at Derbarl Yerrigan Health Service (DYHS) Mirrabooka. She is a pharmacist who also works at Dementia Training Australia delivering dementia education.



Tina Humphry (not pictured) is a nurse based in Perth with many years' experience working in Indigenous health. She loves her work - especially having a good yarn with her clients! She is conducting the medical record audits and comprehensive geriatric assessments for the Let's CHAT project at DYHS, Mirrabooka.



Dr Bonnie Giles is the local Let's CHAT research officer in Mildura, working with Mallee District Aboriginal Services (MDAS). She has a background in social work and academia, with a passion for teaching and conducting research.



Kylie Sullivan is part of the NeuRA team in Coffs Harbour and is the Let's CHAT Research Officer for our services on the Mid-North Coast, Galambila Aboriginal Health Service and Durri Aboriginal Medical Service. She is very passionate about assisting with closing the gap on the high rates of dementia in our Indigenous Communities.

Data collection progress

To date, we are on track with the timeline of the project. Audits one and two (which constitute the baseline audits) have been completed in 11 of 12 of our co-researching ACCHSs. Audit round 3 is now underway, and already completed in some sites.

Audit results from all 12 of our co-researching ACCHSs so far show that diagnosed rates of cognitive impairment and dementia are lower than the rates we would expect based on the prevalence studies. The audits also indicate that the samples of patients audited have a high risk of developing cognitive impairment and dementia, based on their risk factor profiles.

Implementation Update

The implementation phase of the project has commenced at the services randomised to start in round 1 in each state: BADAC in Victoria, BRAMS in WA, Tharawal in NSW and Gidgee Healing Mt Isa in QLD. Drs Dina LoGiudice, Dimity Pond, Eddy Strivens and Leon Flicker are running the GP workshops, while the locally based research officers in each area are facilitating the workshops for all the health service staff.

The first workshop is on 'Best Practice for the Detection and Diagnosis of Cognitive Impairment and Dementia'. Feedback so far has been very positive with good attendance and attendees very well engaged with the presentations. The most recent workshop at Gidgee Healing, run by Dr Sarah Russell and Rachel Quigley, had over 20 staff members in attendance! Future implementation workshops planned include:

- Caring for People Living with Cognitive Impairment and Dementia
- Health Promotion and Prevention
- The Lived Experience: Building Empathy and Understanding
- Health and Wellbeing of Carers of People with Cognitive Impairment and Dementia
- Planning, Decision-Making and End-of-life Care

Research staff facilitation workshop

On the 18th and 19th of July 2019, project staff from all over the country flew to wintry Melbourne for a two-day workshop facilitated and organised by the central/Melbourne team (Robyn Smith, Mary Belfrage, Jo Hughson and Kate Bradley). The goals of the two days were: to workshop the content of the first implementation workshop; to explore the role of being a facilitator; to become familiar with the implementation science framework that is being used in the Let's CHAT Dementia project, the Integrated Promoting Action on Implementation in Health Services Framework (IPARIHS), as well as; to develop strategies for facilitating implementation workshops.

Above all, the workshop was an opportunity for the Let's CHAT Dementia research staff to come together and share ideas. Even though several staff members were meeting each other for the first time, after a few hours together everyone was happily chatting away, workshopping the process and content for implementation workshop 1.

Visit to Coffs Harbour



Jo, Dina, Terry, Wendy and Kylie in Nambucca Heads, NSW

Dina LoGiudice (Project Lead) and Jo Hughson (Project Manager) travelled to the Mid-North Coast of NSW in June to meet with the NeuRA team – Terry Donovan (consultant and Indigenous Reference Group member), Dr Wendy Allan (research supervisor) and Kylie Sullivan (research officer). The group visited our co-researching ACCHS partners in the area, Galambila Aboriginal Health Service (GAHS) and Durri Aboriginal Health Service, and attended a team meeting at GAHS to share some baseline audit results, talk about the Let's CHAT project and answer any questions the GAHS team had about the project.

A call for climate action

Project data collection activities in September in the Kimberley coincided the week of global climate action. The more activist-spirited members



of the Let's CHAT team couldn't repress their desire to show their solidarity with the cause and decided to make a sign calling for climate action.

The Nyangumarta Rangers from Bidyadanga Aboriginal Community La Grange got on board with a show of support too! (pictured below)



Conferences and presentations



Members of the research project have presented at three major conferences during 2019. Dr Jo Hughson and Dr Mary Belfrage (pictured above) presented at the Australia Dementia Forum in Hobart in June, with Jo presenting a paper on the baseline audit results of the project and Mary presenting a paper on the development and content of the *Best Practice Guide to Cognitive Impairment and Dementia Care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People Attending Primary Care*. In October, Dr Jo Hughson and Kate Bradley co-presented a results paper at the 11th International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics Asia/Oceania Regional Congress in Taipei

(pictured below with session moderator, Dr Gahyun Youn). Professor Leon Flicker also presented a paper on the audit results of the project thus far at the Australian Association of Gerontology in Sydney in November. All presentations were well received!



Kate & Jo also managed to see some sights on their visit, like the famous night markets and temples of Taipei.



End of year message

As 2019 draws to a close, the Let's CHAT Dementia team would like to take the opportunity to thank all of our wonderful project staff who work so hard, & our amazing 12 co-researching health service partners who make this research possible:

| NSW | QLD | VIC | WA |
|---|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Durri Aboriginal Corp. Medical Service Galambila Aboriginal Health Service Tharawal Aboriginal Corp. Aboriginal Medical Service | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gidgee Healing, Mt Isa Mamu Health Service Limited Wuchopperen Health Service | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ballarat And District Aboriginal Co-Operative Mallee District Aboriginal Services Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-Operative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bidayanga Aboriginal Community La Grange Broome Regional Aboriginal Medical Service Derbarl Yerrigan Health Services Aboriginal Corp. |

We've had an extremely action-packed and productive year. We look forward to continuing our collaborations and engaging in more great work to improve the health care of older Aboriginal and Torres Strait people and their Communities in 2020! Have a great break over the summer everybody, and stay safe and healthy.

Let's CHAT Dementia Academic Partners

