

Abstract Form

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Title of abstract: BreastScreen NSW Greater Western Aboriginal Engagement Project – Phase 2 – Re-Engagement

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Background: The Aboriginal Engagement Project – Phase 2 – Re-Engagement is an innovative and targeted intervention. The Project consists of key marketing and recruitment strategies targeted specifically at increasing the number of Aboriginal women aged 40-74 years for breast screening and re-engaging with Aboriginal women to encourage and support re-screening.

Aims: The BreastScreen NSW Greater Western Aboriginal Engagement Project – Phase 2 – Re-engagement aims to improve breast screening and breast re-screening participation rates of Aboriginal women across the BreastScreen NSW Greater Western Screening and Assessment area. The Project aims to provide culturally appropriate and evidence-based health promotion strategies established in consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services, Aboriginal Health Workers and communities to ensure efficiency and sustainability.

The Project aims to increase the participation rate of Aboriginal women in the target age group (40-74 years) through the use of community led 'Yarning Circles'. During these Yarning Circles the importance of screening and regular re-screening is discussed. Fears and barriers to screening are also addressed.

Method:

The Project aims to increase the number of breast screens and re-screens completed with Aboriginal women in the target age group (40-74 years) through the use of community lead, culturally appropriate Yarning Circles. The Yarning Circles are facilitated by the Aboriginal Engagement Officer and discussion is held around the importance of screening and rescreening mammograms and also addresses any fears and barriers to screening. Yarning Circles are occurring in both fixed screening sites and mobile unit screening sites across the BreastScreen NSW Greater Western area and are followed by a screening session in which eligible attendees of the Yarning Circle are screened if they wish.

Results:

Since the original Project implementation in March 2017, 42 Yarning Circles have taken place. 413 Aboriginal women have attended, 307 of those women were eligible to be screened. Of those 307 women eligible, 269 were screened. 104 of these women screened were first time screeners.

Implications that impact on your project: Engagement with local Aboriginal Health Workers and local community organisation's vary from town to town and greatly impact the success of the Project. Many Aboriginal Health Worker positions in rural towns are vacant, limiting engagement. 'Sorry business', also cannot be predicted and may coincide with a scheduled Yarning Circle, again limiting engagement.