

## B.strong: Queensland Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Brief Intervention Training Program

### Aim

To build the capacity of Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers in delivering brief interventions to their clients in the key areas of smoking, nutrition and physical activity.

### Overview

*Background:* There are significant differences in health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Queensland compared with the rest of the population, resulting in a 10-year life expectancy gap. Many of these differences can be addressed by changing three modifiable lifestyle factors – smoking, nutrition and physical activity.

*Project description:* The B.strong program is giving Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and community workforce the knowledge, skills and tools needed to provide brief interventions promoting healthy changes to their clients through addressing multiple behavioural risks. Combining brief interventions for multiple risk factors can improve health outcomes by providing a clinical framework to guide screening and intervention.

The B.strong program is providing culturally appropriate training and resource material across Queensland to government operated and community controlled health services in all Hospital and Health Service regions, as well as in non-health community settings such as schools and correctional facilities. Training is delivered by Menzies School of Health Research staff and includes:

- + 1-day face-to-face workshop
- + 6 online modules
- + practitioner kits and client resources.

The program is based on the SmokeCheck Brief Intervention Training Program and the Lifestyle Program (nutrition and physical activity) previously delivered by Queensland Health. B.strong applies a continuous quality improvement perspective through aligning with current clinical practice, encouraging use of brief interventions in the client pathway with adult health checks. Training covers the recording of brief intervention details in patient record information systems and the importance of monitoring and reviewing client progress.

### Outputs to date

- + B.strong has trained 618 participants in 46 workshops across Queensland (as at 24 August 2018).
- + The highest proportion of participants had roles as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners or Health Workers or as Indigenous Liaison Officers (43% of participants).
- + 72% of workshop participants identified as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent.
- + The highest workshop uptake is from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled health organisations (33%), community care centres (32%), and hospitals and health services (22.2%).

### Next steps

- + To increase practitioner access to brief intervention training.
- + To deliver more brief intervention services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients in primary and community care settings.
- + To assess and refer more clients to early intervention programs and services.
- + To improve understanding and awareness of key risk factors for chronic disease in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities over the longer term.

*Project team* Frances Cunningham (Project Leader/Chair)<sup>1</sup>

**Project Steering Group:** David Thomas<sup>1</sup>, Majella Murphy<sup>1</sup>, Rachael Bagnall<sup>2</sup>, Heather D'Antoine<sup>3</sup>, Melinda Hammond<sup>3</sup>, Peter D'Abbs<sup>1</sup>, Simone Nalatu<sup>4</sup>

*Project status* Current

*Dates* 2017 – 2019

*Further information* Dr Frances Cunningham  
**T** +61 731 694 219  
**E** frances.cunningham@menzies.edu.au

B.strong Team  
**T** +61 731 694 208  
**E** b.strong@menzies.edu.au  
**W** www.bstrong.org.au

- 1 Menzies School of Health Research (Charles Darwin University)
- 2 Cancer Council Queensland
- 3 Apunipima Cape York Health Council
- 4 Queensland Department of Health