

# Check Today, See Tomorrow: national Indigenous diabetes-related eye health promotion

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## Aims

To develop culturally appropriate diabetes-related eye health promotion resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

## Methods

A national expert roundtable informed the development of the 'Check Today, See Tomorrow' resources that used a multi-community music and arts based approach. Three regions in three states were selected capturing remote, regional and urban communities. A three-stage iterative development process was undertaken in each region including i) community engagement and planning; ii) development of pilot resources through workshops; iii) ongoing participant and stakeholder feedback. Music and art workshops were held to explore key messages and develop culturally appropriate health promotion resources relevant to the local region. To support national rollout, resource acceptability was evaluated through an online survey sent to the 176 service providers who had ordered the Check Today, See Tomorrow resources (n=50 respondents, 28% response rate).

## Relevance

Annual eye exams are recommended for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with diabetes, yet only 20% receive this care. Supporting health professionals in the delivery of diabetes-related eye health messages is vital to ensure that annual eye checks form part of routine diabetes care. Best practice approaches for Indigenous health promotion are well documented, yet there is little literature describing the application of such frameworks to national health promotion strategies that maintain a local and community-driven process.

## Results

More than 100 community members and health professionals were engaged in the development of the 'Check Today, See Tomorrow' resources. Music clips and personal stories were developed as audio and video material from local community music and arts workshops. Digital material complemented a suite of hard copy and traditional health promotion material for broader social media and professional and/or community educational tools. Survey respondents were from all states and territories (excl ACT) and either Aboriginal health workers (29%) or nurses (36%), with only 29% respondents being 'eye health' professionals. Overall, the Check Today, See Tomorrow resources were rated as being easy to use (4.4±0.6) and an effective way of delivering eye health messages (4.4±0.6).

## Conclusion

Adopting traditional local engagement and community-controlled approaches are critical to developing culturally appropriate and relevant health promotion resources supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The 'Check Today, See Tomorrow' resources demonstrate the feasibility of combining traditional approaches with persuasive communication mediums allowing the connection of local issues to a national contemplation scale up of diabetes-related eye health messages.

## Presenter

Nick Schubert started in the role of Senior Research Fellow with Indigenous Eye Health (IEH), University of Melbourne in January 2016. Nick has a background of rural health workforce policy and program delivery across Australia at community, state and national levels. He is also currently undertaking a part-time PhD with James Cook University in rural health sciences, exploring global approaches to rural medical generalism. In his role with IEH, Nick is working with a number of regions and jurisdictions across Australia to support the implementation of the Roadmap to Close the Gap for Vision (2012), as well as working on a number of key underpinning projects in support of this work.