# Who is attending?

- Gamarada Universal Indigenous Resources Pty Ltd - Ken Zulumovski Hon DHSc

- Social Policy Research Centre: Professor Ilan Katz, Dr Fiona Hilferty, Dr Margaret Raven, Wendy Jopson, Ruby King

- DCJ: Anthony Shannon, Corinne Beasley, Johanne Gow, Dale Forbes, Kathleen Blair, Daniel Foster, Clinton McEntire.

- The Office of the Children's Guardian – CEO Richard Weston

- Representatives from TEI funded services; and

- Representatives from Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations

- Key Stakeholders
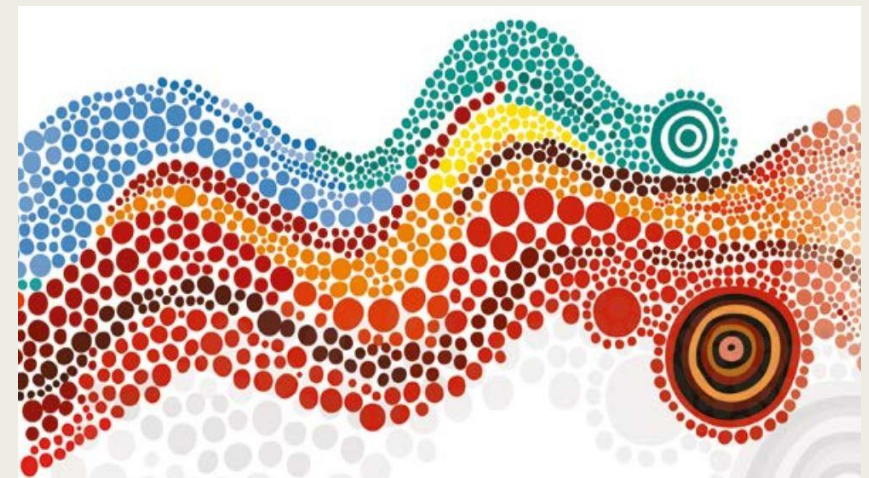
What this forum will cover?

- Present the findings from the draft Evidence Review;

- Listen and take on feedback from key stakeholders;

- Answer stakeholder questions;

- Outline how feedback will be incorporated into the finalised version of the Evidence Review and how finalised version will be accessed.

The Evidence Review

- Aim of the review to examine and assess the available literature on cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

- Review will inform those working in the TEI sector about the cultural safety evidence base and what works to provide culturally safe service delivery.

- Commissioned by NSW Department of Communities and Justice.

- Undertaken by a team of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal researchers and consultants led by Gamarada Universal Indigenous Resources Pty Ltd and Social Policy Research Centre, UNSW.

DCJ Project Background

Scope of the Evidence Review

- Cultural safety within health and human service contexts:
    - *cultural safety originated in relation to healthcare services;*
    - *Project examines cultural safety within the context of children protection and early intervention service delivery*

- Education service contexts (e.g. higher education and schools) excluded from review.

- Cultural safety related to CALD populations excluded.

- Only programs and practices supported by documentation are included

The question of Ethics for this review..?

'Good morning Ken,

After reviewing your project you do not need to apply for ethics. If you begin to collect data about client numbers and their demographics, or intent to record and publish anecdotal information, then you will then need to apply.

Please make sure the review focuses on how the service delivery works rather than who accesses the services.

We appreciate you sending us your information.

Please do not hesitate to contact us, if you require anymore information.'

Aboriginal
Health & Medical
Research Council
of NSW

Defining cultural safety

- Concept developed from the work of Maori nurses in NZ in the 1980s (Irahapeti Ramsden).

- Original focus was on educating non-Indigenous nurses about the history of colonisation and its ongoing effects (education and training).

- Concept has been re-examined by Indigenous peoples in other countries in relation to own needs and historical contexts.

- Defined more broadly in Australia – as a process of service implementation AND an outcome of service delivery.

- Aboriginal service users and communities to determine if services have been experienced as culturally safe.

Defining cultural safety

- Cultural safety is an environment that is spiritually, socially and emotionally safe, as well as physically safe for people; where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, of who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience of learning together (Williams 1999, cited in Bin-Sallik, 2003).

- This is an holistic, foundational definition however review indicates that what cultural safety means in the early intervention/child protection sector is a work in progress.

Defining cultural safety

- A number of related terms used in policy documents and literature: cultural awareness; cultural sensitivity; cultural competency; cultural capability; cultural security.

- Terms have distinct meanings, often conceptualised on a continuum.

Cultural Awareness → Cultural Competency → Cultural Safety

How was the Evidence Review conducted?

- Rapid evidence review method:
  - *Shorter timescale to systematic review;*
  - *Focus on a research question;*
  - *Clearly specify scope and search strategy;*
  - *Assess/extract only key studies for inclusion.*
- Search strategy:
  - *Multiple terms used (although not typically required);*
  - *Evidence dated between 2000-2021;*
  - *Related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (no int'nal lit);*
  - *Study examines/discusses cultural safety in relation to healthcare and/or human service context;*
  - *Invited evidence submissions from TEI service providers*

Direct engagement with key stakeholders

- 25 occasions of direct engagement with TEI funded services and key stakeholders

- By phone or video

- Outcomes of direct engagement included;

  - a clearer understanding of the review

  - Where the idea for the review came from and what its purpose is

  - understanding of the limitations of the scope of the review

  - How to use the findings of the review to improve the quality of services provided to children and families

  - How to use the findings of the review to improve the cultural safety of services Aboriginal staff

4 categories of evidence

- Cultural safety and wellbeing frameworks:

  - *Outlines the policy framework; identifies common components of cultural safety*

- Practice guides and related information:

  - *Contextual information*

- Programs, practices or activities developed to ensure the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, families and communities:

  - *Captures the expertise and practice wisdom of organisations/practitioners*

- Research studies published in academic or industry journals:

  - *Sourced from academic databases*

Assessing the evidence

- **Program, practices and activities ensuring cultural safety**
  - *Large variety in documentation received from TEI service providers (e.g. Aboriginal employment strategy; Aboriginal healing framework; cultural safety organisational audit tool; cultural awareness training options; programs etc.)*
  - *No program/practices have been evaluated – and no framework to appraise practitioner wisdom;*
  - *Submitted documentation shows providers have deeply engaged with issues of cultural safety – have moved beyond workforce development focus of research literature;*
  - *Perhaps material could be shared with others in sector?*

Assessing the evidence

- ■ Cultural safety and wellbeing frameworks
  - *14 identified for inclusion – by federal/state government agencies; government advisory councils; peak bodies and research institutes;*
  - *8/14 relate to healthcare sector; 3 to human services/child protection; 2 to monitoring/evaluation; 1 for public service employees.*
  - *Diversity of terms used;*
  - *Frameworks highlight sectoral and service aims;*
  - *Frameworks often developed by Aboriginal consultants and informed by community consultation and sometimes literature review;*
  - *All specify guiding principles/domains for action*

Assessing the evidence

■ Practice guides and related information

– *11 documents identified (e.g. action plans, fact sheets etc);*

– *Some documents are companions to policy frameworks;*

– *The resource base supporting culturally safe service delivery within child protection is growing;*

– *Key agencies are developing operational guidance for healthcare/community service organisations.*

Assessing the evidence

- Research studies
  - *13 articles identified for inclusion;*
  - *Few Australian studies have examined the topic of cultural safety empirically;*
  - *5 articles were small scale qualitative studies focusing on perspectives of staff; 2 small-scale surveys of practitioners; 2 literature reviews;* **only 2 studies examined cultural safety from the perspective of service users, and no studies connected cultural safety to outcomes**.
  - *Quality of evidence assessed using the Aboriginal and Torre Strait Islander Quality Appraisal Tool (Harfield et al, 2020)*

Assessing the evidence

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Quality Appraisal Tool (Harfield et al, 2020):
  - *14 questions that reflect the values and priorities important to Aboriginal people and research;*
  - *There was a lot of missing data – unable to answer questions on all categories;*
  - *8/13 studies were led by Aboriginal scholars;*
  - *Less than half governed by Aboriginal people;*
  - *Only 1 study indicated that community protocols had been followed;*
  - *4 studies were guided by Indigenous research epistemologies;*
  - *Majority of studies reported that participants learnt from each other;*
  - *More robust studies required to keep building the evidence base.*

Review findings

- Content analysis of framework documents identified 6 core components of cultural safety:

  - *Recognising the importance of culture;*

  - *Self-determination;*

  - *Workforce development;*

  - *Whole of organisation approach;*

  - *Leadership and partnership;*

  - *Research, monitoring and evaluation*

What works to ensure cultural safety?

- Self determination
  - *Founding principle of cultural safety;*
  - *Work still to be done defining what this means in relation to child protection;*
  - *Davis (2019) critical of policies espousing self-determination in child protection;*
  - ***Aboriginal people to meaningfully lead and/or participate in planning, design, management and delivery of services;***
  - *Programs implemented to be informed by an understanding of Aboriginal culture and cultural protocols; echoed from stakeholders who Ken engaged with directly.*
  - *What works in one community, may not work in another.*

What works to ensure cultural safety?

- Workforce development – 2 key strategies identified in research literature:
  - *Recruiting, training and supporting more Aboriginal workers in the sector;*
  - *Providing education and training in cultural safety to non-Aboriginal practitioners*
- Education and training:
  - *Authentic and to involve Aboriginal people from community practitioners are working with;*
  - *Include an opportunity for reflection;*
  - *Be ongoing, not a once-off event*
  - *Short-term benefit evidenced in research*

What works to ensure cultural safety?

- Whole of organisation approach:
    - *Cultural safety applies to all levels of an organisation e.g. policies; location of services; management and governance systems; human resources; organisational processes such as data collection.*
    - *Cultural safety is not the responsibility of individual practitioners however most research does focus at the worker level.*
    - *Evidence submitted by TEI service providers indicate sector is ahead of literature – applying whole of organisation approach (e.g. organisational audit and policy development)*

What works to ensure cultural safety?

- Leadership and partnership:
  - *Organisational leaders responsible for embedding cultural safety throughout organisation*
  - *Embedding cultural safety throughout organisation relies upon effective, long term partnerships with Aboriginal communities and representatives.*
  - *Partnership requires shared vision and power (see definition).*
  - *Sustained and meaningful engagement with local communities identified as a key strategy for cultural safety in studies that include voices of Aboriginal service users.*

What works to ensure cultural safety?

- Research, monitoring and evaluation
  - *The evidence review highlights a gap between policy statements and implementation* *with cultural safety still emerging as a research topic in its own right;*
  - *Research literature provides little guidance on how to monitor cultural safety except to assert that organisations should evaluate the effectiveness of cultural safety training programs;*
  - *TEI service providers are well-placed to contribute to the sparse evidence base.*

Conclusions

- Cultural safety provides a framework through which TEI services can be delivered in way that recognises the injustices of the past, the rights of Aboriginal peoples, and the responsibilities of service providers.

- Policy framework highlights lack of national consistency in language use but show all jurisdictions are committed to improving services to Aboriginal clients.

- Cultural safety is an emerging and evolving field of research and practice.

- The academic literature is challenging to assess: few studies; often cultural safety a peripheral issue; no studies link an improvement in cultural safety to enhanced client outcomes; typically qualitative, small-scale studies focusing on perspectives of practitioners.

- Cultural safety as it is applied to child protection is a newly emerging area of research and policy focus. The evidence base is growing.

Where to from here?

- Evidence Review finalised;

- Evidence Review published on TEI Evidence Portal;

- Evidence base will continue to be built including through data collected by TEI service providers.

- Additionally we will review the **core components and flexible activities** that were identified in the **preventing child maltreatment evidence review** (undertaken by the Centre for Evidence and Implementation, and set out in the Evidence Portal) and establish whether, given the outcomes of the CSW evidence review, these (1) resonate/are appropriate when services are delivering for Aboriginal families; and (2) if so/to the extent that they are, whether as a result of the findings of the cultural wellbeing and safety evidence review these need to be refined when working with Aboriginal families.

- As required, recommend any changes to be made to the content of the preventing child maltreatment core components and flexible activities, to ensure these are culturally safe and relevant.

Cultural safety can only be achieved in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Partnership requires "shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience of learning together" (Williams 1999, cited in Bin-Sallik, 2003).

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Your feedback is important