

Conference Abstract

'Look at Me!' Foot health education for the Aboriginal Health Workforce

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Introduction: Podiatrists are, in rural and remote areas, 'visiting specialists', ensuring weeks, and at times months, between visits. One unique way of addressing this time gap is to upskill Aboriginal Health Workers and Health Practitioners, as the local workforce, in foot health, how to undertake foot assessments and conduct screening.

Methods: Educational workshops that are culturally appropriate provide training for the local Indigenous workforce in the participants' own workplace. The aim is empowering Aboriginal Health Workers and Health Practitioners to confidently identify at-risk feet, know what to do and help prevent complications. This complements Aboriginal Health Workers Certificate III and Health Practitioner Certificate IV qualifications.

Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations in South Australia (SA) signed up to the workshops. The workshop team travelled to each community. COVID-19 created unexpected challenges that were overcome with adaptive and flexible approaches.

Results: There were 114 attendees in 11 workshops across SA.

The feedback was positive:

Great workshop, interesting, very interactive and useful for educating community, easy to follow. (Workshop attendee)

Was really informal and interesting to listen to. Keen to learn more about foot care and problems. (Workshop attendee)

All relevant and informative, visual components liked. (Workshop attendee)

Conclusion: The workshop were a success; however, there is an ongoing need for training to complement workforce skillsets.

