

## **Whole of community suicide prevention forums for Aboriginal Australians**

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### **Abstract**

It is well known that Aboriginal Australians are at increased risk of suicide. Contributors to suicide differ for Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations (Westerman, 2003; 2019). This study evaluated whole of community suicide prevention forums conducted across six locations. Attendees were youth (N = 136), service providers (N = 225) and community members (N = 158). The content of the forums was empirically based and, for service providers and community members, covered knowledge of suicide and depression specific to Aboriginal people, skills relating to working with depressed and suicidal Aboriginal people, and intentions to help an Aboriginal person who is suicidal. Content for youth attendees focused on knowledge of suicide and depression, coping skills, intentions to help a friend, and beliefs about suicide. Whilst the results demonstrated significant gains across most domains, there was a potentiating effect with some skills increases becoming more significant over each phase. This demonstrates that a whole of community approach to Indigenous suicide prevention is required, and that clinical and cultural skills require a longer-term approach for impact and sustainability.

*Keywords:* Indigenous, suicide, suicide prevention, community, evaluation