

Engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders in a telephone-based intensive quit support program

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Background: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders experience significantly higher smoking rates, when compared to other Queenslanders. The QLD Quitline service implemented a free telephone-based intensive quit support program (Yarn to Quit) in 2014, tailored to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders. Yarn to Quit is an evidence-based program which combines multiple behavioural counselling sessions with 12 weeks of free nicotine replacement therapy (NRT). Three key factors have contributed to QLD Quitline successfully engaging Queenslanders in the Yarn to Quit program – i) a team of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander telephone counsellors, ii) the inclusion of free NRT in the program from 2017, and iii) engagement with key stakeholders working alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Quitline maintains strong partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. These partnerships have led to opportunities for Quitline to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities directly via community events and podcasts.

During the 2019-20 financial year, 848 participants engaged in the Yarn to Quit program. There was an 88% increase in client participation following the inclusion of NRT in the program. Quit rate analyses show that 53% of clients have quit following the completion of their program, and 31% remain quit 6 months later. This is significantly higher than unassisted quit rates, which range between 3-5% (1).

QLD Quitline's Yarn to Quit program has provided a successful, free, accessible, and tailored service which is well regarded by the community and organisations working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders.

References:

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