



ST VINCENT'S
HEALTH AUSTRALIA



Using Aboriginal cultural practice (yarning) as a tool toward healing in cardiac care

Lowitja International Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference
November 2016

Ash Gupta – Acting Director of Mission, Project Lead
Shawana Andrews – Aboriginal Consultant

Project Team

Karen Daws – Clinical Nurse Consultant

Shawana Andrews – Aboriginal Consultant

Ash Gupta – Acting Director of Mission, Project Manager

Lisa McDonald – Executive Sponsor

Supported by the St Vincent's Aboriginal Cardiac
Lighthouse Project Steering Committee

Acknowledgement of Country



We would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet today, the Wurundjeri and Boon Wurrung members of the Kulin Nation, and we pay our respects to Aboriginal Elders past and present and to all Indigenous people here today.

Extending the traditional notion of culturally responsive care in an acute public hospital



- Provision of AHLO services
- Asking the question – identification
- Community engagement
- Aboriginal artwork and flags

The Lighthouse Project

Our aim



*To ensure care provided by
St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne
to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients
presenting with heart disease is accessible,
timely, effective and culturally responsive.*

Key achievements

- Increased visibility of patient's Aboriginal identification status.
 - Aboriginal status is visible on nursing handover sheets and other clinician patient lists
- Consultation with regional referral services about improved continuums of care
- Development and delivery of three training modules on culturally appropriate care for clinicians and clerical staff.
 - Cross cultural training for clinical + clerical, innovative yarning module
- Separate guidelines for clinical and clerical staff highlighting culturally specific care processes identified through patient journey mapping.
 - Linked to the training modules
 - VACCHO Introduction to cultural safety
 - Yarning Module

Aboriginal Cardiac Care Working Group (ACCWG)



- Meets monthly
- Membership includes an AHLO, nursing staff, Nurse Unit Manager, representative from Quality Unit
- Aboriginal patient case studies
- Process of care issues explored and discussed
- Improvements to systems of care

The Yarning Module

Define the concept

Aboriginal worldview

Oral tradition, cultural memory,
storytelling

Theoretical basis: Aboriginal
standpoint theory and subjective
relational engagement

Deep listening

Yarning as part of good clinical care using a cultural
framework



Cardiac Clinical Yarning: an extension of the AHLO's role



“Just a short note to let you know that I have been meeting with the Cardiac Team and sharing how important Yarning to our Mob is really of great benefit to all.” SVHM AHLO

“Staff will ask how do I approach an Aboriginal patient? I replied: “Just like you do everyone else, be polite and respectful and listen.” If you like call me and I will do an introduction of staff.” SVHM AHLO

Cardiac clinicians' thoughts post training

“I attended the yarning training at STV and really enjoyed it. I have found that since the training I have been more aware of my conversations, in particular how I introduce myself and share information, and more comfortable in letting conversation flow.”

“I have become more aware of the importance of these conversations both for sharing information and also for developing trust and effective therapeutic relationships.”

“I think the main benefits for me have been increasing my confidence in 'yarning', and as a result I feel that some patients are more comfortable with me. Also I am more aware of the diversity of backgrounds of our patients, and I find myself more comfortable asking questions and being really open and transparent with patients, rather than being hesitant to broach certain topics.”

“I think yarning training has been really beneficial for me.”

Formal integration of yarning as best practice



Overarching standards for improving cardiac care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people:

- ESSENCE Standards (2015)
- Better Cardiac Care Measures for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (AIHW 2015)
- National Heart Foundation
- The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2013-2023
- Koolin Balit Aboriginal Health Strategy

Standards met through yarning model:

- Culturally responsive care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People
- Better Engagement
- Health professional Education
- Systems of care

As a result:

- SVHM Cardiac nursing clinical guidelines provide for yarning and explain its purpose
- Linked to the organisational-wide Patient Communication Working Group