Summer May Finlay and Marie McInerney reported on the 2nd National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention and the 2nd World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conferences held in Perth from 20 – 23 November 2018, for the Croakey Conference News Service.

Croakey is a social journalism project for public health based in Australia. 
http://croakey.org
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Analytics
The second National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference will take place in Perth.

Summer May Finlay, who will cover the discussions for the Croakey Conference News Service together with Marie McInerney, writes below that the focus will be on community-based solutions, as well as listening to young people and LGBTQ+ sistergirls and brotherboys.

For news from the conference on Twitter, follow #ATSISPC18, @SummerMayFinlay, @mariemcinerney and @CroakeyNews.

Summer May Finlay writes:

Suicide among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is regularly in the media and public conversations. Often the focus is on an individual completed or attempted suicide or the negative statistics.

The second National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference, in Perth on November 20-21, will shift the focus to solutions identified by Indigenous people themselves. The program consists of only Indigenous people from Australia and internationally.
Our voices are important because it is our mob who understand what is going on in our communities best. We live and breathe it, with many of us either having considered taking our own lives, making an attempt or having had family members who have. This is why the program includes a focus on community-based solutions.

While the term “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander” is used as a collective term for the Indigenous nations in Australia, each community within each nation is unique – culturally, socially and historically. This means that solutions need to be tailored to each community. Again, this focus is reflected in the conference program.

That’s not to say everyone in each community has the same needs and concerns. Within communities there are sub-groups who also have distinct needs, such as young people and LGBTQI+ sister girls and brother boys.

**Representation matters**

Our young people and community of LGBTQI+ sistergirls and brotherboys experience disproportionate rates of suicide. Their voices on how to address the situation are important to hear, which is why these groups are well represented at the conference, with sessions where people will share their stories of ways forward.

Dion Tatow, a conference presenter, says the focus needs to be on ways forward because being “LGBTIQ+ sistergirls and brotherboys isn’t the cause of suicide, it is the discrimination and exclusion that are the cause”.

He says: “The shame [and] secrecy. You have to hide it, so it’s not good for your own health and wellbeing."

Tatow is an Iman and Wadja man from Central Queensland and South Sea Islander (Ambrym Island, Vanuatu) and chairperson of gar’ban’djee’lum, a Brisbane-based, independent, social and support network for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people with diverse genders, bodies, sexualities and relationships.

He believes that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations like Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) and cisgender people and mainstream organisations have a role to play in improving the health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ sister girls and brother boys.

However, many health services “staff aren’t trained to deal with some LGBTIQ+ sistergirls and brotherboys’ health concerns such as gender reassignment.” This can mean LGBTIQ+ sistergirls and brotherboys can feel uncomfortable accessing a service.

**Safe spaces needed**

Tatow believes that ACCHOs need to step up and become “safe spaces” for LGBTIQ+ sister girls and brother boys. He says that there is a perception among LGBTQI+ sistergirls and brotherboys that ACCHOs may be unsafe, with concerns particularly around confidentiality.

According to Tatow, the program **Safe and Deadly Spaces** run by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service in Brisbane (ATSICHS) is a great example of what ACCHOs can do to offer appropriate services to LGBTIQ+ sister girls and brother boys.
ATSICHS is “committed to being inclusive of all sexual orientations, gender identities and intersex variations to ensure every member our community feels safe, accepted and valued when they access our services and programs”.

Young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people also have a strong presence at the conference. **Culture is Life**, led by Chief Executive Officer Belinda Duarte, has taken charge of the youth program. Culture is Life backs Aboriginal-led solutions that deepen connection and belonging to culture and country, and supports young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to thrive. This includes allowing young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to take on leadership roles.

Will Austin, 22, a Gunditjmara man, from south west Victoria who is the Community Relations manager for Culture is Life, was charged with leading development of the youth program. He believes that young people being part of the program was important because “Aboriginal leadership and expertise needs to be shared in a really inclusive way with young people through listening and reciprocity across the generations.”

**Culture is key**

Culture is Life, as the name implies, places culture at the centre of the work they do, and Austin sees culture as key to health and wellbeing for our young people, connecting to cultural practice in traditional and modern ways. He says:

> Modern culture is marching down the street and finding the balances in different ways such as art, dance and contemporary dance, poems, song writing, music.

> Our culture has been around for thousands of years and shared through our Elders. It will evolve. There is no better feeling than going out on country, dancing on country, feeling your feet on the earth your ancestors have walked on. Connecting to the ancient knowledge and using modern ways to communicate it.”

Katie Symes, Culture is Life General Manager – Marketing and Communications, also believes Culture is a key “protective factor” for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

Will Austin and Katie Symes encourage young people at the conference to have their voices heard.

Austin said: “Don’t be shame. Make sure you step up. Make sure you contribute to the conversations... young Indigenous people are the heartbeat of the nation.”
Symes said: “It’s important for young people to be supported to cut their teeth in a really safe space.”

And the conference is designed to be just that, a safe space.

**Listening with heart**

Culture is Life is promoting the importance of “Listening with our hearts to the lived experiences of First Nations young people, their friends, families and communities” through its **LOVE and HOPE campaign**, which aims to raise awareness through communicating the evidence, lived experiences and Aboriginal-led solutions. This aim is echoed through the conference.

You can watch the two campaign videos featuring young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and Professor Pat Dudgeon, chair of the conference organising committee, here and here. Also follow the campaign on social media using the hashtags #loveandhope #culturesquad and #cultureislife.

The conference showcases evidence from research and lived experience from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and Indigenous brother and sisters from other countries. The uniqueness of the program will lend itself to a unique experience for attendees.

This conference follows the first conference held in Alice Springs in 2016 as part of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Evaluation Project funded by the Commonwealth Government (see this Croakey report compiling coverage of the conference).

• If you or someone you know needs help or support, call Lifeline on 13 11 14 (24 hours-a-day), contact your local Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisation, call Beyondblue on 1300 22 4636 or call Q Life: 1800 184 527.

**Further reading:** On World Suicide Prevention Day, calls for the Federal Government to invest in Indigenous suicide prevention.

• The feature image above is detail from an artwork on the conference website: **Moortang Yoowarl Dandjoo Yaanginy: Families (Cultures) Coming Together for a Common Purpose (Sharing) Shifting Sands**. The website says: “This artwork represents our people doing business on country that is recovering from colonisation; our lands taken over, our cultures decimated, and our families separated, causing hardship, despair, and loss of hope.”
Coming together with “love and hope in our journey of healing”

Marie McInerney and Summer May Finlay report:

The second National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Conference opened in Perth on Tuesday with a powerful expression of Nyoongar culture and raw acknowledgement of the personal impact of suicide, in the lives of delegates and Indigenous peoples in Australia and across the globe.

Speaker after speaker through the day – in the plenary sessions, in presentations and over coffee and meals – talked to the toll of suicide in their own lives and of its disproportionate impact among their communities.

Conference convenor Professor Pat Dudgeon said barely an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family is unaffected by this crisis.

Before asking the packed plenary room to observe a minute’s silence at the opening of the two-day conference, co-MC Professor Ted Wilkes, a leading Aboriginal academic and policy advisor, invited his daughter Sonia Blurton Wilkes on to the stage to speak on behalf of those present who had lost loved ones to suicide.
To the hushed room, she said:

“I am a grieving mother, I lost my son. I know that many here today have also lost loved ones, they’ve lost sons, daughters, brothers, sisters.

I pay homage to you and I share your pain. We share your pain as a community. Over the next four days we will be having hard discussions but I hope we come together with love and hope in our journey of healing.”

The conference opening also showcased the strength of culture in the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and its protective role in health and wellbeing.

Wilkes welcomed the more than 500 delegates to the land of the Whadjuk Nyoongar people, one of the 13 tribes of the Nyoongar people of southwest Australia. He said:

“I follow in the footsteps of those before me, I think that’s true of all of us. We’re cultural people and we people who know that knowledge has power in its own right will follow in the footsteps of others.”

Following a smoking ceremony, on a hotel balcony overlooking the blue sky and ocean at Scarborough, Wilkes introduced his brother, Whudjuk elder and “family culture man” Nigel Wilkes to lead the Mungart Yonga Traditional Dance Group performance that got delegates up dancing with them.

“We respect you for coming here to talk about this,” Wilkes told them.

The first day also featured a host of high profile Aboriginal and Torres Strait speakers, including Dudgeon, Professor Tom Calma AO, Professor Helen Milroy (a former Commissioner of the Royal Commission into institutional abuse of children), and leading health advocate Gracelyn Smallwood. Croakey will report on their addresses in the coming days.

Tweets and photographs follow below.
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Coming together with “love and hope in our journey of healing”

#ATSISPC18
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews - 5h
Powerful minute’s silence here at #ATSISPC18. Prof Ted Wilkes daughter speaks on behalf of those who have felt loss. “I’m a grieving mother, I lost my son. I know others here have. I pay homage to you and I share your pain. we share your pain as a community.”

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews - 5h
We’re here today to have a v courageous conversation about what’s happening in our communities’. Professor Dawn Bessarab, a Bard/Yindjibarndi woman from Broome #ATSISPC18

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews - 4h
Well that was extraordinary #ATSISPC18 welcome performance

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay - 3h
CEO of @NACHOAustralia Pat Turner agrees, that there needs to be enough time on Conference program for Cultural business. A strong recommendation for all mainstream orgs. #ATSISPC18

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay
Professor Helen Milroy, commissioner at the National Mental Health Commission said she loved the long Welcome to Country at the #ATSISPC18 & she is over 10 minute Welcome. She says we need to reclaim the space culturally. A good note for mainstream orgs to take on...

IndigenousNCDs @IndigenousNCDs - 4h
Culture is an important part of who we are as Indigenous people. It’s fantastic to see Culture as a crucial part of the National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference. #ATSISPC18

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay
Welcome performance at the National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Conference. #ATSISPC18 pscp.tv/w/beNgjiEwOTU0...
Deputy Premier Roger Cook

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews · 4h
Official opening of #ATSISPC18 by @RogerCookMLA, WA Health and Mental Health Minister and Deputy Premier

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 4h
Co-chair Associate Profession Ted Wilkes thanks @RogerCookMLA for acknowledging Indigenous self-determination and for talking properly about our business. He says "he is a good man" #ATSISPC18

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews · 4h
Good to hear you acknowledge Aboriginal self-determination, Prof Ted Wilkes says to @RogerCookMLA "Not too many Ministers do that in this country". #ATSISPC18

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews · 4h
Unless we address entrenched racism, recognition of indigenous rights, have a justice system that institutes fairness, and economic opportunity, efforts to address Indigenous suicide will be hamstrung: @RogerCookMLA #ATSISPC18
Cultural activities

Denise Baxter @DeniseBaxter11 · 1h
“This place is for the healing” sharing her gifts of thanks - Yarning Sticks - to the team made by Dallas Phillips #ATSISPC18 #ISPC2018 #CrossTheWaters @NANComma

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews · 54m
Time out to make #ATSISPC18

Safe spaces

Sabine Hammond @sabine_hammond
Meet the #ATSISPC2018 Healing Team - ready for a yarn or healing - @cbpatsisp #WISPC2018 @HealingOurWay @Lowitjainstitut @NACCHOAustralia @IAHA_National @AlpaAust
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

Members of the healing team at the smoking ceremony @CBPATSISP atispc2018 wispc2018 @LowitjaInstitut @NACCHOAustralia @AipaAust

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews · 4h
Being introduced at #ATSISPC18 to a conference support team: traditional healers, Aboriginal clinical psychologists, family therapists, mental health specialists on hand to support through difficult conversations: “if you need support, just tap us on the shoulder.”

Marc Bryant  @MarcJamesBryant · 4h
At the #ATSISPC18 - creating safe environment for delegates - love this ‘healing facilities for time out and yarning spaces’.

Coming together with “love and hope in our journey of healing”
Culture is Life

Koorie Youth Council @KYC_Vic · 1h
The Koorie Youth Council is here on beautiful Noongar Boodja at the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference #ATSISPC18

@cultureislife is doing amazing work hosting the youth stream for this conference!

John Mendoza @johno910 · 1h
I'm privileged 2B listening 2 emerging indigenous leaders #ATSISPC18 - Ethan Taylor is among them. Huge impact on providing culturally appropriate supports 4 indigenous uni students. This is real #SuicidePrevention @chrissara @JulieCollinsMP @alan_hickie

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews · 1h
Ethan Taylor: “I haven’t seen my country. Am I black enough?” I know so many of my mob who ask these questions every day. Negotiating Aboriginal identity is complex. Here community needs to surround young people, provide comfort for pain and reassurance for identity. #ATSISPC18
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

Coming together with “love and hope in our journey of healing”
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

Presentations

**Simon Pont @s_pont · 53m**
Prof Pat Dudgeon "We need to privilege the Indigenous lens in suicide prevention" #ATSISPC18

**Joe Williams - TEW @joewilliams_tew · 41m**
'Suicide & self harm were never part of traditional Aboriginal culture, prior to contact with Europeans' Jane Nelson - Njaki Njaki/Willman woman WA.

#ATSISPC18

Coming together with “love and hope in our journey of healing” #ATSISPC18
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

Coming together with “love and hope in our journey of healing”

#ATSISPC18
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Romlie Mokak @RMokak - 1h
A great privilege to listen to the stories and priorities of Ngulluk Koolunga Ngulluk Koort (Our Children Our Heart) Elder co-researchers #ATSISPC18 @teletonkids @LowitjaInstitut @KenWyattMP

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay - 1h
“Wellness measure should be shaped around a set of values that Indigenous peoples hold dear” said Maori woman Dr Kahu McClintock in the Indigenous Data Sovereignty stream at the 2nd Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference. #ATSISPC18 @aihw

Matthew Tukaki @tukakimatt - 41m
1 in 4 #maori call #australia home - and its great to see that there are #maori groups working to support them across the nation. This example is in #WA and based on empowering through #culture - all for #suicideprevention @ #atsispc18 @NanaiaMahuta

Coming together with “love and hope in our journey of healing”
Snaps and selfies

Denise Baxter @DeniseBaxter11 · 6h
Waiting for the #ATSISPC18 conference to begin #CrossTheWaters #wispC18 @NANComms #tbay @HammarskjoldP

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews · 5h
#ATSISPC18

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews · 5h
#ATSISPC18

You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Coming together with “love and hope in our journey of healing” #ATSISPC18

Croakey
“Conference News Service”
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Coming together with “love and hope in our journey of healing”

20 #ATSISPC18

All of us committed to Indigenous people leading the design & imp of services for our own #mob, our own #people #tomcalma Chancellor of @UniCanberra Professor #patdudgeon of @UWA Minister of Health @RogerCookMLA #ATSISPC18 working together to prevent suicide @SuicidePrevAU
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Matthew Tukaki @tukakimatt · 50m
Walking in two worlds here @ATSISPC18 - As Chair of @SuicidePrevAU and as a member of #msorg council - its all about knowledge sharing and exchange as we all work together when it comes to #suicideprevention in #indigenous communities

Denise Baxter @DeniseBaxter11 · 3m
@NANComms NAN Youth & Delegation meeting with Elders #isop18 #ATSISPC18 #CrosstheWaters

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 3h
One of the amazing things abt the National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference is the number of bursaries given to our mob to attend. This is why so many mob could come! #ATSISPC18

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 2h
If you’re on twitter, please tweet while at the 2nd National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference. There are lots of ppl here but lots that couldn’t be. Let’s get the messages out there for everyone! #ATSISPC18

Toby Adams @tobymadams · 56m
Very grateful for all of the deadly people tweeting from #NATSIEC2018 & #ATSISPC18! Love the way our mob utilise social media!
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Coming together with “love and hope in our journey of healing” #ATSISPC18

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Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 1h

This seems like a good time to remind people of the safe language guide when talking about LGBTQI+ Sistergirl & Brotherboys at #ATSISPC18 & at any other time.

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Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 47m

If you’re working in media, remember to use the @MindframeMedia guidelines when talking about suicide & self harm. They can be found here: mindframe-media.info #ATSISPC18 @33creativeaus @cultureislife

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Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 1h

Today is Transgender Day of Remembrance. The need for this day is important for #ATSISPC18 attendees to consider especially when there is such a strong LGBTQI+ Sistergirl & Brotherboy representation at the Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conferences.

This Transgender Day Of Remembrance, Let’s Remember Those We … It’s been a tough year to be trans in Australia.
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here. Coming together with "love and hope in our journey of healing" #ATSISPC18
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

Coming together with “love and hope in our journey of healing” #ATSISPC18
Communities lead on suicide prevention: new report “offers hope and inspiration”

Inspiring stories of how two Indigenous communities dramatically reduced high levels of suicide among their people through community led and owned solutions were shared at the second National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference in Perth.

The responses of the two remote communities – the Tiwi Islands, north of Darwin, and the Queensland rural community of Yarrabah, west of Cairns – are also detailed in a new report, Stories from community: how suicide rates fell in two Indigenous communities, which was launched at the conference by the Healing Foundation.

Marie Mclnerney reports:

There’s a mural on the wall at the Gurriny Yealamucka Health Aboriginal Corporation in the community of Yarrabah, about 60 kilometres from Cairns in northern Queensland.

It acknowledges the day in 1995 when the community declared a “stop work” day and more than 400 community members, many scared by the wave of suicides amongst them, came together for what is now remembered as the community suicide crisis meeting.
Such was its importance that even young people who weren’t alive at the time can tell the story of what happened and how it was a major turning point in the community’s history, according to a new report from the Healing Foundation.

Stories from community: how suicide rates fell in two Indigenous communities, launched at the second National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference, tells how Yarrabah and the Tiwi Islands community, north of Darwin, each took control of a suicide crisis in their midst.

In Perth for the launch, Aunty Mary Kyle, a social and emotional wellbeing (SEWB) worker in Yarrabah, recalled how non-Indigenous psychiatrist Professor Ernest Hunter had come along to the meeting to help.

“A lot of people come into our communities and tell us what to do, but they don’t know how spiritual we are, they don’t know who we are, they don’t know what we like,” she told the conference.

“What he said, and it really stuck with me, was ‘I’m not coming here to tell you what to do, you have all the resources and all the people to know what to do’.

“My spirit lifted that day.”

Crisis galvanised the community

According to the report, the first suicide anyone encountered on the Tiwi Islands was in 1989, at a time when there was no word for it in Tiwi language.

By 2006, the community, just a 20-minute flight from Darwin, had one of the world’s highest suicide rates, and was attracting headlines like “The Land of the Dead” that shamed the community.

The wave of suicides that triggered a community response began in June 2005, and within weeks had sparked more than 50 copycat attempts. Six of the suicides were Sistergirls (a term used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to describe gender diverse people with a female spirit) who struggled for acceptance within families and communities.

The report sketches the political and service environment at the time: multiple but fractured local services and the loss of community control that had come through aggressive government policies such as the NT Intervention, as well as traumatic loss of connection to culture through ongoing colonisation.

At Yarrabah, the community had faced three waves of suicide in the 1980s and 1990s. One community member described in the report how the third wave in 1995 sparked around 95 suicide attempts in the small rural community.

“We didn’t know what was happening and it was too much to take in,” said one worker.
For Paul Neal, who works with young people in Yarrabah and also attended the launch in Perth, the problems for his people had begun with colonisation and were entrenched by a century of loss of identity, family and culture.

The community was made up of around 4,000 people – 80 per cent identify with the Stolen Generations, he said.

“You were basically owned like cattle,” he said.

But the sheer scale of the suicide crisis in 1995, while frightening, galvanised the community.

“It impacted the whole community and became a community issue so we knew we had to come together as a community and we tried to work together as a community. See the problem our way and address the problem our way,” one health worker said in the report.

### Spreading love and respect

On the Tiwi Islands, the recognition of a strong role for the four skin groups is identified as a critical factor in the dramatic reduction in suicides that was to come.

The community there also developed very practical and grassroots responses, including night patrols run by a youth diversion team that employed the ‘bush telegraph’. According to community members quoted in the report:

“Youth Diversion ran the intervention program...mostly young people in a vehicle and they would hear someone (might be at risk) ...and they would find them within half an hour with the right skin group to talk to them and then they follow up with the family and provide a safety mechanism.”

“We dealt with the families and nurtured the person back to health and at the time there was a changed attitude of police with a new guy who empowered the community take control and (formed) good relationships.”

Tiwi Elder Uncle Bernard Tipiloura has been involved since the beginning, and he and his wife still go every Tuesday to the local school to teach culture and songs and dance.

“We want to see them be proud of their own dances, their own songs,” he said.

“Our job is to spread love and respect.”

### A cultural framework

In Yarrabah, the community took a different approach, through control of health and wellbeing service provision.

A new community controlled primary health care service model was established, the first of its kind in Queensland, along with a family wellbeing project, a men’s group, and the employment of dedicated health workers – known as Family Life Promotion officers rather than Suicide Prevention officers.
These responses remain the “cornerstones” of Yarrabah’s turnaround and “all remain key strategies that guide the community as they maintain vigilance and build education and awareness around suicide prevention and intervention”, the report said.

The authors warn that the problem of suicide is not solved once and for all, of course.

In fact, their consultations had to be suspended for a short time in 2017 when the Yarrabah community faced a significant challenge around suicide ideation and a number of deaths by suicide.

However, although data is difficult to collect, author Dr John Prince says the communities have gone from having some of the highest rates in the world to where “suicide is now rarely seen, although it’s important to say it hasn’t disappeared”.

As importantly, he said, they now have their own cultural response and framework for prevention, intervention, and response.

**Key factors: Yarrabah**

He highlighted the section of the report which reports on some key factors raised by the Yarrabah community when asked what other communities can learn from its experience. They included:

- the whole community needs to come together and recognize the problem as a community problem and time needs to be taken to reach consensus/agreement/commitment
- there needs to be respect of Elders and cultural ways for addressing the problem, there needs to be healing leadership/leaders and family leaders need to be known and identified
- communities need to do it their way – ‘Yarrabah worked because we did it Yarrabie way’
- communities need to take control and communities need to be the solution
- organisations and services do not come first – the community comes first
- solutions need to come from the ground up and services need to fit through the cultural frameworks and not the other way round.
Key factors: Tiwi Islands

For the Tiwi Islands, the messages were similar:

• Tiwi people fixing Tiwi problems with Tiwi wisdom
• community working together and reaching consensus
• working through the skin groups the Tiwi way and using cultural knowledge and
• cultural ways
• focussing on three priorities being you (individual), family and community
• having to have a right person facilitating with the key knowledge and understanding of
• the individual and their challenges
• supporting families and engaging families with strong women and strong men.

Hope and inspiration

Healing Foundation CEO Richard Weston said these communities offer hope and inspiration to others across Australia who are dealing not just with suicide but other complex challenges. He said:

“The Tiwi and Yarrabah stories show us that when we empower ourselves to tackle challenges we are stronger. Our communities leading our solutions can make a difference.

They’re reclaiming their strengths, they’re reclaiming their culture and they’re reclaiming their own ways of dealing with challenges.”

At the launch, Weston said the suicide rates in both communities, like elsewhere across Australia, were long-term outcomes of the colonial process, and the traumatic disruption to culture and families that continues today, as well as a broader context of deep poverty and social and political exclusion from many decades of brutal government policies.
But these community based solutions to the suicide crises have created “a new narrative” for both communities, he said.

Weston was struck by how community representatives had spoken about the strengths of family and love in their solutions.

“These are things you can’t get from mainstream providers,” he said. “These are solutions that come from within our communities.”

Summer May Finlay reports:

Watch this interview with Tiwi Elder Bernard Tipiloura

Watch this interview with Richard Weston

Watch this interview with Romlie Mokak, CEO of the Lowitja Institute
Communities lead on suicide prevention: new report “offers hope and inspiration”

You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

Reports from Twitter

Sabine Hammond @sabine_hammond · Nov 20
#ISPC2018 Day 2 keynote panel session on Community Driven Initiatives
@HealingOurWay @cultureslife @cbpatsisp @LowitjaInstitute @AipaAust @IAHA_National @NATSISWA @NACCHOAustralia

Healing Foundation @HealingOurWay · Nov 20
Today we launch a report that we hope will inspire communities around Australia. We will hear the stories of Tiwi Island (NT) and Yarrabah (QLD), two communities that have seen a dramatic fall in suicide rates. #CommunityHealing #ATSISPC18 #SuicidePrevention

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews · Nov 20
Takeaway message from @HealingFound8n #StoriesFromCommunity: “We can empower ourselves to decide the future we want to be. We don’t have to wait for a crisis or for anyone’s permission to do it.” @RichJWeston #ATSISPC18

Healing Foundation @HealingOurWay · Nov 21
These communities have a story that when told from their own perspective might provide evidence of how trauma and healing impact suicide rates and how community-based solutions lead to success. Find the stories here: bit.ly /2A4MAe0 #StoriesFromCommunity #ATSISPC18
Communities lead on suicide prevention: new report "offers hope and inspiration"
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

Communities lead on suicide prevention: new report “offers hope and inspiration”

The report from Healing Foundation details steps and tactics both communities took to reduce suicide rates. Further, qualifying that every community is different and approaches need to be specific and tailored to the needs of the community.


#ATSISPC18

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews - Nov 20

A lot of people come into our communities and tell us what to do. They don’t know how spiritual we are, what we like, how we are..." Aunty Mary on the power of being able to give own solutions tailored at #StoriesFromCommunity #ATSISPC18

#ATSISPC18 @HealingOurWay

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews - Nov 20

Paul says it’s hard for people to understand that such high suicide rates in the community are not just numbers, they are human lives, with their stories. #ATSISPC18

#ATSISPC18

"Conference News Service"
Marie McInerney and Summer May Finlay report:

The second National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference closed on Wednesday, with most delegates set to move into the second World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference for the next two days.

Conference convenor Professor Pat Dudgeon, who is from the Bardi people of the Kimberley area in Western Australia, closed the national event with the presentation of a list of recommendations developed over the two days of sessions.

She said Elders from many nations attending the international conference will meet on Friday to consider “what they think are the big recommendations and then we'll weave them together”.

Dudgeon is a psychologist and Fellow of the Australian Psychological Society, and the Poche Research Fellow at the Centre of Best Practice in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention (CBPATSISP) at the University of Western Australia.

She said the final recommendations will be presented to government and shared broadly across Australia.
The 13 draft recommendations are:

1. The first step in suicide prevention is a recovery and healing process for community.
2. Suicide prevention needs Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community control, empowerment and self determination.
3. Suicide prevention needs to draw on aspects of culture to give strength and identity.
4. Addressing racism is an important aspect of suicide prevention.
5. Suicide prevention needs to build the capacity and capability of Indigenous service providers:
   - increase the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suicide prevention workforce
   - ensure that workforce is culturally safe
   - embed the role for cultural healers, including paid positions.
6. Additional resources need to be made available for services based on individual and community need.
7. Recognise the important role of Elders in suicide prevention and healing.
8. Recognise the importance of investing in children and youth:
   - early intervention
   - young people as a valuable resource
   - role of young people as future leaders.
9. Recognise additional risk and special needs of LGBTIQ+SB people – intersectionality of being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and LGBTIQ+SB.
10. Importance of listening to and learning from the people with lived experience.
11. Data sovereignty
   - build local community capability to collect, analyse and use data for planning and evaluation of suicide prevention programs
   - cultural values and understanding need to be represented in the type of data collected and the ways in which they are presented
   - Australian Institute for Health and Welfare to further develop the provision of community level data and to ensure community access and capacity to use data
   - all research should adopt the principles of Indigenous data sovereignty and assure ethical use of data.
12. We need to address and support the mental health needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people engaged in the justice and corrections systems, including post release.
13. Fund a national plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suicide prevention based on conference recommendations and work done by CBPATISP and ATSISPEP report.
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

From Twitter

Culture Is Life @cultureislife · 10h
Hey guys it's Barak Rind @banoky here

I just wanted to share a personal reflection of the last two days at the National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention conference #ATSISPC18

Summer May Finlay Retweeted
Culture Is Life @cultureislife · 10h
Whilst it's been a heavy last two days full of emotion, I have seen the strength our people carry on their shoulders every single day

It's not easy, it's hard. It's hard for us to yarn about loss, it's hard for us to celebrate when we are still grieving #ATSISPC18

Culture Is Life @cultureislife · 10h
But the strength we carry as black people, the resilience we possess is something we will always have.

Whilst we have shared yarns about our loss in communities to suicide, the support given to one another has been of love and hope. #ATSISPC18

Culture Is Life @cultureislife · 10h
Loving one another & having hope is the way to move forward
Remembering those that have passed to shape a future for our young people and emerging leaders

Have a deadly week all! I will be tweeting live tomorrow for the World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference #ATSISPC18

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 3h
Day one of the 2nd National Suicide Prevention Conference in photos...
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Recommendations from #ATSISPC18: calls to action

#ATSISPC18
Conference preview: A declaration on role of culture and self-determination in suicide prevention

Representatives of the Nyoongar people accept the Maori gift to the second World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference. Photograph by Marie McInerney

Marie McInerney writes:

The second World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference followed immediately on from the second National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference.

In a moving prayer ceremony at the close of the national event, Maori delegates presented a gift to the conference from the first World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference held in 2016 in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The Manaia, a guardian spirit, will in turn be passed on to Canada for when it hosts the next event in 2020.

As Maori delegates sang the gift to the conference, Kaumatua (Elder) Ron Baker told delegates:

“It has one eye, it has one hand, it has one half of a face, one half of a body, you will find them on the back paths of meeting houses and it means one half of the body is in the physical world, the other half is with the ancestors, both of them in unison.”
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

The gift was accepted by representatives of the Nyoongar people, the Traditional Owners of the Perth area, and the ceremony can be viewed here.

Conference patron, Professor Tom Calma AO, says organisers have been overwhelmed by interest from across Australia, and from First Nations people in other countries, particularly New Zealand, Canada, and the United States.

This year’s international event will feature speakers from many Indigenous and First Peoples nations, including Deanna Ledoux, Saskatchewan First Nations Child Advocate, Maori researcher Dr Kahu McClintock of Te Rau Matatini, and Dr Gayle Morse from the Society of Indian Psychologists, United States.

It will build on the work of the inaugural conference and on the powerful Turamarama Declaration from that conference that aims to foster community led and based solutions in suicide prevention and global recognition of the disproportionate rate of Indigenous peoples’ suicide as a worldwide phenomenon.

**Bringing light to life**

The Turamarama Declaration is a powerful and cultural call to arms on Indigenous suicide.

Its opening lines declare that its signatories weep with the pain of suicide in Indigenous communities and speak to the need for “healing our own wounds and the wounds of our lineage”.

The Declaration was overwhelmingly adopted by delegates at the first World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference held in Aotearoa New Zealand in 2016.

Its name comes from the conference theme: Turamarama ki te Ora (Maori for ‘bringing light to life’).

Originally drafted by eminent Maori researcher and health specialist, Emeritus Professor Sir Mason Durie, it is far from the dry declarations that so many conferences deliver to mark their work.
Durie wrote last year that the conference wanted it to be as accessible as possible, particularly for young Indigenous people, so its language purposely avoided technical, clinical and sociological terminology.

"Instead, it was couched in terms that were essentially humanistic, respectful and comprehensible", he said.

The first three of its 14 compelling articles recognise the anguish and perplexity that frequently accompany suicide, the need to heal, and the strengths inherent in Indigenous people, community and culture.

It speaks with poetic power of being able to live well as Indigenous peoples and as citizens of the world, of Indigenous cultures and languages as key precursors to wellness, and of the role of Indigenous cultural values and protocols in lifting the spirit.

And it puts the challenge for action to Indigenous leaders and tribal authorities, and on then national and local authorities, politicians, and global agencies like the UN.

**Elders’ request**

Indigenous suicide prevention expert, Michael Naera, the Kia Piki te Ora Project Leader for Te Runanga o Ngāti Pikiao Trust, was one of the convenors of the inaugural World Indigenous Suicide Prevention conference in Aotearoa New Zealand in 2016.

Naera told Croakey the conference was held “at the request of our Elders”, because of the disproportionate number of Maori dying by suicide and to build on the cultural and political insights and momentum that were emerging from the first New Zealand Maori suicide prevention conference.

“Because that was so successful, our Elders said ‘let’s go to the world, let’s bring all the Indigenous people together, because we understand that a lot of Indigenous peoples around the world have the same issue, exceeding the suicide rates of non-Indigenous people in their own countries,” Naera said.

Since then, said Naera, a movement has been created particularly among First Nations people in New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the US, with “huge buy-in” from Indigenous communities and community organisations around the globe, and among many non-Indigenous organisations.

Naera is part of a Global Indigenous Network Advisor Group, chaired by Sir Mason Durie, which aims to give effect to the Declaration.

With other leading Indigenous suicide prevention experts – Australia’s Professor Pat Dudgeon and Carol Hopkins, Executive Director of Canada’s Thunderbird Partnership Foundation – Naera presented at the First Nations Suicide Prevention World Leadership Dialogue at the World Congress of Public Health in Melbourne 2017.

Naera hopes the subsequent launch of the World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA) first Indigenous Working Group will prompt global recognition by public health organisations of the Declaration, as a key step towards United Nations recognition of Indigenous suicide as a worldwide phenomenon.

He will report on progress at the conference this week in Perth. Watch an interview with Naera here.
Building a stronger tomorrow

The theme for the second World Indigenous Suicide Prevention conference is ‘Building a stronger tomorrow: Connecting our communities through culture’.

Conference convenor Professor Pat Dudgeon said the international event encourages Indigenous nations worldwide to “gather and validate our cultural norms and realities, whilst looking at how we contribute to reducing suicide and solutions that work and promote the strength of Indigenous led suicide prevention programs”.

Dudgeon, who is from the Bardi people of the Kimberley area in Western Australia, is a psychologist and Fellow of the Australian Psychological Society, and the Poche Research Fellow at the Centre of Best Practice in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention (CBPATSISP) at the University of Western Australia.

She and Professor Tom Calma were co-chairs of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Advisory Group.

Speaking to Croakey in Perth ahead of the conference, Calma said the overwhelming interest from international and local delegates underscored the importance of hosting the event.

“We thought we’d get 350 people (attending),” Calma said.

“We had to lock the door at 530 (delegates) and there’s still people knocking. There’s a big interest in this area and we need governments to understand they need to support these initiatives,” he said.

Calma said the Canadian Government, in particular, had supported a number of delegates to attend. They will be joined by the Canadian High Commissioner to Australia Paul Maddison who has been a strong supporter on issues of mental health and suicide prevention.

However, Calma said the Australian Government continued to lack long-term commitment, funding and support for Indigenous suicide prevention efforts, and was still more likely to spend significantly more on road safety when the toll of suicide was so much higher.

Focus on community-based solutions

Although incidence and prevalence varies, recent international research shows that suicide rates are elevated in many Indigenous populations worldwide, in some places more than 20 times higher than non-Indigenous peoples.

In his article about the Turamarama Declaration, Sir Mason Durie cites research showing highly disproportionate suicide rates for Indigenous people in Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

But he warns that, in the wake of increasing suicide among Indigenous peoples, “the significance of generic understandings derived from western philosophies and experiences, has been found wanting”.

The World Indigenous Suicide Prevention conference will focus on community-based solutions, the importance of community partnerships, the role of cultural practices, lived experience and data sovereignty. Like the national conference, it will also have a strong stream of presentations on LGBTIQ+ issues and for young people.

To be MCed by Aboriginal performer and writer, Steven Oliver, of ‘Black Comedy’ fame, it will be officially opened on Thursday by Indigenous Health Minister Ken Wyatt.
The Turamarama Declaration

We, participants in Turamarama ki te Ora Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference, held in Rotorua, New Zealand on 1 – 3 June 2016, are deeply concerned about the high rates of suicide among indigenous peoples.

1. We weep for the increasing number of our people whose lives have been cut short by suicide;

2. We respect the courage and fortitude of families and friends who have endured unexpected and often inexplicable losses of dear ones;

3. We commit ourselves to healing our own wounds and the wounds of our lineage, and in so doing to exemplify the ways in which light can be brought into the world inhabited by our elders, our peers and our young people;

4. We declare that all our people should be able to ‘live well’, into old age;

5. We believe that the will to ‘live well’ is strong when the human mauri is strong; ‘living well’ means being able to live as Māori, as indigenous peoples, and as citizens of the world;

6. We will strive to build safe and nurturing communities that generate confidence, integrity, inclusion, equity, and goodwill;

7. We recognise the key roles that whānau and families play in strengthening the mauri by transferring knowledge, culture, language, values, and love to their children and grandchildren;

8. We endorse the benefits of tikanga, kawa, healing, and other cultural protocols to lift the spirit and strengthen our people in schools, health centres, sporting clubs, social media, the workplace, and the streets;

9. We expect health, education, and all social service providers to offer services that are accessible, timely and effective for indigenous peoples;

10. We urge our own indigenous leaders, tribal authorities, and community champions to create opportunities for our children, youth, women, men, and our older people so they can be part of te ao Māori and the indigenous world, and can be active participants in the communities where they live and work;

11. We challenge national and local authorities and city councils to adopt and enforce regulations to reduce the availability of alcohol and other harmful substances, to ensure that homes are warm, comfortable, and affordable, to insist that streets, workplaces, schools, and the internet are all safe places for our peoples, and to combat practices that diminish self-worth and hope;

12. We call on our elected leaders in Parliament, especially those who have responsibilities for education, social services, health, housing, employment, indigenous development, and the environment, to work together in order to create a society where equity of access, equitable outcomes, and extended opportunities can prevail;

13. We recommend that our people in the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues make all nation states aware of the extent of Indigenous suicide and ensure that suicide prevention is highlighted in the UN Millennium Goals;

14. We pledge ourselves to work collectively so that our combined energies can create a world where the mauri can flourish and all our peoples can live well, into old age.

Declared at Rotorua, New Zealand, 3rd June 2016.
First Nations Peoples gather to share culture, knowledge and healing

The World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference began with powerful cultural ceremonies involving First Nations Peoples from around the world.

Marie McInerney and Summer May Finlay report:

To the rhythms of clapping sticks, the Nyoongar people led the way down to the white sands and blue waters of the Indian Ocean in beach-side Perth. With them came the Elders from First Nations in Canada, the US and New Zealand, and delegates from the Pacific states of Tonga, Samoa and the Cook Islands.

They were flanked by the bearers of the three powerful conference flags: the Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islands, and Rainbow flag, the latter to honour LGBTIQ+SB Indigenous people, whose experiences and solutions are centre stage at this event.
With the vast horizon interrupted only by birds and the occasional passing surfer or tourist, hundreds of delegates lined up in single file for the smoking ceremony.

One by one they wafted eucalyptus smoke over hands and faces to cleanse their minds and spirits and help clear thoughts ahead of two days of difficult and courageous conversations.

“None of our families are unaffected, in some way,” said Ken Wyatt AM, the Minister for Indigenous Health and for Senior Australians and Aged Care, who delivered the opening address on the foreshore. Earlier he walked barefoot in the sand with Elders and other dignitaries.

“For us it’s personal,” said Healing Foundation CEO Richard Weston. Most people at this gathering of national and international experts and community leaders have personally experienced the pain of suicide in family and community.

Personal too is the legacy of colonisation that hangs over this conference, and the national conference before it, like the thick grey clouds that occasionally parted for the sun through the ceremony.

“The blood of our people lies on this sand,” said Nyoongar Elder Aunty Liz as she stood in the sand to welcome delegates onto her country.

“My heart cries for my people but we must begin to heal.”

Community-led healing has been very much the focus of the discussions at both conferences.

Watch some of the cultural events

This playlist has a series of short videos from the Welcome to Country and opening ceremony, including Minister Wyatt’s speech. Below is a short clip compiled by Summer May Finlay.
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

First Nations Peoples gather to share culture, knowledge and healing

#WISPC18

From Twitter

Joe Williams - TEW @joewilliams_tew · 20m
Opening ceremony at the #WISPC18 Beautiful gathering of #FirstNations from around the world - talking about our healing, our way 💚

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews · 1h
#WISPC18 welcome ceremony

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews · 1h
Elders gather from around the world #WISPC18

Croakey Conference News Service
First Nations Peoples gather to share culture, knowledge and healing.

You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference [here](#).

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**Summer May Finlay** @SummerMayFinlay · 56m

Noongar men dancing on Country as part of the World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference. I get emotional every time I see our men dance. It shows such pride in & strength of culture. #WISPC18

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**Rommie Mokak** @RMokak · 1h

Blessing and cleansing by the beautiful yorgas #WISPC18 @LowitjaInstitut @CroakeyNews

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**Jayda** @jaydefuller · 24m

Participating in round dance from North America #WISPC18 - high on spirit and culture!
First Nations Peoples gather to share culture, knowledge and healing #WISPC18
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

First Nations Peoples gather to share culture, knowledge and healing

#WISPC18
First Nations Peoples gather to share culture, knowledge and healing. #WISPC18
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

First Nations Peoples gather to share culture, knowledge and healing

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 1h
Fantastic to see our Maori brothers and sisters perform at the World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference in Perth especially when the first one was held by in New Zealand. #WISPC18

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews · 48m
#WISPC18 delegates from Treaty 8 Territory (Canada)

 complaints, they endorsed a strong need for coordination and strategic planning to support reconciliation initiatives.
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

First Nations Peoples gather to share culture, knowledge and healing

#WISPC18
First Nations Peoples gather to share culture, knowledge and healing.
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

First Nations Peoples gather to share culture, knowledge and healing

Jody Kopp @jody_kopp · 2h
With my sisters from across the sea #WISPC18

Jody Kopp @jody_kopp

With my brother Merve, too Deadly brother, keep up the good fight #WISPC18
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

First Nations Peoples gather to share culture, knowledge and healing.

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews · 12m

After extraordinary #WISPC18 welcome ceremony involving Indigenous peoples from Canada, US, Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand, Cook Islands, Tonga, Samoa, we’re heading back to the plenary room for first keynote panel session of this 2 day conference.

You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

First Nations Peoples gather to share culture, knowledge and healing

First keynote panel session for Day 1 of the #WISPC18 is Anna Betty Achneepineskum, an Anishinaabe-Muskeg woman from the Marten Falls (Ogoki Post) First Nation in Ontario, Canada.

Anna Betty Achneepineskum of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation speaks to terrible challenges facing her community in Canada, rejects top-down solutions, and describes community-based Choose Life project to address mental health service gaps for children and youth. #WISPC18

'Ve want our children to feel love, want to live and to choose life' Anna Betty Achneepineskum of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation speaking on the Choose Life Project #WISPC18

First Nations Peoples gather to share culture, knowledge and healing #WISPC18

Croakey
"Conference News Service"
First Nations Peoples gather to share culture, knowledge and healing #WISPC18

You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

John Mendoza @johno910 - 3m
Anna Betty Achneepineskum from Nishnawbe Aski Nation Canada at WISPC18 - "top down approaches from Ottawa or Toronto for our people do not work". Don't work for any communities! @GregHuntMP @JulieCollinsMP @CroakeyNews @chrissarra

Choose Life Pilot Project

• Intent and purpose of Choose Life
• Streamlined process and tools to address gaps in mental health services for children and youth
• Service delivery activities
• Project was extended to schools and organizations serving students who have to attend high school off-reserve

Allison Toby @AllToby - 2h
LGBTQ+ brotherboysistersgirl and 2spirit First Nations people from around the world. Suicide prevention for all our mob #wispc18 #atsispc18 strong in culture, strong in spirit

Croakey
"Conference News Service"
First Nations Peoples gather to share culture, knowledge and healing.

You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

Matthew Tukaki @tukakimatt · 3h
Showing our support for our beautiful and wonderful #LGBTIQ community here at #WISPC18 🏳️‍🌈 Chair of @SuicidePrevAU Matt Tukaki and Director Vanessa Lee! Shout out to all our amazing #indigenous participants @LeeVanessa2011

Lisa Taylor O'Brien @lissobrien1966 · 4h
#WISPC18 #atelisp18 safe inclusive space for Sistergirls and Brotherboys Australia

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews

Been a huge focus here at #WISPC18 on young people. Here are folks from the Nishnawbe Aski Nation Youth Council with participants in a session today.
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

First Nations Peoples gather to share culture, knowledge and healing

Two impressive youth delegates from #WISPC18. Sam, a member of the Nishawbe Aski Nation who presented today and Madelyn who screened her doco, Feathers Falling.

With whanau here in Perth for #WISPC18 #hakaforlife #mob #SuicideAwareness #suicideprevention
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

First Nations Peoples gather to share culture, knowledge and healing.

Matthew Tukaki @tukakimatt · 3h
A shining example of two cultures coming together here at #wispc18 in perth - our #maori and #Aboriginal families coming together to fight #suicide - #suicideprevention proud to be representing @SuicidePrevAU as Chair and #maorcouncil

Joe Williams - TEW @joewilliams_tew · 19m
What the old people did worked; what we are doing now, isn't it! #nispC18 #ATSISPC18 #Decolonise the mind 🎎

Joanna @jm Gregg · 33m
Big thanks to all those tweeting from #wisPC18. Those of us who couldn't attend are fortunate to be able to listen to First Nations voices.
First Nations Peoples gather to share culture, knowledge and healing

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews - 2h
Next up, international #WISPC18 panel on the role of cultural practice

Marlene Longbottom
@MLongbottom13

Thank you to all of those at the #WISPC18 who have shared the event on Twitter, esp for those of us that couldn’t attend. Today looked to be a great day of sharing knowledge. Looking forward to reading more Tweets as they come thru 🌷

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews - 2m
#WISPC18 trending top in Perth after fantastic welcome ceremony cc @croakeyblog @SummerMayFinlay

Perth trends · Change
#WISPC18
Melissa Sweet is Tweeting about this
Stan Lee
15.1K Tweets
Renae Lawrence
Renae Lawrence arrives in Australia after release from Indonesian prison
Marcus Harris
#duststorm
Hazy skies in Sydney as dust storm arrives in the city
Chris Tremain
#SouthStart18
David Eastman
Colin Winchester
Cleveland
61.8K Tweets

You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.
First Nations Peoples gather to share culture, knowledge and healing

You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Culture Is Life @cultureislife · 36s
Day 1 of #WISPC18 has ended, now for a deadly conference dinner!
Inclusion and respect showcased at Indigenous suicide prevention conferences

Brotherboys, Sistergirls and other Indigenous LGBTQI+ people were centre stage of discussions at the recent National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference and the World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference in Perth.

It was a measure of inclusion and care that sets an example for other health conferences, whether in suicide prevention or broader health issues.

Please note this story refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQI+SB people, referring to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer, Sistergirl and BrotherBoy people. Sistergirl and Brotherboy are terms used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to describe gender diverse people who have either a female or male spirit.
Marie McInerney reports:

It was a powerful statement of inclusion.

The Rainbow flag flew proudly alongside the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island flags in the plenary room at the recent National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference and the World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference in Perth.

Just as powerfully it stood alongside them on Scarborough Beach for the vibrant two-hour welcome ceremony for Indigenous peoples from across the globe.

But the visibility of Brotherboys, Sistergirls and other Indigenous LGBTQI+ people was not just symbolic at the conferences.

Their issues of concern were centre stage over four days of discussions and presentations, with a dedicated stream of LGBTIQ+ topics at both conferences and in keynote addresses.

It was the biggest profile and presence yet for LGBTIQ+SB people at a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander conference, according to Rebecca Johnson, co-founder of the IndigiLez Women’s Leadership & Support Group and a member of the conference organising committee.

“We felt we were visible,” she said in her report back from LGBTIQ+SB delegates to the closing session of the conference.

“(We) felt safe, grounded, heard, valued and extremely grateful to be with our mob and safely within our mob,” Johnson said, giving particular thanks to the local Nyoongar Elders, led by Aunty Liz Hayden, for “extending their love and support for us”.

It was a critical act of inclusion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+ people who, the conference heard, experience a “double whammy” of discrimination – for their sexual identity and gender diversity within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and for their cultural identity from non-Indigenous LGBTIQ+ people.

In multiple sessions, the conference heard stories of lived experience and calls for inclusion and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+SB in their own families and communities, in community controlled organisations and services, and in mainstream and LGBTIQ+ services, policies and frameworks.

It also heard the need for better data collection to determine where support and services are needed.

Dion Tatow, chairperson of gar’ban’djee’lum, a Brisbane-based support network for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander LGBTI+SB people, said there are two groups in Australia at high risk of suicide — Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and those who identify as LGBTIQ+.

“We cop a double whammy,” he said.

But despite that, he said, there is very little research on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+SB people and their wellbeing, including protective factors, with most focused on HIV rather than mental health.

“There are currently no protocols for identifying us in the suicide and self harm statistics,” he said.

“If we don’t have the data how can we argue for health services to meet the need?”
“A minority within a minority”

In her keynote address, Rebecca Johnson, a Gooreng Gooreng woman who is connected to the Tarlibelang Bunda people and has worked for more than 20 years experience in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and #LGBTIQ+SB issues, talked about the importance of visibility – and not just at conferences.

It’s needed at every level in shaping services, policies and frameworks across Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, LGBTIQ+ and mainstream organisations and to ensure they have the capacity and capability to provide safe healthy spaces for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+BS people, she said.

“It has to be a collaborative approach,” she told the conference.

Johnson said Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+SB people experience invisibility in multiple settings.

It comes when LGBTIQ strategies and plans are rolled out in health and education without consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+SB people. It’s to be found in LGBTIQ organisations and promotions that are not culturally safe, and in mainstream, LGBTIQ and community controlled health services that don’t understand the particular health needs and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+SB people.

That includes having to address racism, exclusion, isolation and stigma in the broader LGBTIQ+ community, about what makes culturally appropriate approaches, and who needs to be included in developing frameworks and strategies. She said:

“**The same fight we have for Indigenous affairs across this nation we have inside the LGBTIQ+ non-Indigenous sector.**

**We are still fighting the good fight of who we are as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and what our intellectual rights are to hold on to our knowledge and experience inside the sector.**

**We’re asking the questions inside the non-Indigenous organisations that receive all the bungoo [money].**

**If they want people to access their services they have to start ensuring their services are culturally safe spaces. It’s about dismantling colonial behaviours that stunt the self determination of Indigenous LGBTIQ+ people.”**

Tatow, who is an Iman and Wadja man from Central Queensland and South Sea Islander, raised similar concerns, saying gar’ban’djee’lum members actively look to join and take on roles in mainstream LGBTIQ+ organisations to “make sure they are culturally safe”.

The group, largely run by volunteers, has been selected to lead a suicide prevention awareness campaign for the whole Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in Queensland, as well as for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+SB people.

“This is self determination in practice for us,” he said.

At a session titled “A minority within a minority”, Tatow talked about the compounded and layered discrimination experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+SB people, “where some non-Indigenous gay men are some of the most racist men I’ve ever met”.

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"You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here."

“Inclusion and respect showcased at Indigenous suicide prevention conferences #WISPC18"
“We are coping racism from the LGBTIQ community and stigma and discrimination for being gay from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community,” he said.

Tatow said:

“It is not our sexual orientation and gender identity that is the cause of our high rates of suicide. It’s all the things we cop because of it, the racism, the exclusion, the discrimination and violence”.

“It’s not because I’m a gay Aboriginal man that I may be suicidal. It’s because of the shit I cop for being a gay Aboriginal man.”

Tatow offered some basic tips for people, services and organisations to help keep Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+SB healthy and safe:

Solutions

- Understand different terminology
- If unsure, ask
- Identify and engage with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+SB orgs/groups/individuals
- Challenge negative comments/bullying/harassment about LGBTIQ+SB
- Include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+SB on committees/working groups for SEWB/suicide prevention

“We are a part of the solution”

The conference also heard strong stories and messages about discrimination experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+SB from their own families and communities.

Johnson told the heartbreaking story of a young woman who had been involved in the Indigilez group for a few years in her late teens.

She had started to develop a sense of pride in her identity as an LGBTIQ+ woman, but had been confronted with “layers of exclusion” when she returned to her regional hometown.

“She lost her fight and she’s no longer with us,” Johnson said.

“These are the impacts of exclusion and isolation.

“Our young ones are taking their own lives and it is our responsibility to build their strength and their ability to stand up in the face of adversity.”

She told the conference that there are huge repercussions for the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+SB people who are segregated by stigma and shame from family and communities.
The impact of discrimination on the mental health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+SB people is currently being investigated in the Breaking the silence research project being currently led by Braden Hill at Murdoch University.

Hill told the conference the project will focus on the ‘silences’ related to being Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+SB – those within families, communities and, particularly, within policy and service delivery. See related tweets below.

Johnson said the gar‘ban’djee’lum network will next year host cultural healing retreats that enable Indigenous #LGBTIQ+SB people to spend time on Country, “with their old people”.

“It’s about enhancing cultural resilience, about enhancing wellness and our social and emotional wellbeing, for our ways of being, knowing and doing: country, mob, language, community, all the things that make us who we are as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people,” she said.

“We need to develop a pride and sense of belonging to our cultural identity and a confidence in our sexual and gender identities to know and understand and see ourselves in our communities as leaders and contributing to closing the gap across many agenda.”

“Acceptance is life, connection is spiritual and mental strength for our mob.”

She challenged all delegates to “dig deep into your heart and get to know and understand the experience of Indigenous LGBTI people”.

“We can’t do the journey alone. We need you fellas to stand beside us.”

“We are not the problem, we are a part of the solution.”

**Include everybody**

Issues of acceptance by your own community were also highlighted by Sade ‘Heart of the Hawk’ Ali, a Canadian First Nations person now living in the United States and working at the Zero Suicide Institute.

She talked about her experiences as a Two Spirit person – “what you call LGBTIQ+” – who she said were held as holy people in Indigenous communities in north America prior to colonisation but now suffer much discrimination.
She showed a photo of herself (far left) at the historic Standing Rock protest, the Native American-led movement that rose up in 2015 in opposition to the Dakota Access pipeline being built just north of the Standing Rock Sioux reservation.

The Two Spirit Camp was given an honoured place at the created right in the middle of the protest, but she described the pain and hurt of later being excluded from an important ceremony by one woman after being introduced as a Two Spirit Elder.

“Unfortunately I can tell you that the vast discrimination I have gotten in the 72 years of my life has been from my own people believing there was something wrong with us when at one time we were considered holy and sacred.”

Ali said she had been moved to see how much attention had been paid at the conferences in Perth to LGBTIQ+SB people, and urged that that focus stay strong beyond its discussions, in research and service delivery and other community support.

“We need to pay attention to the whole community, to all of us, not some over here and some over there.

“Please make sure you’re thinking about all people when you create interventions, when you go into communities and ask ‘what works for you, what are your healing ways and how can we help?’ Ensure that you include everybody.”

From Twitter

CalebNM @lonicholsmansell

Have felt so welcomed, loved and accepted by beautiful Noongar Elders throughout the #ATSISPC18 and #WISPC18 - LGBTIQ+SB were given an incredible space within both programs. Congratulations to all involved in pulling it together.
Inclusion and respect showcased at Indigenous suicide prevention conferences

#WISPC18

Love that the 2nd World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference flies the LGBTIQ+ Sistergirl & Brotherboy flag alongside the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander flags!!!

#WISPC18

One Mob Many Voices
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Inclusion and respect showcased at Indigenous suicide prevention conferences

#WISPC18
Watch this interview
Summer May Finlay speaks with Dion Tatow and Rebecca Johnson:

Watch this Culture is Life video from presenter Mark Nannup, Yamaji and Noongar man, and Culture Squad ambassador. He talked at the conference about his role in ensuring stronger Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+SB representation in high profile LGBTIQ events, like the Pride March and Midsumma Festival.
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

Inclusion and respect showcased at Indigenous suicide prevention conferences

#WISPC18
Self-determination is at the heart of suicide prevention for Indigenous Peoples

Preventing Indigenous suicide is deeply connected to the recovery of self governance and self-determination for Indigenous peoples.

That was the strong message from Australia’s Professor Pat Dudgeon and many other speakers and presenters at the recent National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference and the World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference in Perth.

It came ahead of the release last week of the final report from the Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, which endorsed the call for a First Nations Voice to Parliament made in the landmark Uluru Statement of the Heart which was rejected out of hand by the Federal Government.
Marie McInerney reports:

Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission spent six years travelling to all parts of Canada to hear from First Nations, Inuit and Metis people who had been taken from their families as children and placed for much of their childhoods and through systemic and personal abuse at so-called Indian Residential Schools.

The Commission’s 2015 report was unambiguous about what is at the core of poorer health outcomes, including high suicide rates, experienced by Canada’s Indigenous people.

It’s also echoed in the experiences of Indigenous peoples in Australia, the US and New Zealand, the recent National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference was told.

Among its 74 calls to action for the Canadian Government was:

“We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to acknowledge that the current state of Aboriginal health in Canada is a direct result (our italics) of previous Canadian government policies, including residential schools, and to recognize and implement the health-care rights of Aboriginal people as identified in international law, constitutional law, and under the Treaties.”

It clearly sheeted home where the responsibility for health inequity should lay, according to Dr Alexandra King, a Nipissing First Nation person from Ontario in Canada and the inaugural Cameco Chair in Indigenous Health at the University of Saskatchewan.

“Being Indigenous is not a risk factor (in suicide rates),” she told the conference.

“Being colonised is THE risk factor.”

King said too many statistics about the poor health and justice outcomes for Indigenous peoples “miss the mark”, and fail to see Indignity as strength.
The conference heard multiple examples of how self-determination, community-led responses and cultural reclamation were at the heart of effective solutions to suicide in Indigenous communities across the world.

They include the Akwesasne Freedom School in the US which provides “total immersion” in Mohawk culture, ceremony and language and are considered key to comparatively low suicide rates in the local community, and in other similar initiatives.

“International research has shown that (Indigenous) communities with no or little suicide actually are communities with a high level of self determination and that also are reclaiming cultural activities,” conference convenor Professor Pat Dudgeon told Croakey.

Yet the conference also heard again and again how ongoing Australian government policies, from plans by the former Western Australian government to shut down remote communities through to rejection of the Uluru Statement from the Heart, continue to put Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in harm’s way.

### Political recognition

Where the blame and solutions lie was clear for Western Australian Deputy Premier Roger Cook, also the state’s Minister for Health and Mental Health, who officially opened the national conference.

He said:

> “Since the beginning of colonisation, Aboriginal people have experienced racial discrimination, removal from their lands, the stripping away of their culture and a generation stolen from their families.  

> We cannot deny the impact of this history, as well as (that which) multiple community social and systemic factors have on the mental health of Aboriginal people”.

Cook also acknowledged the work of Aboriginal community controlled health organisations across the country, saying only when they are resourced and given the power and capacity to work closely with their communities will we begin to resolve issues of suicide.

> “We are only getting rubber on the road when we get Aboriginal organisations in an act of self determination driving these programs through the communities which they represent,” he said.

And he said that concerted efforts in the health sector have to be supported by the rest of the community, and go to the heart of the social determinants of health.

> “Until we all seek to address entrenched institutionalised racism, recognition of Indigenous rights, a justice system that delivers fairness, and an economic future that resolves poverty and provides opportunity…all these efforts to address these complex issues around suicide will be hamstrung.”

It was a welcome message but the distance between rhetoric and reality was clear in many presentations to the two-day national suicide prevention event, and for other First Nations people at the World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference that followed.
“How can we expect a child to succeed, to have hope, to have the will for life, when they are living in conditions that we classify as third world?”, asked Anna Betty Achneepineskum from the Nishnawbe Aski Nation in Ontario, Canada, who talked about the lack of safe affordable housing and safe drinking water in many communities.

**Public policy crisis**

In a keynote address, Pat Turner AM, CEO of the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO), talked about the “public policy crisis” for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities that, like Canada’s experience, has a direct link with poorer health outcomes and particularly in higher suicide numbers.

Almost all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who die of suicide are living below the poverty line, she said.

Over-incarceration, lack of access to safe, affordable housing, exposure to violence and a lack of access to mental health services were also common factors, she said.

“This tells us we need a comprehensive public policy to address suicide rates among our people and that the suicide level is linked to our status and situation more broadly in Australia,” she said.

Turner talked about the need to have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander control at the centre of programs and interventions and to “draw on elements of our culture that give us strength and identity”.

“We must continue to challenge the continuing aspects of colonisation on our people’s contemporary lives,” she said.

Turner said at the heart of suicide is a sense of helplessness and powerless, which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience “at multiple levels, across multiple domains in our lives” in the face of harsh government policies.

That’s why the Uluru Statement from the Heart has emerged, she said, as “a cry from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to have a say on matters that impact on us”.

She raised the looming new Close the Gap targets as a current example of the failure of Australian governments to work properly with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on policies that directly affect them.

A coalition of peak Indigenous legal and health organisations, including NACCHO, the Healing Foundation and the Lowitja Institute, say they have been shut out of discussions so far on the development of the new targets that are set to be agreed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) this month (December).

In a letter to COAG, they say the only consultations they were involved in were “demonstrably inadequate” and “conducted at a very superficial level”. The letter says:

> “We are certain that Indigenous peoples need to be at the centre of the Closing the Gap Refresh policy: the gap won’t close without our full involvement and COAG First Ministers, who are responsible for the Closing the Gap framework, cannot expect us to take responsibility and work constructively with them to improve outcomes if we are excluded from the decision making.”
Turner raised other policies that need urgent attention in the context of suicide prevention, including the need to:

- raise the rate of Newstart
- renew the National Partnership on Remote Indigenous Housing
- overturn and replace the Community Development Program “that is leaving young people totally disengaged”.
Kimberley trial

The conference also heard an update from a trial in the remote Kimberley region of Western Australia, where suicide rates are six times the national average, and how Western approaches to suicide prevention don’t fit the experience of Aboriginal people there.

Rob McPhee is co-chair of the $4 million four year Kimberley Suicide Prevention Trial Site Steering Committee, one of 12 trial sites launched by the Federal Government in 2016 to address higher than average rates of suicide.

He said the Steering Committee resolved early to not take up the LifeSpan and European Alliance Against Depression suicide prevention models being adopted elsewhere.

“Most did not fit the context of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suicide, did not take into account the historical legacies we’re dealing with, and they tend to focus on depression as the issue we have to solve,” said McPhee, who is Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the Kimberly Aboriginal Medical Services, with cultural connections to Derby and the Pilbara.

“For us that doesn’t resonate with what we know about suicide in the Kimberley,” he said.

Instead, he said, the Kimberley was framing its work around the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Evaluation Project (ATSISPEP), led by Professor Pat Dudgeon and Professor Tom Calma AO.

McPhee said the Kimberley has been subject to at least 40 inquests and inquiries seeking to find reasons and solutions for having the highest rate of suicide in Australia, yet had had no impact on the issue.

“What they all highlight is the underlying themes of the colonial legacies of social and economic disadvantage, poverty, discrimination, racism, intergenerational trauma, dispossession of land, breakdown of culture, language, lore and ceremony, overlaid with contemporary issues of unemployment, education, and substandard housing,” he said.

“They tell us the same story over and over again.”

McPhee outlined the terrible toll of suicide in the region, emphasising when he began that “while I talk about numbers, I am referring to people, to loved ones we’ve lost”.

Over the ten years to 2016, 125 people had died by suicide in the Kimberley. Of them, 102 were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Nearly three out of four are men, though there is a worrying increasing trend with women, particularly young mums, and nearly half of those who died are under 25 years. Seventy per cent of those who took their lives had no previous contact with the mental health system, he said.

A big issue is that the trial has to be community led, “but the community is tired of talking about it, there’s only so much you can say over and over again”, he said.

Nonetheless, he said, the community is “the ultimate body we are accountable to”.

McPhee talked about features of the trial, of working to “understand how culture protects and how we strengthen that”, of seeking to be innovative in schools, and of trying to deal with the complexity of the mental health system in the region by strengthening it – chiefly through cultural safety – rather than pulling it all apart.
It was also looking at a ‘no wrong door’ policy across the Kimberley so that mental health services were not permitted to turn anyone away, in response to constant feedback from the community that people go to services for help, and are told ‘sorry you don’t fit this criteria’ but are not offered alternatives.

“They don’t help, so after the third or fourth time, people drop out of the system,” he said.

Among the lessons to date from the trial are, he said, the need to take time for the community to express its anger, frustration and help and to factor in the social determinants of health “which create an environment in which we struggle to cope”.

There is also a need to temper expectations that the trial will fix the problem, “which is impossible given the timeframe and complexity”.

- Short time frame – rushed community engagement upfront
- Community required a process of recovery / healing – frustration and anger was common
- Addressing social determinants largely missing
- Expectation for the trial to ‘fix’ the suicide problem – reduction is suicide/self harm = need other measures of success
- Mental health system complexity
- Too many sites – highly resource intensive
- Data before planning / baseline
- Complex interface between KAMS, PHN, governance and community
- Communication across stakeholders
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference [here](#).

Self-determination is at the heart of suicide prevention for Indigenous Peoples.

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**More reports from Twitter**

- **Summer May Finlay** @SummerMayFinlay - 4h
  “For ppl in the Kimberley suicide prevention is not just about addressing suicide” which is why they adopted the #ATSIPEP report recommendations said Rob McPhee CEO of the Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service #ATSISPC18

- **Summer May Finlay** @SummerMayFinlay - 4h
  “Ppl in the Kimberly are tired of talking abt it (suicide). There has been over 40 reports. But it was important to go out and talk to people for the (suicide prevention) trial site”, Rob McPhee #ATSISPC18

- **Summer May Finlay** @SummerMayFinlay - 4h
  “Self-harm is an increasing area we are trying to get our head around. The Kimberley trial site is trying to get a better picture of that data because they are really keen to work with people before they take their lives”, Rob McPhee #ATSISPC18

- **Summer May Finlay** @SummerMayFinlay - 4h
  A key theme from the conference is the need to address the social determinants of health if we are to reduce the high suicide rate for our mob. Rob McPhee reinforces that message. #ATSISPC18

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Malcolm & Alexander King at #ATSISPC18 on the truth & reconciliation commission - the health of Indigenous ppl in Canada is direct result of previous government policy. Same true in 🚨 @TonyAbbottMHR @ScottMorrisonMP @billshortenmp @RogerCookMLA

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**Principles**

- **C2A:18:** We call upon the ... governments to acknowledge that the current state of Aboriginal health in Canada is a direct result of previous Canadian government policies, including residential schools, and to recognize and implement the health-care rights of Aboriginal people...
Self-determination is at the heart of suicide prevention for Indigenous Peoples.

You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

#WISPC18
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Self-determination is at the heart of suicide prevention for Indigenous Peoples.

#WISPC18

Croakey
"Conference News Service"
Self-determination is at the heart of suicide prevention for Indigenous Peoples

#WISPC18

Pat Turner AM

Denise Baxter @DeniseBaxter11 · 3h
(Australian)Governments should be investing in the positive end of supports to help people and families heal and get on the right path- not on the negative end of incarceration, adoption and child removal” - Pat Turner AM - so children can lead full rich lives. #wisp18 #ATSISPC18

The Need for Community Leadership

Pat Turner AM
National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews · 3h
‘At the heart of suicide is helplessness and powerlessness - it’s why we have the Uluru Statement from the Heart.” Pat Turner @NACCHOAustralia #ATSISPC18

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 3h
Pat Turner CEO of NACCHO: many of our mob taking their own lives are living in poverty. This is why we need to raise the #Newstart allowance. #ATSISPC18 @ACOSS @AustralianLabor @LiberalAus @KenWyattMP @LindaBurneyMP

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews · 3h
“Suicide is linked to our status and situation.” Pat Turner @NACCHOAustralia who says governments are continuing to fail on housing, income support, work participation for Indigenous peoples & why Indigenous groups must have more input to #CloseTheGap refresh #ATSISPC18

Denise Baxter @DeniseBaxter11 · 3h
“Suicide in our people is linked to our status in Australia” - must tackle issues that lead to incarceration- instead opportunities for employment and support while seeking support so not living in poverty - Pat Turner AM #affordablehousing #wisp18 #ATSISPC18 @NANComms

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 3h
“We are all community. We are all part of the community. We all need to step up & get rid of the scourge affecting our community so our young people can live healthy & happy lives”. Pat Turner CEO @NACCHOAustralia #ATSISPC18
Self-determination is at the heart of suicide prevention for Indigenous Peoples.

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 23m
When considering what people need to improve their health you can’t just look at the availability of health services. Fadwa Al-Yaman at the National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference #ATSIHPC18 #SOH

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 25m
The @AIHW using data they are the custodians of, are able to identify service gaps for our mob. This is an important picture when trying to tackle suicide in our communities. #ATSIHPC18

From the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Why is there geographic variation?

- Characteristics of the people who live in the area (composition)
- Characteristics of the place (context)
- Health service availability and delivery

Examples:
- Climatic factors
- Economic status
- Health risk factors
- Community connectedness
- Housing stock
- Employment opportunities
- Transport
- Gender

Physically accessible
- Geographically accessible
- Financially accessible
- Culturally respectful

Service gaps: areas with high health needs and no or poor access to primary health care services

40 SA2s with:
- 0% of Indigenous people within 1 h of nearest RSPHCs
- Poor access to GP services relative to need

8 in Qld, 2 NSW, 1 in WA

Areas where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have poor access to primary health care services

- Acute and Chronic health care
- Primary care
- Mental health
- Alcohol and drug
- Smoking

8 in Qld, 2 NSW, 1 in WA

Areas where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have poor access to primary health care services

- Acute and Chronic health care
- Primary care
- Mental health
- Alcohol and drug
- Smoking

8 in Qld, 2 NSW, 1 in WA
A workshop at the conference focused on online safety for young people

Dr Jo Robinson @JoRobinson_Aus · 2h
So humbled to have heard from these young people last night about what staying safe on social media means to them. Convos led by @jewilliams_tew & @SummerMayFinlay suicideprevention #chatsafe #ATSISC18 @orygen_au & @Portable

Dr Jo Robinson @JoRobinson_Aus · 54m
Awesome workshop starting to bring the #chatsafe guidelines to life with some young Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander young people. TY to all our fab young people and to @jewilliams_tew and @SummerMayFinlay for co facilitating #atsispc18 #atsispc2018

Self-determination is at the heart of suicide prevention for Indigenous Peoples

#WISPC18
The importance of safe, strengths-based narratives that enable families and communities to heal from the traumas of colonisation was highlighted repeatedly at recent Indigenous suicide prevention conferences in Perth.

The conferences also heard about suicide prevention efforts arising out of Canada’s adoption of Jordan’s Principle, which aims to makes sure all First Nations children can access products, services and supports for a wide range of a health, social and educational needs, when they need them.

Jordan’s Principle is named in memory of Jordan River Anderson, a young boy from Norway House Cree Nation in Manitoba, who died in hospital while state and federal authorities argued over who was responsible for his care.

Images from #ATSISPC18, via @CroakeyNews tweet
Marie McInerney reports:

One of the most important roles of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse was in allowing people who had experienced great harm to tell their stories – and, importantly, to do so in a safe way, according to psychiatrist Professor Helen Milroy.

“We have now heard thousands of stories of what happened – not just what happened to individual children, but what happened to whole communities of children, to generations of children,” Milroy told the recent World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference in Perth.

“I don’t think prior to this we understood the true magnitude.”

Milroy, a psychiatrist and descendant of the Palyku people of the Pilbara region, was a Commissioner of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

While 15 per cent of survivors who gave testimony to the Royal Commission were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, she told delegates that Australia has not provided “truth telling” in the way that Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission did in its landmark investigation into First Nations, Inuit and Metis children taken to Indian Residential Schools.

“Unfortunately in Australia we have had Reconciliation without Truth,” she said.

New stories

But now, she said, it is also time for new stories that focus on the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, not always on the trauma and dislocation of colonisation and the Stolen Generations policies. It is also time she said for services and policies to rebuild those strengths in people who might struggle as a result of previous harm.

“We need to reclaim our stories and rebuild new stories of healthy families and communities going forward,” she said.

“We were really good at this,” she said of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family connections. “We were really good parents, we had the safest family attachment in the world but [for many] it’s become fragmented and disrupted by trauma.”

“We have to reclaim that space. That’s how our children in these missions survived, you could take them away from country and culture but not from spirit.”

Shifting the narrative from deficit to strength to address high rates of suicide, particularly among young people, was a call echoed by many others at the conferences.

Professor Dawn Bessarab from the Poche Centre for Indigenous Health at the University of Western Australia urged greater Indigenous control and ownership of data as a vital tool for suicide prevention, particularly for young people.

She said:

“For a long time when colonisation first came, they said Aboriginal people were a ‘dying race’, we were on the way out.

The statistics are still saying that, but we’re not dying out.

Yes, our mortality rate is higher but we are also thriving, and until we change the narrative for young people, they’re going to believe it.”
Safe processes

Milroy said the Royal Commission aimed to set up a process where a person’s story was able to “come to the surface in a safe way”.

This was done for two reasons: to avoid re-traumatising people or keeping them “trapped” in the story of harm; and also to investigate how that person used their own strengths to overcome the harm of abuse and neglect.

She said this was a lesson also to be learnt in mental health services, where the purpose of coming for an assessment is often framed as a deficit, where the question is ‘what’s wrong with you?’ instead of ‘what’s happened to you?’.

The Royal Commission asked many survivors what helped them get through, and heard some common themes.

These included having a safe person to talk to, having an enduring and safe relationship – with a family or community member – throughout life, and being able to excel at something, perhaps school or sport.

“It was different for different people but people found their own way through,” Milroy said.

“Certainly family and relationships came through as some of the strongest factors that helped people survive.”

Milroy said early intervention is the key – not only to address trauma in young people before it manifests in crisis behaviour in adolescence, but also for families who need support to be able to stay together.

She said there were still too few child and adolescent mental health services available and too little collaboration between child protection, out of home care, and mental health services and policy makers.

“We are still seeing children in foster care with 50 placements!” she said. “That’s not going to help in their development.”

Choose Life

Meanwhile, conference delegates also heard about a promising suicide prevention program in Canada that takes Nishnawbe Aski Nation children back up to their traditional lands, to restore connections to culture and country.

The Choose Life suicide prevention program among Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) in northern Ontario arose out a tragic system failure in the Canadian welfare system.
Anna Betty Achneepineskum, NAN Deputy Grand Chief, told delegates that Choose Life was developed through Jordan’s Principle, which aims to resolve jurisdictional disputes within, and between, provincial/territorial and federal governments concerning payment for services to First Nations children when the service is available to all other children.

It is named in memory of Jordan River Anderson, a young boy from the Norway House Cree Nation in Manitoba who spent two years unnecessarily in a hospital because the Federal Government and province of Manitoba fought over who was responsible to help him be treated at home.

“This little boy died in the hospital,” Achneepineskum said.

As this article explained, the reason for the dispute was that the province normally delivers health care off-reserve, but the federal government funds it on-reserve.

Talking about how long and far her delegation had travelled from northern Ontario to be at the conference in Perth, Achneepineskum said she had been struck by the shared suicide experiences of Indigenous peoples that emerged at the conference.

“Our people have followed the same legacy, the same traumas, and other harms that have been caused when our lands were invaded,” she said.

“The practices, the ceremonies and our laws and languages were taken and outlawed.”

The Choose Life program seeks to address those issues – “the disempowerment of our people and the burden of the losses we have suffered through our history”.

Her community has suffered “grave losses” through suicide, with much of the burden on children. Of 573 deaths by suicide since 1986, 89 were children aged 10-14 years. Last year the community held funerals just days apart for two 12 year old girls, who were best friends.

But she said the community was beginning to witness “great things happening” with the Choose Life program, which is designed and owned by community, although faces an uncertain funding future.

Choose Life takes Nishnawbe Aski Nation children back up to their traditional lands, to restore connections lost when families were displaced into small reserves and children taken from family and culture into Canada’s infamous Indian Residential Schools.

“Our Choose Life program brings those teachings back for those people, going out on land and spending time with their elders,” Achneepineskum said.

“You can see in their faces how great they feel, how wanted they feel and how loved they feel, and that is what makes our Choose Life program so successful.”
'We want our children to feel love, want to live and to choose life.' Anna Betty Achneepineskum of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation speaking on the Choose Life Project #WISPC18

Reclaiming and rebuilding stories of strength and resilience

#WISPC18 #WISPC18
More from Twitter

**Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 3h**
There is no 1 thing that’s going to fix this (suicide & poor health) we need comprehensive wrap around services said Prof Helen Milroy #ATSISPC18

**Conference reporting @CroakeyNews · 3h**
Royal Commission into institutional abuse learned about the power of bearing witness.
“We need to reclaim our stories and rebuild new stories of healthy families and communities going forward. Still seeing children in foster care with 50 placements!” Helen Milroy #ATSISPC18

**Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 3h**
Maybe we need to go back to the truth telling as part of reconciliation says Prof Helen Milroy at the 2nd National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Suicides Prevention Conference. I ABSOLUTELY AGREE! Truth telling is part of healing.

During our five-year inquiry:

- 16,953 people contacted us who were within our terms of reference
- we heard from 7,981 survivors of child sexual abuse in 8,013 private sessions
- 63.6% were male
- 14.9% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- we also received 1,344 written accounts
- we have referred 2,562 matters to police.
- private sessions were held in:
  - every capital city
  - 25 regional locations
  - 62 correctional facilities.

**Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay · 3h**
Just some of the information from the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse. quite frankly it’s horrific. #ATSISPC18
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Reclaiming and rebuilding stories of strength and resilience

#WISPC18
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews - 3h
"Who holds you so you can hold others?" Prof Helen Milroy #ATSISPC18

Conference reporting @CroakeyNews - 3h
Helen Milroy: Suicide was rare in Indigenous communities prior to the 1970s. Now has been described as self annihilation, 'genocide by proxy'. #ATSISPC18

Sabine Hammond @Sabine_hammond

Professor Helen Milroy on hope after the Royal Commission #atsispc2018 @cbpatsisp @LowitjaInstitut @HealingOurWay @IAHA_National @NACCHOAustralia @AipaAust

Summer May Finlay @SummerMayFinlay - Nov 20
Dr Michael Wright while discussing the Looking Forward Program at Derbarl Yerrigan Health Service Aboriginal Corporation reminds people that "Aboriginal" is a collective term which includes over 300 languages. Culturally and historically we have different needs. #ATSISPC18
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Reclaiming and rebuilding stories of strength and resilience

#WISPC18
Professor Pat Dudgeon is from the Bardi people of the Kimberley area in Western Australia, and the Poche Research Fellow at the Centre of Best Practice in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention (CBPATSISP) at the University of Western Australia.

Dudgeon convened both conference and talks here about the main aims and takeaways from four days of intense conversations and presentations.

Among her personal highlights was having a healing team available to delegates throughout the conferences, which included clinical and community psychologists, traditional healers, youth counsellors and other mental health professionals – a team that might not have been able to be put together just ten years ago.

@WePublicHealth

In the week following the conferences, Summer May Finlay guest tweeted for @WePublicHealth on behalf of the Centre of Best Practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention.

She shared reflections from the conferences, as well as findings from a Senate inquiry, Accessibility and quality of mental health services in rural and remote Australia.
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

Reclaiming and rebuilding stories of strength and resilience

#ATSISPC18 #WISPC18 @WePublicHealth · Dec 8
13 recommendations came from the 2nd National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference in Perth in November. The recommendations will be presented to government and shared broadly across. Read them here: Australia.croakey.org/recommendation... #atsispc18

Recommendations from #ATSISPC18: calls to action
Marie Moloney and Summer May Finlay report: The second National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference closed on Wednesday, ...
croakey.org

#ATSISPC18 #WISPC18 @WePublicHealth · Dec 3
To stay up to date with the Centre of Best Practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention (CBPATSISP) follow @cbpatsisp or check out their website: cbpatsisp.com.au #CBPATSISP

Home - Centre of Best Practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention
Promoting Best Practice The Centre of Best Practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention (CBPATSISP) aims to reduce the ...
cbpatsisp.com.au

AHCSA @AHCSA_ · Dec 4
A powerful statement of inclusion featured heavily in the recent National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference & World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference in Perth.
#aMinorityWithinaMinority #OurHealthOurChoiceOurWay

#ATSISPC18 #WISPC18 @WePublicHealth
Brotherboys, Sistergirls & other Indigenous LGBTQI+ ppl were centre stage at the recent National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference & World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference in Perth. croakey.org/Inclusion-and-... #WISPC18 #atsispc18 #LGBTQ

#ATSISPC18 #WISPC18 @WePublicHealth · Dec 6
Social Determinants of Health were raised as issues reducing the Accessibility and quality of mental health services in rural and remote Australia in Senate Inquiry Report. aph.gov.au/Parliamentary..., #mentalhealth
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

Reclaiming and rebuilding stories of strength and resilience

Reclaiming and rebuilding stories of strength and resilience

#WISPC18

#WISPC18

Senate Inquiry Report into the Accessibility & quality of mental health services in rural and remote Aust included 2 recommendations specifically relating to Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people & the Primary Health Networks. Will we see changes? 

Recommendation 11

6.51 The committee recommends the Commonwealth Government implement measures to ensure that services commissioned by Primary Health Networks embody the action plans: National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Peoples’ Mental Health Social and Emotional Wellbeing 2017-2023 are delivered by, or in genuine long-term partnerships with, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations.

#ATSISPC18

Senate Inquiry Report into the Accessibility & quality of mental health services in rural and remote Aust included 2 recommendations specifically relating to Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people & the Primary Health Networks. Will we see changes? #phn #primaryhealthnetwork

Recommendation 12

The committee recommends the Commonwealth Government implement measures to ensure that services commissioned by Primary Health Networks embody the action plans: National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Peoples’ Mental Health Social and Emotional Wellbeing 2017-2023 are delivered by, or in genuine long-term partnerships with, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations.

#WISPC18

Concerns #NDIS plans are being designed & written for the services which are available in community rather than the services genuinely needed by the individuals: Accessibility & quality of mental health services in rural & remote Aust report

#WISPC18

Concerns #NDIS plans are being designed & written for the services which are available in community rather than the services genuinely needed by the individuals: Accessibility & quality of mental health services in rural & remote

As discussed in Chapter 2, many rural and remote communities are facing uncertainty, confusion and lack of services due to the rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). In some regions, the introduction of the NDIS has in turn introduced new barriers to accessing mental health services, rather than increasing the accessibility of services.
“Live well, live lightly, live uniquely” – wrapping the conversations from #WISPC18

First Nations peoples from across the globe were represented at the recent World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference in Perth.

They included delegations of Māori researchers and practitioners from Aotearoa New Zealand, which hosted the inaugural world conference in 2016, and from the First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples from Canada, whose government provided strong support to their participation, and from the United States.

This post features video interviews with a number of the presenters and keynote speakers, as well as a Twitter wrap, and social media analytics for the event.
Marie McInerney reports:

Ways of living and mourning

Professor Linda Waimarie Nikora is Professor of Indigenous Studies at Te Wānanga o Waipapa, the University of Auckland, and co-director of Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga New Zealand’s Māori Centre of Research Excellence, which has a network of about 200 Māori researchers from across New Zealand.

She said the network’s research is clustered around many issues but she likes to summarise it as work that contributes to three themes:

1. **Live well** – particularly through a stream that looks at Mauri Ora (human flourishing), and the challenges that many Māori and other Indigenous people experience, with housing, health, nutrition, food security, access to water etc.

2. **Live lightly** – with a focus on Māori economics: “Rather than simply making profit for profit’s sake off our lands and other resources, (it’s about) thinking carefully about the way we impact our ecologies, impact the planet and also thinking about the state we are going to leave the planet in for the next generation to come,” she said. This includes a big focus on climate change.

3. **Live uniquely**, as Indigenous peoples – looking at the importance of language, culture, the role of culture in Māori people’s lives, and the stressors on each of those “in terms of culture change”.

Nikora’s research is also focused on Tangi: Māori ways of mourning and she talks in the interview about death rituals handed down over generations – which are “more about life than death” – which can assist people to deal with death, including after suicide.

She said Western ways of dealing with death – “(where you’re told) ‘you’ve got to let go, detach, get over it, and you’ve got three days to do it in’” is not a very healthy way of carrying out a healing process, and she urged delegates to have faith in their cultural institutions, rituals and customs.

“We shouldn’t just put them aside because some dominant group has come and said we have to do it like this. (We need to) have faith in what we know, have faith in what our ancestors made for us. It’s worked for them, there’s no reason why it can’t work for us.”
Corey O’Soup is the first Indigenous person to hold the position of Advocate for Children and Youth in the Canadian province of Saskatchewan – born and raised in the province, he is a member of the Key First Nation.

O’Soup said suicide rates among Indigenous children and youth in Saskatchewan were already “staggering”, but the month before he started in the role in late 2016 saw a cluster of suicides of six young girls, which galvanised calls for action from both sides of politics.

Asked to report on the issue, O’Soup’s team spent a year in northern Saskatchewan, meeting with young Indigenous people about their perceptions, realities and lived experiences related to youth suicide.

It resulted in a report that not only looks different to the usual tomes on such topics, but which O’Soup said took a very different approach.

Its title – *Shhh….Listen, We have something to say! Youth Voices from the North* – is part of that, as is its size (“about the size of a vinyl record” – in tribute to Canadian musician Gord Downie and his *The Secret Path* album which tells the story of a young First Nations boy who died in 1966 trying to escape from an Indian Residential School).

O’Soup said the report raises many issues not seen in investigations that only tap adults for information, including different insights on bullying. He told Croakey:

- *“We create programs for kids bullying kids...what we haven’t done is created programs for adults who are bullying kids.”*
- *As a parent and a professional, and as the Advocate, I had to take a step back.*
- *Young people in this report are calling us out: as professionals – they mention teachers, police officers – and parents as active participants in bullying that leads them down the path of suicide.”*
Total immersion in culture as a protector

Dr Gayle Morse is an enrolled member of the Mohawk tribe, a psychologist and president of the Society of Indian Psychologists, which represents and works with Indigenous/First Nations psychologists in the United States and Canada.

She spoke at the conference about the Akwesasne Freedom School, where her mother teaches, which provides “total immersion” in Mohawk culture, ceremony and language for students. The community experiences comparatively low suicide rates, as do other similar initiatives in American Indian education, as this article discusses.

“They have the leaders, the chiefs go into the school to share traditional ways and we believe that helps the kids overcome any of the negative effects of colonisation,” she told Croakey.

Morse also said how much she had got from attending the conference, and that the connections created among delegates had led to efforts to establish a First Peoples of the World Psychology Network.

“I think this is really exciting because we all have done research, we all have pieces of information and ways that we know work. Now we can connect with each other and create something bigger and better.”
Nothing about us without us

Dr Kahu McClintock is Research Manager of Te Kīwai Rangahau, the research and evaluation unit of Te Rau Matatini, the National Centre for Māori Health, Māori Workforce Development and Excellence.

She spoke at the conference and in this interview about Indigenous data sovereignty. She told Croakey that the suicide data recording process in New Zealand raises concerns around how to keep families included in the process and confidentially collect data without compromising confidentiality or breaching their trust.

“These concerns were echoed by First Nations’ researchers from Canada, Australia, the United States and Pacific,” she said.

Maori funding was not in Maori hands and Maori health needs are being identified by non-Indigenous systems, and on non-indigenous terms, she said.

“Therefore, failure to ask Māori whānau (family) and those most impacted by suicide what their health needs are and to include them in decisions about the types of data that needs to be collected about them and why undermines their mana, authority and opportunities to protect the stories of their loved ones,” she said.

McClintock emailed a list of priorities for the protection of the sovereign data of Indigenous peoples that emerged from the conference. They are:

• Shift the lens from deficit to strength based.

• Re-telling the story creates fatigue: Indigenous peoples are tired of telling the same story with no action from Government.

• Psychological assessments need to begin and end with positive formulation to cause less distress.

• Data sovereignty and governance – ‘nothing about us without us’

• We need to start mapping seasons to suicides to determine what is giving people purpose to get families/ communities to change their focus. Use of the Matauranga Maori (Māori knowledge) and the Maramataka (Māori calendar) is old wisdom that is being reclaimed and applied in a modern context.

• Community designed interventions need to enhance self-determination and autonomy.
Focus on resilience

Dëgawënnödëhe’t (Jocelyn Jones) is a member of the Seneca Nation and founder of the grassroots organisation, Securing the Seventh Generation (S7G), which was founded in response to the need to address intergenerational trauma in Indigenous communities.

She urged delegates in her presentation to focus not just on intergenerational trauma but on the resilience handed down from Indigenous ancestors “who refused to quit”.

And she challenged people to look at how they were carrying trauma at a personal, family, and institutional level, warning against lateral oppression.

Working for prevention

Jöndo:d (Clayton Logan) and Nicole Thompson, First Nations people from the Seneca Nation in the US, talk about their interest in suicide prevention and the work they do.
Twitter wrap

Jayde @jaydefuller - 4h
The Maori presenting local people with a Manaia – thank you for your spiritual blessing. #ATSISP18

Centre of Best Practice @cbpatsisp - Nov 22
Glenn Pearson, Co-chair of the Organising Committee for both National and World Conferences. #WISPC18 @telethonkids @HealthInfoNet @HealingOurWay @cultureislife

“Live well, live lightly, live uniquely” – wrapping the conversations from #WISPC18
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

“Live well, live lightly, live uniquely” – wrapping the conversations from #WISPC18

#WISPC18
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"Live well, live lightly, live uniquely" – wrapping the conversations from #WISPC18

Gifts to delegates of the Seneca Nation of New York State – Elder Clayton Logan danced up a storm at yesterday’s welcome ceremony #WISPC18

Ernie Dingo welcomes delegates of #WISPC18 teaching us a song and telling the tale of the pelican flying in a V and working together to fly forward.

Adelo Cox @adelec23 speaking about NICR #WISPC18 “what our is common sense - we are willing to go there”
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

“Live well, live lightly, live uniquely” – wrapping the conversations from #WISPC18

Health reporting @CroakeyNews · Nov 22
National Indigenous Critical Response Service: 3 main elements: #WISPC18
“Needed to own this space, come up with something that would hit the spot for families immediately after they lost loved ones”. Adele Cox

Funded by the Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet

Three elements to our program:
1. Critical Response Support
2. Community capacity and development approach to support local communities to develop prevention programs or build capacity to provide postvention support
3. Systems change

Health reporting @CroakeyNews · Nov 22
Adele Cox: SAPOL changed form, to make sure their officers identify if Indigenous person in suicide, harm or trauma. They now provide automatic notification when that happens. Queensland Police second cab off the rank. WA unfortunately “still in negotiations”. #WISPC18

Health reporting @CroakeyNews · Nov 22
Adele Cox: “Govt said give us example of community capacity and development examples. I said I can’t and I won’t. Up to communities to tell us what they need.” #WISPC18

Sabine Hammond @sabine_hammond · Nov 20
Heartfelt presentation on the lived experience of suicide in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people - #ISPC2018 &cbpatsisp @NACCHOAustralia @HealingOurWay @AlpaAust @LoweInstitut @culturelife @IAHA_National @NATSISWA – at Rendezvous Grand Hotel

Acknowledgement of those with lived experiences and those lost too soon
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

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“Live well, live lightly, live uniquely” – wrapping the conversations from #WISPC18

Health reporting @CroakeyNews · Nov 22
Touchean Fiddler talking about the importance of Nishnawbe Aski Nation in his life, in his parenting: Snowshoe Ceremony, the Berry Fast, First Kill (though he admitted to Googling for tips during his first moose kill) #WISPC18

Mary Lou Hayman @LouHayman · 3h
Deanna Ledoux, Saskatchewan First Nations Child Advocate and 3rd generation in her family who attended a residential school. #WISPC18
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

“Live well, live lightly, live uniquely” –
wrapping the conversations from #WISPC18

Dr Keri Lawson Te Aho from Otago highlighting the importance of activities to reclaim culture. The powerful rarely give ground with facts alone. #WISPC18 @CroakeyNews

“Live well, live lightly, live uniquely” –
wrapping the conversations from #WISPC18

Tom Brideson at #WISPC18 on the importance of cultural healing & holistic #SEWB teams. @chrisarra @tobyadams_ @CroakeyNews @SummerMayFinlay @adelec23 @JulieCollinsMP @ConNetica @MarionWands

Our elders say our language give us our true identity. Language we must maintain. That gives us our true identity. We must instill within our children their true identity. We must promote our traditional healers - Aunty Liz Hayden #WISPC18
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

“Live well, live lightly, live uniquely” – wrapping the conversations from #WISPC18

Jayde @jaydefuller · Nov 22
Sade ‘Heart of the Hawk’ Ali First Nations Mi'kmaq speaking passionately about Two Spirit or LGBTQ+ people #WISPC18

Culture Is Life @cultureislife · Nov 23
"The LGBTQ+SB stream feedback we received, they felt we were visible - it’s empowering. They felt safe, grounded, heard and valued. They felt extremely grateful to be around mob at this conference" - Rebecca Johnson sharing recommendations from the LGBTQ+SB stream #WISPC18

Centre of Best Practice @cbpatsisp · Nov 22
Haka for Life and Corroboree for Life #WISPC18

“Live well, live lightly, live uniquely” – wrapping the conversations from #WISPC18

Croakey “Conference News Service”
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

“Live well, live lightly, live uniquely” – wrapping the conversations from #WISPC18
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

“Live well, live lightly, live uniquely” – wrapping the conversations from #WISPC18

The 2nd World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference has kicked off in Perth. First Nations people from around the world have gathered to fight suicide in Indigenous communities. #WISPC18 #ATSISPC18

“Hate He Said” by Steven Oliver. A poem he performed yesterday at the opening of the World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference youtube.com/watch?v=xurO_Y... #WISPC18

“Hate He Said” a poem by Steven Oliver. An aboriginal man who wrote in response to how in Australia the 26th January is celebrated as Australia Day. A day wh... youtube.com
You can track Croakey's coverage of the conference here.

“Live well, live lightly, live uniquely” – wrapping the conversations from #WISPC18

#WISPC18
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference [here].

"Live well, live lightly, live uniquely" – wrapping the conversations from #WISPC18

Culture Squad members performing alongside Glen Skuthorpe

Setting the scene for a beautiful evening of reflection, celebration and the journey ahead #WISPC18
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

“Live well, live lightly, live uniquely” – wrapping the conversations from #WISPC18

**Culture Is Life** @cultureislife · 8h
Culture Is Life CEO, Belinda Duarte, is the deadly MC for tonight’s dinner.

In absolute awe of her strength and resilience! #WISPC18

**Marie McInerney** @mariemcinerney · 6h
At #WISPC18 dinner, Nyoongar Elder Aunty Roma hands over a healing stone as a gift to Canadian First Nations who will host #WISPC20

**Marie McInerney** @mariemcinerney · 7h
#WISPC18 dinner
You can track Croakey’s coverage of the conference here.

“Live well, live lightly, live uniquely” – wrapping the conversations from #WISPC18

#WISPC18
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“Live well, live lightly, live uniquely” – wrapping the conversations from #WISPC18
Analytics

#ATSISPC18

Watch 25 videos from the conference at the #ATSISPC18 playlist. Not all of the videos were broadcast via Periscope. For those that were broadcast, by 4 December 2018, there had been 3,318 viewers (2,296 for interviews and 1,022 for presentations/ceremony events).

Symplur analytics for the period of Croakey’s coverage of the conference (17 November-14 December) show there were more than 31 million Twitter impressions of the hashtag, 4,386 tweets, and 779 participants using the hashtag. Read the Twitter transcript here.

As the grabs below show, the conference hashtag trended nationally and also in Perth.
#WISPC18

Watch the 22 videos from the conference at the #WISPC18 playlist. Not all of the videos were broadcast via Periscope. For those that were broadcast, by 4 December 2018, there had been 4,775 viewers (1,765 for interviews and 3,010 for ceremonies and presentations).

In addition, this video compilation of the opening ceremony, produced by Summer May Finlay, had been watched 2,534 times, as of 7 December 2018.

Symplur analytics for the period of Croakey’s coverage show there were 711 participants using the conference hashtag, sending 4,527 tweets, and more than 31 million Twitter impressions. Check the analytics, and read the Twitter transcript.
Croakey Conference News Service

- Reporting by Summer May Finlay and Marie McInerney
- Editing by Melissa Sweet
- Layout and design by Mitchell Ward