

## Applying Culturally Tailored Approaches to Dementia Risk Reduction in First Nations Communities: A Continuous Quality Improvement Framework

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**Abstract—Background:** Dementia risk is significantly higher in First Nations communities, with rates up to five times greater than the general population. Culturally appropriate interventions in primary health care are crucial to address this disparity.

**Methods:** A decolonising approach was used to develop and implement dementia risk reduction strategies in one urban and three rural Queensland communities, Australia. Aboriginal Participatory Action Research (APAR) and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) methods guided the study. Data were collected through research yarning with stakeholders, including community members, health staff, and service providers. Health records were reviewed, and clinical processes were mapped to inform interventions. Feedback from the community helped shape the strategies, which were refined through CQI cycles over three years using the Plan-Do-Study-Act model. Evaluation focused on process, impact, and sustainability using the RE-AIM framework.

**Results:** Four key dementia-related goals were achieved: (i) increasing screening and assessment rates for cognitive impairment; (ii) enhancing staff capacity for dementia care; (iii) empowering communities to recognize and address dementia risks through education; and (iv) co-developing health promotion strategies for broader Indigenous populations. Indigenous leadership and collaboration with health professionals and community members were central to these outcomes.

**Conclusion:** Ongoing collaboration led to the practical integration of research into health services, with CQI-driven changes becoming embedded in practice. This culturally tailored approach offers a model for improving dementia care and prevention in First Nations communities and beyond