

Report: Trauma informed care and practice training with Dr Derek Chong June 2022

Background and purpose

Social Futures Earlier Intervention Connect (EIC) program commissioned Dr Derek Chong to deliver three one-day trauma-informed care and practice training workshops for Targeted Earlier Intervention (TEI) services and other Aboriginal Services in Northern NSW in May-June 2022. This was a follow on from workshops delivered by the EIC program and Dr Chong in 2021. The workshops were funded under the NSW Department of Communities and Justice TEI program and delivered in Lismore, Tweed Heads and Grafton.

Thirty-nine workers and managers from 13 EIC client organisations participated in the workshops. 12 (31 per cent) of attendees were First Nations Australians.

Workshop Structure

The workshop objectives were:

- understand trauma and the phases of trauma
- understand trauma informed care principles
- understand impacts of disaster-related trauma for communities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- practical strategies for working alongside community through recovery

Workshops were a full day of face-to-face training including case studies, group work, online tools and resources.

All attendees were offered support after the session to debrief and connect.

Assessing participants' learning

Participants completed a pre workshop questionnaire designed to establish their baseline knowledge of trauma informed care and practice, and a post workshop survey at the end of the day. Pre-workshop and post-workshop responses were compared to identify if participants improved their knowledge and understanding about trauma informed care and practice.

Pre workshop

36 attendees completed the pre workshop survey, the average rate of understanding was 5.3 out of 10

Post workshop

After the session 36 participants completed a post workshop questionnaire with the average rate of understanding being 7.9 out of 10.

This equated to an increased level of understanding of 2.6 percent in the group.

Evaluation results



We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land where we live and work and their continuing connection to land, water, sea and community. We pay respects to Australia's First Peoples, to their unique and diverse cultures, and to Elders past, present and future.

Inclusion is about the actions we take every day. We welcome, support, and celebrate diversity.

All respondents (100 per cent) agreed the session supported them to strengthen connections and they had new learning that will enhance my practice. Survey respondents shared the following about what is the most important thing you are taking away from the session:

- All the info about dopamine and also found the learning brain vs the survival brain very interesting and useful. I loved the whole session
- Phases of trauma - how the different parts of the brain work & what these parts mean
- When we're safe we can connect and create. Trauma is an experience, not an event.

Comments and suggestions included:

- Often times we are limited with learning opportunities being from Grafton, so to have such a quality training is awesome.
- I feel it could have been taught strategies more work related. I did love hearing the culture side though.
- Presenter did well to engage with the audience - lots of heavy content to cover.

Conclusion and recommendations

The workshops were well received, and attendees requested more training on trauma in the future, ideally this training will focus on practical ways of applying trauma informed practice in our work.

Some participants attended a follow-up two-hour Better Chances Forum reflective practice workshop, which offered opportunities for reflection on engagement with a trauma informed practice lens.

Attendees were invited to be added to the BCF mailing list where they will be notified on future training and opportunities.