Psychological first aid for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

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Psychological first aid (PFA) has emerged as the crisis intervention of choice in the wake of critical incidents such as trauma and mass disaster. The literature abounds with PFA definitions, its applicability and usefulness. However, little is known about the suitability of existing PFA approaches for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

This paper will outline plans to develop a PFA model considered acceptable to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health professionals and communities in several rural and remote regions of New South Wales.

The paper will describe the traditional PFA approach; how PFA might be culturally adapted to better suit the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; and plans for a program aimed at understanding and developing culturally appropriate models of PFA interventions.