

## Report: Trauma informed care and practice training with Dr Derek Chong June 2023

### Background and purpose

Social Futures Earlier Intervention Connect (EIC) program commissioned Dr Derek Chong to deliver four one-day trauma-informed care and practice training workshops for Targeted Earlier Intervention (TEI) services and other Aboriginal Services in Northern NSW in June 2023. This was a follow on from workshops delivered by the EIC program and Dr Chong in 2021 and 2022. The workshops were funded under the NSW Department of Communities and Justice TEI program and delivered in Murwillumbah, Ballina, Grafton and Lismore.

Sixty-six workers and managers from 18 EIC client organisations participated in the workshops. 16 (24 per cent) of attendees were First Nations Australians.

### Workshop Structure

The workshop objectives were:

- Trauma informed care principles; and recognising and responding to phases of trauma.
- Trauma and the nervous system; impacts of invasion and colonisation – transgenerational trauma and healing; and practice recognising and responding to phases of trauma.
- The science behind Indigenous cultural resilience; epigenetics and transgenerational trauma; and practice mindfulness.
- Confirming our learning – strategies for your own practice in trauma informed care.

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*

Before the session 65 participants completed the pre workshop survey, the average rate of understanding was 4.8 out of 10

#### *Post workshop*

After the session 64 participants completed a post workshop questionnaire with the average rate of understanding being 8.4 out of 10.

This indicated a self-rated understanding of Trauma Informed Care improved by 75 per cent (from an average of 4.8/10 at the start of the session to 8.4/10 at the end).

Thirty-seven participants (58 per cent) improved by 3 points out of 10 or more.



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.

## **Evaluation results**

Most respondents (95 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:

- I felt safe, informed, easy to understand and stay focused, I learnt new tools and a lot more about indigenous culture.
- How trauma can affect so many different aspects of your life. How it can affect you without realising and how it can be transgenerational.
- The training has made me more aware of trauma and helped me realise signs of trauma. Better strategies to assist my clients with their needs and be able to help them feel more comfortable and open to receiving the support they need.
- The importance of understanding the affects of trauma on Aboriginal people and how to view and respond from a different perspective.
- Highly recommend this program for all staff and the workplaces working with Aboriginal clients. Professor Chong was a great facilitator and relatable.
- Dr Chong is very knowledgeable I appreciate when he shared his family pics and history it builds trust and connection.

Comments and suggestions included:

- The things Derek said and linked helped me process the information more.
- Thankyou for the opportunity to be here. I have so much more to learn and know it will be lifelong. Learning like this gives us a safe place to learn.

## **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.

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