

Fighting Disadvantage: Examining the role of Social Work in the context of an Aboriginal Sustained Home Visiting program

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Background:

This paper aims to provide a critical reflection of the ongoing role of Social Work within the context of an Aboriginal Sustained Home Visiting team in the South Western Sydney Local Health District. It has been prepared by the Senior Social Worker of the Bulundidi Gudaga Sustained Home Visiting team and provides current statistics in relation to allocated Bulundidi Gudaga Social Work clients. This paper examines the role of Social Work involvement with Aboriginal families and provides recommendations for future intervention in consideration of the key Strategic Directions of the NSW Aboriginal Health Plan 2013-2023 and the 'Close the Gap' initiative. A case study of Social Work intervention of Bulundidi Gudaga clients is used to provide insight in to the complexities of working with vulnerable Aboriginal families in Sydney Suburbs.

Method:

The Bulundidi Gudaga program highlights South West Sydney Local Health District's ongoing commitment to 'Closing the Gap' and providing improved health outcomes for vulnerable Aboriginal families in South West Sydney. This paper provides critical reflection of current service provision of the Bulundidi Gudaga program through the use of a qualitative analysis of single case study from current allocated Aboriginal families, as well as quantitative data from Social Work service intervention statistics for 12 months.

Discussion / Recommendations:

This paper aims to provide an in depth examination of the current strengths and concerns affecting the Social Work intervention of Aboriginal families in South West Sydney. It explores the effectiveness of working in partnership with Child and Family Health Nurses, Aboriginal Health Workers and Government and Community organisations to support vulnerable families in crisis driven situations, as well as providing analysis of the appropriateness of current models of care. Recommendations for better service provision and improved health outcomes for Aboriginal families are provided in consideration of the key Strategic Directions of the NSW Aboriginal Health Plan 2013-2023.