

Ongoing analysis and reporting of data from the ABCD National Research Partnership

Aim

To undertake further analysis of the continuous quality improvement (CQI) data provided by health services participating in the Audit and Best Practice for Chronic Disease (ABCD) National Research Partnership, which supported and guided research on improving the quality of care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary health care.

Overview

Background: The ABCD Data Analysis project extends the work of the ABCD National Research Partnership 2010–2014. The Partnership was established to bring together primary health care centres, stakeholder organisations and research institutions to support and guide research on understanding the determinants of variation in quality of care, as well as supporting the effective translation of research findings into clinical practice and policy.

One hundred and seventy-five primary health care centres across all States and Territories – including Aboriginal community controlled health organisations and government-managed health centres – provided the Partnership with de-identified clinical audit data derived from the use of CQI tools and processes. More than 56,000 de-identified patient records were made available for research across the following areas of care: chronic illness, preventive care, child health, maternal health care, rheumatic heart disease and mental health. The CQI data from the Partnership provide the most comprehensive picture to date of the quality of primary health care received by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people around Australia.

Project description: Building on the success of the Partnership, the ABCD Data Analysis and Reporting Project is continuing collaborative analysis of the CQI data, providing a solid foundation for system-wide improvement of care quality across Australia. It continues to inform priorities through the work of the CRE-IQI.

Outputs to date

- + 65% (37 of 57) of peer-reviewed manuscripts from the CRE-IQI to date have been related to the ongoing ABCD Data Analysis Project (this is an increase from 17 peer-review publications reported in the Year 2 Review), with 23 different lead authors from eight organisations.
- + 15 of the 37 publications were led by project officers, Masters or PhD students and public health trainees – a strategy aimed at developing the next generation of researchers.
- + Researchers from institutions/university departments around Australia have partnered to undertake more than 20 research projects using ABCD data to address the objectives of the Partnership. Effective collaborations across jurisdictions, sectors and organisations have been a feature of these projects. Examples include analyses of:
 - child health data with the Centre for Research Excellence in Improving Health Services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
 - maternal health data with Monash University
 - sexual health data with the Western Australian Centre for Rural Health.

There has also been international interest in our CQI work and resulting collaborations with institutions in other countries.

Key messages

- + There is a wide variation in the delivery of care between health services and jurisdictions, with a significant proportion of this variation explained by health centre factors rather than patient characteristics.
- + Longer participation in CQI is associated with improved adherence to best practice care, particularly when backed by higher level support.
- + High-level policy support and regional-level support for CQI can have an important influence on the quality of care provided.
- + The design of the delivery system – clinic infrastructure, staffing profile and the allocation of roles and responsibilities – is important as it is associated with greater provision of evidence-based care.
- + Identified drivers for high-quality care delivery include the availability and use of clinical information systems, committed leadership support for CQI processes, and strong Indigenous participation in the workforce and health service.
- + A lack of follow-up of abnormal results across a number of areas of care needs to be addressed.

Next steps

The project continues to inform the improvement of primary health care quality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and to add to the national and international CQI literature.

<i>Project team</i>	Ross Bailie (Team Leader) ¹ , Veronica Matthews ¹ with collaborators
<i>Project status</i>	Current
<i>Dates</i>	2014 – current
<i>Further information</i>	Dr Veronica Matthews T +61 7 3169 4211 E veronica.matthews@sydney.edu.au

¹ University Centre for Rural Health (University of Sydney)