

# ACHIEVING SEXUAL HEALTH PROMOTION DURING A PANDEMIC

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## **Background/Purpose:**

Rates of syphilis continue to rise amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Western Australia (WA). Delivering sexual health education to Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service (ACCHS) staff, clients and communities can be a dilemma in a pandemic. The Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia (AHCWA) have developed innovative ways to deliver education, which aims to reach workforce and community, particularly young community members. The aims for our social media campaign are to be informative, accurate and entertaining.

## **Approach:**

Over the past six months AHCWA have developed multiple ways of engaging in sexual health education during the pandemic. These include creating a Syphilis Flipchart and board game, social media campaigns and online sexual health sessions for ACCHS staff and community-based workers.

## **Outcomes/Impact:**

The Syphilis Flipchart has been focus-tested by both ACCHS staff and young Aboriginal people. Using social media for education has allowed for greater engagement among our target audience as these platforms are now playing a key part in young peoples' lives. Attendance and post-evaluation data from the lunchtime online information sessions shows participants find this strategy valuable yet there were limitations in effective yarning and evaluation data.

## **Innovation and Significance:**

Based on anecdotal evidence, focus testing and evaluation data; delivering sexual health education in a variety of formats can help build awareness, skills and knowledge during a pandemic. Although the pandemic has limited face-to-face outreach, it has highlighted the underrated impact of online campaigns and education delivery.

## **Disclosure of Interest Statement:**

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