



Rajan Martin

Director
Eye, Ear and Dental Health Section
Program Management and Evaluation Branch
Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health
Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing



Improving Eye and Ear Health Services for Indigenous Australians for Better Education and Employment Outcomes measure

- Commenced in July 2009
- **\$58 million** over 4 years, of which **\$32 million** is allocated towards ear health components
- Aims to support improved prevention, detection & management of Otitis Media & associated fluctuating hearing loss
- Longer-term gains in education and employment, & reduced interactions with the judicial system



Key ear health components

- Provision & maintenance of ear & hearing health equipment
- Training for Aboriginal Health Workers in ear & hearing health
- Improved information & clinical resources for health practitioners
- A national ear health social marketing campaign
- Additional ear surgical & ENT outreach services, & clinical leadership support for primary health care services



Ear and hearing health equipment

- Planning & needs analysis to inform the location of equipment completed in May 2010; updated in January 2011
- Arrangements in place for the supply & maintenance of ear health equipment for Aboriginal Medical Services & eligible primary health care service, including:
 - **pneumatic & video otoscopes**
 - **Audiometers**
 - **tympanometers**
- Equipment delivered to Aboriginal Medical Services prior to training on equipment & ear & hearing health
- To date, more than **750 items** of ear & hearing health equipment have been distributed nationally

Training for Aboriginal Health Workers in ear and hearing health

Ear & Hearing Training project comprises four Phases:

- development of an equipment training kit in line with the roll-out of hearing equipment to Aboriginal health services.
- development of a national ear and hearing training program & material which is accredited. This work includes piloting the training program & an evaluation.
- delivery of nationally accredited training through the Aboriginal Community Controlled Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) to any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker working in Indigenous health services where the need is identified.
- evaluation of the training & will be undertaken concurrently with the training.

Phases 1 & 2 were completed 30 June 2011, Phases 3 & 4 commenced 1 July 2011

& are due to end 30 June 2013.

- There have been five professional development (equipment training) workshop held across Australia to date with approximately 180 participants.
- Accreditation workshops started earlier this year, with 6 planned for January to June period.

Improved information and clinical resources

- Update of the ***Recommendations for Clinical Care Guidelines on the Management of Otitis Media in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Populations***
 - Completed in 2010; based on the 2001 Recommendations
 - Available to order through:
 - **www.health.gov.au**
- **Australian General Practice Network** funded to:
 - Develop a 'best practice' model of care based on the Guidelines to pilot in selected Divisions/Medicare Locals
 - Develop & deliver a training module on the Guidelines for mainstream GPs
 - Promote the Guidelines through various media
- Other projects:
 - Expansion of web-based resource ***Ear InfoNet***
 - Additional production of resources developed by the **Rural Health Education Foundation**



Social marketing campaign: Care for Kids Ears'

- Aims to help reduce the incidence of Otitis Media in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people
- Primarily targeted at **parents & carers of children 0-5 years old**. Secondary audiences are **health professionals & early childhood/teaching staff**
- Social marketing components involve:
 - **national targeted resources** including a new resource kit for health professionals
 - **localised communication projects** through Indigenous media organisations e.g. TV, radio, DVDs, music, outdoor broadcasts, grassroots events
- Resources can be ordered through the campaign website:
 - **www.careforkidsears.health.gov.au**
- Please see flyer for more information and the resources on display



Ear surgery, ENT outreach & clinical leadership

- Scoping study into existing state & territory activity in ear health completed in May 2010
- Informed priorities for Project Agreements with state & territory governments
- Project Agreements provide funding for:
 - **Clinical leadership** support for primary health care
 - **Additional ENT outreach services**
 - **Additional ear surgical services**
- Agreements are currently in place with SA, WA, NT, VIC & QLD
- Implementation varies between jurisdictions; aims to build on existing programs



What will the Project Agreements deliver?

- 309 additional ear health outreach visits;
- 697 extra ear surgical procedures; and
- 6,036 children receiving ENT specialist services.

Future directions and challenges

- **Evaluation of the *Improving Eye and Ear Health Services for Indigenous Australians for Better Education and Employment Outcomes* measure:**
 - Commencing in 2012-13
 - Will inform future activities and investment in ear and hearing health services, and contribute to the evidence base
- **Stronger Futures Northern Territory package:**
 - Announced on 29 March 2012
 - 10 year commitment commencing from 1 July 2012
- **Strengthening national prevalence data:**
 - Need to consider gaps and opportunities for data development including to target future investment
- **Cross-sectoral work:**
 - Timely to explore opportunities for cross-sectoral work to address the broader impacts of ear disease



Thank you

Any questions?