



#IHMayDay: showcasing Indigenous knowledge and innovation

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Twitter is a vibrant platform for advocacy and for the dissemination of news, views and resources about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health. It is enabling the formation of new, open networks and self-organising communities united by an interest in improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and peoples. This paper reviews the inaugural #IHMayDay—a 15-hour Twitter-fest of discussions about Indigenous health that took place on 1 May 2014. The event provided a platform for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to share views and knowledge about wide-ranging issues affecting health. Non-Indigenous people were encouraged to participate by retweeting and listening. The event can be seen through multiple lenses: as an act of self-determination, a form of community development and engagement; an intervention in health promotion; and as an innovation in journalism. This presentation will examine the decolonising methodology that informed the event; the impacts of #IHMayDay, and the broader lessons that can be drawn from this event, which was run on zero budget. #IHMayDay trended number one nationally on Twitter at several times and achieved nearly 26 million Twitter impressions. It led to new connections and opportunities for participants. Importantly, it helped challenge the “deficit model” so prevalent in professional and public discussions about Indigenous health. This presentation will be informed by interviews with a sample of participants, and will also address the question, what next for #IHMayDay? It will also consider lessons for the wider rural and remote health field. The authors argue this submission is:

- Current and relevant. This is a timely paper given the upheaval and uncertainty facing Indigenous affairs more broadly, and the need for ongoing advocacy and public debate about related issues.
- Analytical. This paper takes a multidisciplinary approach to examining #IHMayDay, using a decolonising methodology to make specific recommendations for policy makers, organisations and professionals working in rural and remote health and Indigenous health more broadly.
- New knowledge. #IHMayDay is thought to be the first such event globally. Learnings will be valuable across a range of fields.
- Conference themes. In many ways #IHMayDay exemplifies these—showing the potential of Twitter as a platform for connecting diverse peoples in many places with new possibilities.

- Broadening health: The process, content and outcomes of #IHMAYDay illustrate an innovative approach to broadening discussions around the determinants of health.
- Quality: This paper provides a novel and valuable addition to the emerging literature around decolonising methodologies and social media, and particularly considers the implications for rural and remote health.