

Enhancing harm reduction services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who inject drugs through improved engagement: Lessons learned using the CONSIDER Statement



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BACKGROUND

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who inject drugs (PWID) have high rates of blood borne viruses (BBVs) and sexually transmissible infections (STIs).

Accessible, culturally responsive, and high-quality harm reduction services such as needle and syringe programs (NSPs) are essential for addressing this inequity. There is limited understanding of stakeholder perspectives to guide service design, and this is exacerbated by limited engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander PWID.

This project used the CONSIDER Statement to critically assess the project's research design and governance, and inform increased stakeholder engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

METHODS

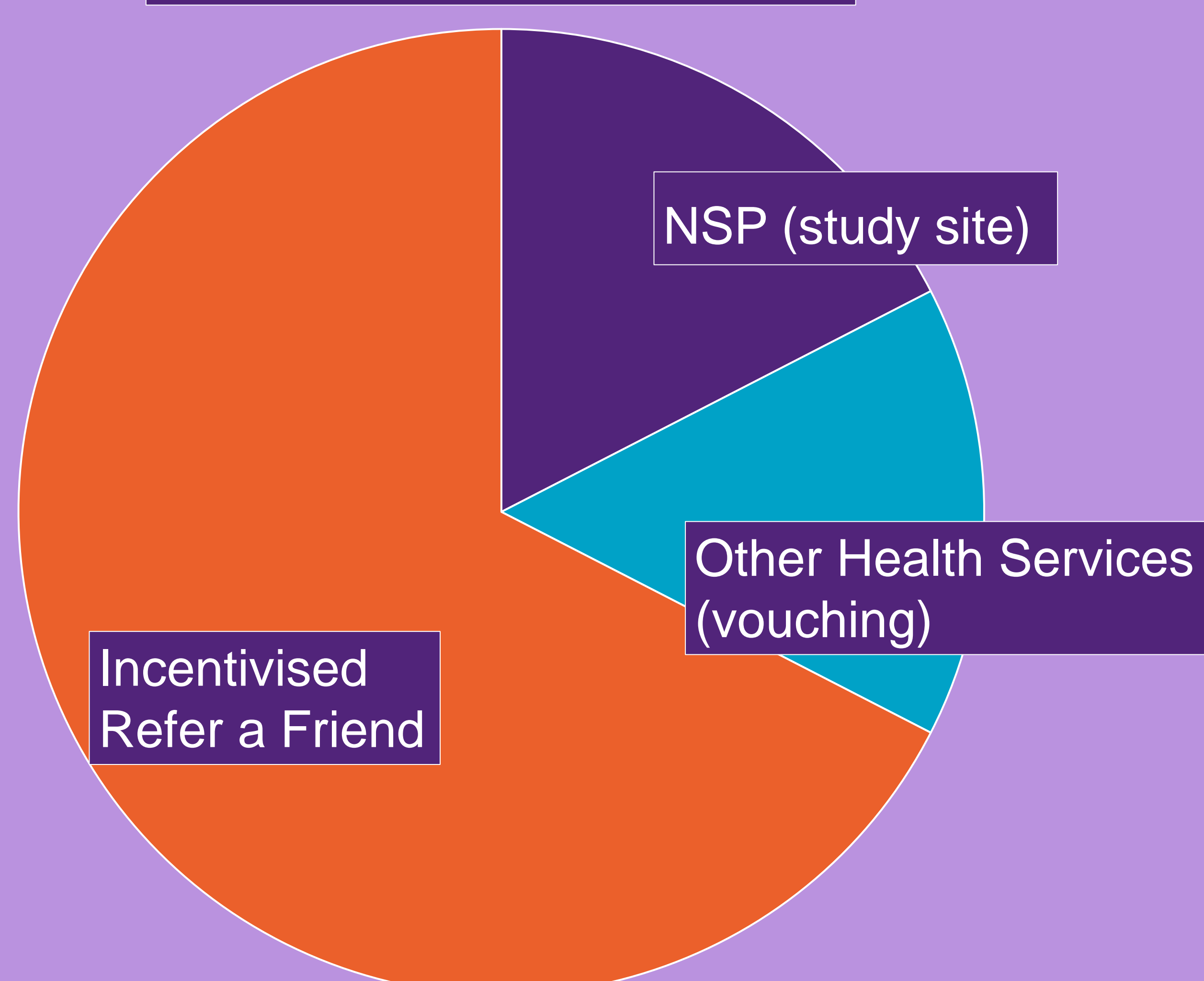
The research was conducted in partnership with:

- University-based researchers,
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health organisations,
- Community-based harm reduction services.

Participants included:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who had injected drugs within the last 12 months,
- recruited at NSPs in two regional sites, and one major city in Queensland.

Study Referral Source



CONSIDER STATEMENT

The CONSIDER Statement (1) is a collaborative synthesis of national and international research guidelines, created to encourage researchers to conduct ethical and meaningful research with Indigenous people.

CONSIDER Statement Domains:

- Governance
- Prioritisation
- Relationships
- Methodologies
- Participation
- Capacity
- Analysis and Interpretation
- Dissemination

(1) Huria T, Palmer SC, Pitama S, Beckert L, Lacey C, Ewen S, et al. Consolidated criteria for strengthening reporting of health research involving indigenous peoples: The CONSIDER statement. BMC Med Res Methodol. 2019;19(1):173-.

Partner Organisations



RESULTS

This project aligned with CONSIDER Statement Domains 3 and 4.

- A valuable aspect of the research was the involvement of Aboriginal service providers, researchers, and consumers in all research stages
- This appeared to be associated with increased NSP client engagement (in BBV/STI testing and referral). 30% of the research participants were new clients to QuiHN and YouthLink NSPs.
- Community-based services 'vouched' for the research and participants referred friends in response to an unconditional recruitment incentive.

CONCLUSION

Stakeholder and consumer involvement is essential to inform how to effectively engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander PWID. Our findings will inform guidelines for enhancing harm reduction services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander PWID.

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