




RESEARCH ARTICLE

Impact on stakeholders of a cultural adaptation of a social and emotional well-being intervention in an Aboriginal community

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Abstract

Purpose: Australian Indigenous people conceptualise health broadly as situated within a social and emotional well-being (SEWB) framework. A consultation process with an Aboriginal community revealed that the fundamental principles of the population wide, community-based Act-Belong-Commit mental health promotion Campaign were consistent with Aboriginal people's understanding of SEWB and that a cultural adaptation of the Campaign would be welcomed in the community. The purpose of this paper is to present key stakeholders' feedback on the Campaign adaptation.

Methodology: Two years after implementation of the Campaign, individual in-depth interviews were conducted with a purposeful sample of $n = 18$ Indigenous and non-Indigenous stakeholders to identify ongoing issues in the community and assess their reactions to the Campaign implementation and perceptions of the effects of the Campaign on the community.

Results: The two primary factors influencing stakeholder acceptance of the Campaign in the community were (i) the nature of the consultation process that clearly acknowledged that it was for the community to decide whether or not to adopt the Campaign and (ii) the ability of the Aboriginal Project Manager to gain the trust of the community, bring stakeholders together and illustrate the Act-Belong-Commit principles in her actions in the community. Stakeholders reported observing social and emotional well-being benefits for individuals, their families and the whole community.

Conclusion: Overall, the results suggest that the Act-Belong-Commit mental health promotion Campaign can be successfully culturally adapted as a community-based, social and emotional well-being Campaign in Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities.

So What?: The Act-Belong-Commit cultural adaptation in Roebourne provides an evidence-based best practice model for the development of culturally appropriate mental health promotion campaigns in Indigenous communities around Australia.

KEYWORDS

Aboriginal, cultural adaptation, Indigenous, mental health promotion, social and emotional well-being

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1 | INTRODUCTION

1.1 | Aboriginal mental health/social and emotional well-being

As in other areas around the globe, Indigenous people in Australia have substantially higher morbidity and mortality than non-Indigenous people, including higher rates of mental illness, contributed to by factors such as disadvantage, racism and poverty.^{1,2} For example, in 2018-2019, Indigenous Australians were 2.3 times more likely than non-Indigenous Australians to report “high or very high” levels of psychological distress.³

Further, mainstream mental health programs are often inadequate to meet the needs of Indigenous people because they tend to be individual based, do not take into account Indigenous Australians' concepts of mental health and do not recognise that the risk and protective factors for mental health among Australia's Indigenous people differ significantly from those for non-Indigenous Australians.^{4,5} That is, Australian Indigenous people conceptualise health broadly as situated within a social and emotional well-being (SEWB) framework. SEWB includes mental health but extends beyond the Western understanding of mental health and well-being to include the social, emotional, physical, cultural and spiritual dimensions of well-being.⁶

It has therefore been proposed that community and culturally based interventions are required rather than simply attempting to adapt individual psychological counselling services and increase access to these in Indigenous communities.⁷⁻¹⁰ The cultural adaptation of the community-wide Act-Belong-Commit mental health promotion Campaign described below is proposed as an articulation of that call for community and culturally based interventions, but where the focus is on the promotion of good mental health and mental illness prevention rather than services for dealing with mental illnesses.

1.2 | The Act-Belong-Commit campaign

Act-Belong-Commit is a comprehensive, state-wide, community-based health promotion Campaign designed to build population mental health and prevent mental illness.^{11,12} The campaign's concept of mental health (or “keeping mentally healthy”) is based on the World Health Organization's definition of mental health as “a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community”,¹³ a perspective which is often termed “positive mental health.”¹⁴ The state-wide Campaign uses mass and targeted media advertising and publicity to encourage individuals to engage in mentally healthy activities, while at the same time supporting and encouraging organisations that offer mentally healthy activities to promote and increase participation in these activities. The Campaign is implemented through partnerships with health services, local governments, government departments, schools, workplaces, community organisations and local sport, arts and recreational clubs.

As the brand name suggests, people can build positive mental health and resilience by keeping physically, mentally, spiritually and socially active (Act); building a sense of identity and belonging by keeping involved in family and community activities and participating in community events (Belong); and by taking on challenges or causes that provide meaning and purpose in their lives (Commit). There is substantial evidence that these three domains contribute to increasing levels of positive mental health (and in fact, to physical health)¹⁵⁻¹⁷ Impact evaluations in both Australia^{18,19} and Denmark²⁰ report positive impacts of the campaigns in their jurisdictions.

1.3 | The Act-Belong-Commit campaign and indigenous people's beliefs about social and emotional well-being

The Act-Belong-Commit framework is consistent with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's holistic view of mental health and well-being and their use of “social and emotional well-being” to describe this broader view as stated on the Australian Indigenous Health InfoNet:

The term social and emotional well-being is used by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to describe the social, emotional, spiritual, and cultural well-being of a person. The term recognises that connection to land, culture, spirituality, family, and community are important to people and can impact on their well-being.

There is a clear similarity between the basic constructs in the Act-Belong-Commit framework and the factors identified as both protecting from and helping Indigenous people deal with mental illnesses, such as social connectedness and a sense of belonging; connection to land, culture, spirituality and ancestry; living on or near traditional lands and passing on of cultural practices.²¹⁻²⁴ Researchers have found that connection to culture is related to improved social and emotional well-being and that engaging in activities like re-learning language, recording voices and visiting and caring for country, all strengthen well-being.²⁵

Overall, given the above and Aboriginal people's focus on family, community and the social care of others,²⁶ it has been proposed that approaches to Indigenous mental health should include components that promote engagement in activities that strengthen personal, community and cultural identity.^{27,28} Hence, it was anticipated that the principles underlying the Act-Belong-Commit framework would be acceptable to Indigenous communities and readily translate to an Indigenous cultural framework for mental health promotion.

The Act-Belong-Commit focus on positive mental health rather than on mental illness is also consistent with many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people believing

that mental health and mental illness focus too much on problems and don't properly describe all the factors that make up and influence well-being.²⁹

Given the above, it was decided to look for (i) an Indigenous community that was positive towards assessing the acceptability and feasibility of implementing a cultural adaptation of the campaign and (ii) for a funder that would support such an intervention. Roebourne was chosen because the team had Aboriginal contacts in the area and because Chevron Australia, which was active in the Pilbara region, agreed to fund the intervention.

1.4 | The Roebourne cultural adaptation of the Act-Belong-Commit campaign

After gaining funding support from Chevron Australia and the engagement of a local Indigenous consultant, a consultation process was begun in 2014 to assess the feasibility of implementing a pilot social and emotional well-being adaptation of the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign in Roebourne in Western Australia's Pilbara region. The town of Roebourne sits on the traditional lands of the Ngarluma people, although members of other Aboriginal language groups from surrounding areas also reside in Roebourne. Three quarters of the just under 1000 Roebourne residents identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, with just under 40% speaking only English at home (compared to almost three quarters of all people in Australia).

The project received ethics approval from Curtin University's Human Research Ethics Committee (HR02/2016) and the Western Australian Aboriginal Health Ethics Committee (HREC Reference #574). As will be evident below, the consultation process and project implementation were consistent with the four fundamental IATSI ethical principles of Indigenous self-determination, Indigenous leadership, Impact and Value, and Sustainability and Accountability,³⁰ and with the measures of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander quality appraisal tool.³¹

After confirmation by Chevron that they would fund the Program for at least 3 years if the community chose to adopt the Campaign ("Sustainability"), the consultation and formative research began with the appointment of an Aboriginal Project Manager and the engagement of a local Aboriginal consultant ("Indigenous self-determination" and "Indigenous leadership"). Following various recommended approaches to consultation and research in Aboriginal communities,³² the formal and informal consultations over the first 6 months of the project involved group discussions with elders, community organisation representatives and members of the general community, including both men and women, a range of age groups and the main language groups in the town and surrounding area. The qualitative data were supplemented by community-wide surveys using a semi-structured questionnaire, to ensure that ordinary community members also had an opportunity to express their views.

Initial consultations with the community confirmed that the Act-Belong-Commit domains could be culturally adapted to enhance social and emotional well-being in Roebourne.³³ Based on these

consultations, the initial aims of the Campaign and the goals of the Aboriginal Project Manager were to increase the salience of being proactive about mental health and social and emotional well-being in the community amongst both community leaders and community members in general, facilitate greater community member participation in activities conducive to good mental health and, of major priority, to facilitate greater co-operation between community organisations, both in general and in staging and providing such activities ("Impact and Value").

1.5 | Roebourne Indigenous people's articulation of the Act-Belong-Commit messages

The overall messages of the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign were accepted by the community as relevant to social and emotional well-being, with community members emphasising that good social and emotional well-being depends on interacting with family, involvement in community activities and connecting to country and culture. Hence, and consistent with the protective factors noted earlier, the community expressed the Act-Belong-Commit domains in the following way:

Act: Keep mentally, socially, spiritually, physically and culturally active.

Belong: Build and maintain a strong *Aboriginal identity* by keeping connected to *family* and *language* group and by getting together with others at *cultural* events and keeping connections to country strong.

Commit: Care for *country*, teach the young ones about *culture* and *language* or re-learn culture and language yourself, keep up *obligations to family and community*, take part in *lore* ceremonies and *express culture* in art, craft, song, music, dance or stories.

To strengthen local ownership, the community in late 2015 was then involved in developing a locally relevant cultural adaptation of the Act-Belong-Commit branding¹⁰ that also marked the launch of the culturally adapted Campaign (see Figure 1). This branding was accompanied by a new slogan "Standing Strong Together." For Aboriginal people in Roebourne, the "Standing Strong Together" slogan epitomises interacting with family, involvement in community activities and connecting to country and culture for building and strengthening social and emotional well-being in communities. Given that these understandings are consistent with a variety of research findings across Australia,⁹ there is potentially widespread acceptance of the logo by other Indigenous communities.

1.6 | Campaign implementation

Given issues discussed in the community in the consultation phase, the initial aims of the campaign and the goals of the Aboriginal Project Manager were to: (i) increase the salience of being proactive about



FIGURE 1 The locally developed standing strong together logo branding.

mental health and social and emotional well-being in the community amongst both community leaders and community members in general; (ii) facilitate greater community member participation in activities conducive to good mental health; and, of major priority, (iii) facilitate greater co-operation between community groups in general and in staging and providing such activities. One major achievement in this last goal was the bringing together of mental health service providers in the town, which became the Roebourne Social and Emotional Well-being Network, which then met regularly over refreshments.

The campaign implementation included supporting a variety of community and group activities and events where posters and banners displaying the Act-Belong-Commit Standing Strong Together logos were displayed, including music concerts, NAIDOC Week, play groups, a mothers' club and events such as National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day and "Art for your SEWB Day" for Mental Health Week. One major project was the "Healing out on Country" project which aimed to support families bereaved by suicide and tragic loss. An example of bringing groups together was the launch of the locally developed logo and slogan which was attended by around 180 locals and included entertainment by local artists, activities for children, giveaways and kangaroo stew. Elders shared with the audience what they did to Act, Belong and Commit to stay healthy and strong and highlighted the importance of the program for their families and the future of the Roebourne community. The event was supported by over a dozen volunteers as well as the Roebourne Social and Emotional Well-being Network.³⁴

1.7 | Campaign impact assessment

The impact of the Campaign on general community members was measured by an intercept survey of a convenience sample of Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members, using a structured questionnaire that focussed specifically on Campaign awareness and impact. The survey results for Indigenous respondents are presented in Anwar-McHenry et al.⁵ In brief, almost all of these respondents were aware of the Campaign in Roebourne, with substantial percentages reporting that as a result of the Campaign they had tried to do something for their own social and emotional well-being, for the social and emotional well-being of family and friends and to support the well-being of the community.

At around the same time, in-depth interviews were conducted with key Indigenous and non-Indigenous stakeholders, where the primary focus of the interviews was on general social and emotional well-being issues in the community. Where the opportunity arose during these interviews, participants were also asked questions on their awareness of the Campaign awareness and their perceptions of its impact in the community. This report presents the results of the key stakeholder interviews with respect to Campaign impact.

2 | METHOD

2.1 | Sample

A list of key stakeholders in the town was constructed by the Aboriginal Project Manager in consultation with elders, a local Aboriginal consultant and persons who had partnered in campaign activities. This list included Aboriginal elders and other community leaders, native title groups, health professionals, policy makers and government and non-government service providers. A sample of 20 of these key stakeholders was then systematically selected to provide representation of relevant organisations in the community. Given that most of the government and nongovernment organisations in the community were led by non-Indigenous persons, approximately two-thirds of this stakeholder sample was non-Indigenous.

2.2 | The interview questions re-Campaign impact

An open-ended questionnaire was developed to serve as a topic guide, with participants free to raise any issues they considered relevant to social and emotional well-being in Roebourne. However, rather than asking some Indigenous respondents to respond to specifically formatted questions as below, it was deemed more appropriate to "yarn" about their overall views on the past, present and future of the community in Roebourne and surrounding areas and their views on the Campaign (see "yarning" as both a social and research tool³⁵). Hence not all participants were asked all the specific Campaign impact questions listed below, and particularly where participants' greater interest was in other issues.

To assess Campaign impact, the questionnaire guide included the following topic areas:

- Understanding of the Campaign messages (“If someone new to Roebourne asked you what the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign is about, what would you say?”)
- Perceived impact of the Campaign on others and the community (“Has the Campaign benefited people in Roebourne? Do you have any stories about people getting involved in the Campaign and this being good for them, family or community?”)
- Respondent's own reaction to and involvement in the Campaign (“Have you tried to do something for your own or your family's social and emotional well-being as a result of the Campaign?”)
- Comment on the Aboriginal Project Manager's work in the community (“How do you feel about what the Project Manager has been doing as part of the Act Belong-Commit Campaign in Roebourne? Can you tell me some good things she had been doing?”)
- Support or otherwise for sharing with other Aboriginal communities, the Standing Strong Together logo developed in Roebourne (“Do you support sharing the Standing Strong Together logo with other Aboriginal communities?”).

The interviews were conducted by author Julia Anwar-McHenry (sometimes accompanied by one or other of the other authors) and recorded with the permission of the participants. Most interviews took between 30 and 60 min. The interviews were transcribed for hard copy records and for content analysis of issues raised. For the purposes of this paper, only responses related to the above topics are presented below.

2.3 | Ethical and other considerations

Participants were provided with an information sheet (in person or by email) before verbal consent was obtained. Where it was felt desirable, the information sheet was also explained verbally. Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they may withdraw their consent at any time without reason or prejudice. All respondents were fluent in English.

It was acknowledged that some individuals could experience some discomfort at being interviewed about Aboriginal mental health. However, the risk to participants was considered low as the topic is positive mental health and the sorts of activities that enhance social and emotional well-being. Nevertheless, some participants may have, or have had a mental illness, or they may have a family member or friend that has suffered a mental illness, has attempted suicide, or has taken their own life. Therefore, it was decided that if a participant appeared to be in distress, the interview would be terminated and the person would be referred to an appropriate service from a list of relevant service providers. However, none of the participants exhibited any signs of discomfort or distress.

The Campaign impact results were distributed among the Roebourne Social and Emotional Well-being Network, the respondents

and other stakeholders for feedback and comment. None raised any issues with respect to the reporting of the findings.

3 | RESULTS

3.1 | Participants

In total, 18 of the 20 key stakeholders participated in an interview. Two interviews were conducted over the phone and 16 conducted face-to-face. Sixteen respondents were female and six identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, reflecting that most organisations in Roebourne are led by women and non-Indigenous persons. Those interviewed included Aboriginal Elders, community leaders, coordinators/managers at community organisations, health and human service agency representatives, a senior police sergeant and a teacher. All lived in either Roebourne or the surrounding communities of Wickham, Karratha, Samson and 5 Mile. The majority of those interviewed had lived in the area for 8 or more years, including several who had lived there all their life.

In presenting the results, extensive use is made of respondents' verbatim comments to illustrate the themes derived from the content analysis and to ensure that the respondent's own terminology is acknowledged and formally presented. Respondents are identified as Indigenous (I) or Non-Indigenous (NI), Male (M) or Female (F) and, where relevant, as from a nongovernment organisation (NGO) or government organisation (GO). Where several quotes are listed under a topic, all are from different respondents. As noted above, not all questions were asked of all participants. Hence the number responding to the various question topics is noted in reporting the results.

3.2 | Understanding of the Act-Belong-Commit messages and goals

When asked “If someone new to Roebourne asked you what the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign is about, what would you say?,” all 12 who were asked this question gave responses consistent with the Act-Belong-Commit messages and referred to both specific Act-Belong-Commit behavioural domain components, as well as to overall social and emotional well-being. For example:

Act-Belong-Commit in Roebourne means ways that you can become strong in body, mind, and spirit. (I, F, NGO)

It's about keeping strong in mind and body and just joining in and looking after yourself your health, your well-being and your culture. (NI, F, NGO)

It is first and foremost about improving the social and emotional well-being of the Roebourne community. This is done through a variety of activities that support and engage the Roebourne community to be active (socially/emotionally/physically, etc.), belong and commit. (I, F, NGO)

Overall, all respondents showed a good understanding of the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign aims and messages, and particularly as demonstrating a holistic view of health.

3.3 | Perceived impact of the Campaign on others and the community

3.3.1 | Has the Campaign benefited people in Roebourne?

Eight of the nine who were asked this question responded with an unequivocal “yes,” with many referring to the sorts of activities they believe have helped, and to the Project Manager’s role in the Campaign. The remaining respondent answered, “don’t know,” referring to the complexity of the issues in Roebourne, but nevertheless supported the Project Manager’s inclusive approach: “works with other people to achieve what she’s here to try and do” (NI, F, GO).

The responses below illustrate how the Campaign is perceived to have been beneficial:

Having something like Act-Belong-Commit helps the people who are dealing with these everyday traumas and everyday issues, helps gives them the resilience and helps give them that good standing to be able to deal with other issues that are happening. (I, F, NGO)

From what I'm hearing definitely yes. It's made a big difference ... There's so many people that just offer to help as well, so obviously they love to be part of it. (NI, F, NGO)

Made a huge difference. ... She (the Project Manager) spent the first year working alongside people and supporting their programs, half of her time on that and half the time on delivering the message. (I, F, NGO)

3.3.2 | Do you have any stories about people getting involved in the Campaign and this being good for them, family or community?

Eight individuals responded with “stories,” with responses referring mainly to events or activities initiated or assisted by the Project Manager that had a beneficial effect on participants or the community in general, and specifically with respect to bringing the community together. For example:

Our staff here got really on board with the message. One of the programs Lesley (Project Manager) got funding for was Out on Country. Our staff help out in their own time, they went on the Out on Country program too, now they've become stronger and want to share with other families. (I, F, NGO)

I have seen many people engage with the Act-Belong-Commit Standing Strong Together Campaign that would otherwise not engage in community programs. This is a credit to Lesley and her ability to make community feel a sense of belonging and ownership of the program. (I, F, NGO)

The group that runs here on a Tuesday, that's a really positive outcome of the message getting out there, they support one another, and they do activities. (NI, F)

How the community all came together for that launch, the community hadn't come together for something like that since I'd been here, and that's several years... And now the community association came out of that, and people go to the community association. (NI, F, GO)

The above comments emphasise the impact of the Campaign on bringing the community together and that stakeholder organisations and their staff became very involved in the Campaign.

3.4 | Respondent's own reaction to and involvement in the Campaign

When asked whether they had tried to do something for their own or their family’s social and emotional well-being as a result of their exposure to the Campaign, most of the 11 respondents to this question indicated that the Campaign had prompted them to consider their own behaviour, in some cases both personally and professionally, and to assess whether what they were already doing was good for their mental health. Four stated that they had specifically done something extra as a result of the Campaign messages. For example:

Going to Mum's Mondays. I have a busy life and I'm away from my country, which is very different to here so it's really helped me. (I, F, NGO)

We participate in the program ourselves and I feel better for it. We do the programs with the ladies and not just deliver them. (NI, F, NGO)

3.5 | Comment on the Aboriginal Project Manager's approach in the community

As part of the interview process, 10 respondents were asked how they felt about what the Project Manager had been doing as part of the Act-Belong-Commit Campaign in Roebourne and to nominate some good things she had been doing. All responses were very positive. The following quote summarises the structural attributes of her work as well as her personal attributes that impacted the effectiveness of her efforts, with one key element being that she led by example:

Lesley is about the individual building a firm foundation, putting tools in their toolbox. It's not done in a patronising way, it's done in a sensitive, respectful way. ... Lesley's not just telling people to do it, she's actually getting out there and doing it. She's backing up everything she says with her actions, and people see that, people respect that, and people think, oh, maybe there is something to this. (NI, F, NGO)

Another key factor reported was that the Project Manager took time to merge into the community and establish relationships with community members, such that she was “considered to be part of the community rather than an outsider who's providing a service” (NI, F, GO):

We love Lesley. She spent most of the first year, probably 6 months, sitting in the background, watching what went on. She didn't make a big scene or anything. ... As the year went on she started working alongside the programs and organisations already here ... Didn't come in with a know-it-all attitude. She watched the community and learnt how the community ran. Once she got all that background information, she went from there. (I, F, NGO)

This gradual merging into the community was seen to be showing respect for the community and a key facilitator for gaining trust, which is a crucial prerequisite for gaining the cooperation and participation of community members and stakeholders in particular, given that many interactions with university-based researchers and other organisations tend to be short-lived and yield little benefit to the community:

For Aboriginal people ... relationships is a really big thing. We don't really open up to people unless there's that trust level. She's got to that point now where she's got those relationships where people are starting to open up to her ... and that's her strong point. (I, F, NGO)

The Program Manager was also seen to have “the ability to engage with all members of the community, from the very young to the elderly. I think that this is one of her greatest strengths” (I, F, NGO). At the same time, she was also seen as behaving professionally and able to be trusted with respect to what people might disclose to her: “People find her very easy to talk to because she is so professional, she keeps things confidential” (NI, F, NGO).

By attending local events, the Project Manager became recognisable in the community and took opportunities to demonstrate the Act-Belong-Commit message via her own actions. This was considered important as an indicator of commitment to the community and validation of the program message:

She'll take our people home if they need a ride home, cos some of them get a bit tired around lunch time and need a sleep. (NI, F, NGO)

She attends everything. She promotes it [the message] in a gentle way. (I, F, NGO)

One of the key findings of the consultation phase was that the many agencies in the town operated in a “silo” fashion, and hence a major objective for the program was to increase cooperation and collaboration between agencies. It was evident that the Project Manager was seen to be achieving this goal: “She's been great at linking a lot of agencies together” (NI, F, NGO); “She works with many other agencies to meet common goals and is always willing to help when and where possible” (I, F, NGO). One major achievement in this area was the Project Manager's working with organisations involved in mental health to establish a Roebourne Social and Emotional Well-being Network that then met regularly.

Of the 12 respondents asked at the end of the interview whether they had any further comments on the Campaign or the Project Manager, two indicated they had nothing more to add, whilst 10 took the opportunity to reiterate their positive view of the Project Manager's contribution in Roebourne. Overall, the themes that emerged further reinforced the above themes, but also that she had become “a source of information for others” and a source of assistance in their own efforts to engage the community:

It's been invaluable having someone there on the ground like that and having someone so connected with community and with organisations. I ask for Lesley's advice cos I know that she knows the community better... A lot of us aren't from here, so having that guidance from someone that's living in the community and knows the community is huge for our service provision. (NI, F, GO)

3.6 | Support for sharing with other Aboriginal communities the “Standing Strong Together” logo developed in Roebourne

Of the nine individuals asked whether or not they supported sharing the Standing Strong Together logo with other Aboriginal communities, seven showed very strong support for sharing the logo, one was supportive provided the community agreed and one (non-Indigenous) was ambivalent, stating they preferred each community to adapt their own version.

Reasons for supporting sharing of the logo included support for sharing of the Campaign messages per se, as well as feelings of pride in the Roebourne community:

It is a strong message. Especially I think for people who are a bit disconnected, like the elderly or the unemployed, people that don't have a reason to get up and socialise every day. (NI, F, GO)

It's just fabulous ... everyone was very proud about that ... really displays that message of we're standing strong, we're on sacred ground, it's very cultural. (I, F, NGO)

Overall, respondents were not only expressing the view that the logo design could be shared but that the overall Campaign adaptation would be beneficial for other Indigenous communities.

3.7 | Overall summary as to why respondents considered the Campaign to be successful

Overall, the participants stated the following factors as to why they believed the Campaign has been successful in gaining widespread acceptance within the community: the Campaign empowers people via encouraging and gaining their involvement in activities; the consultation process genuinely sought and acted on community members' opinions; the Campaign brought groups together rather than operating as yet another organisation competing for funds and/or allegiances and the Project Manager's openness to people seeking her advice or simply wanting to talk to her about their own issues. Many of these are illustrated in the following comment:

I think also why the program has worked so well, because it is (not only) about empowering and encouraging and equipping, but also about giving people a say... There's a difference between patronising people and respecting people, and that's what I believe Lesley brings to the whole sort of situation ... She's not saying that it's only for Aboriginal people or it's only for white fellas, it's for the whole of community and not trying to reinvent the wheel, just getting alongside what's already running or what could be running and helping facilitate those things.... (NI, F, NGO)

4 | CONCLUSIONS

The Project Manager's initial goals for the first 2 years of the Act-Belong-Commit program in Roebourne were to introduce herself and the Campaign to community members and organisations, gain their trust and then look for opportunities to assist individuals and organisations participate in activities that would enhance their and/or the community's social and emotional well-being. The strategy was to build on existing strengths and positive events/activities, not introduce wholly "new" program activities. Given the consultation phase findings, the Project Manager's specific primary goal was to work on bringing groups together and encouraging collaboration and cooperation.

The results of these stakeholder interviews indicate that all of these initial goals are being achieved: there was widespread acceptance of the Project Manager and the Campaign messages; a comprehensive understanding of the Campaign goals; and a willingness of agencies to cooperate with the Project Manager in collaborations with other organisations with similar and/or complementary goals. As noted above, one of the first activities undertaken under the goal of facilitating cooperation and collaboration between organisations, was the Project Manager's formation of the Roebourne Social and

Emotional Well-being Network. This involved the coming together of the organisations in the town concerned with mental health/Social and Emotional Well-being for regular meetings over refreshments.

The overall belief amongst these stakeholders is that the Campaign has had a positive effect on people in Roebourne, and particularly via their involvement in specific activities facilitated by the Project Manager that they would otherwise not have participated in. There is also the belief that the Campaign has raised community organisations' and general community members' awareness of mental health in a positive, holistic and culturally appropriate way.

4.1 | Reasons for success

Factors influencing the success of health promotion and injury prevention interventions in Indigenous communities have been known for some time.^{36,37} Such interventions are characterised by inclusive community consultation, community involvement in and ownership of the intervention activities, incorporation of how Aboriginal people view the health issue in question and health in general, building of trust, being holistic in nature and not only recognising, but promoting cultural practices.^{9,38–40} The above findings indicate that the Act-Belong-Commit adaptation in Roebourne has been successful for those same reasons. However, our findings add to the above in that these stakeholders very much emphasised the personal and professional characteristics of the project manager in achieving community trust and collaboration, and in particular, an overall nonintrusive but collaborative, understanding approach; professionalism; a genuine desire to assist; visible active participation in the community; listening skills; and an ability to bring groups together.

4.2 | Concluding comment

A limitation of this study is that the impact evaluation questions were raised with participants only when considered appropriate in the broader topic of relevant issues in the Roebourne community. Hence not all participants were asked all of the specific evaluation questions. Nevertheless, the results are consistent with the contemporaneous community survey of Indigenous participants referred to in Section 1,¹⁰ and, in conjunction with those results, provide a substantial indication of the positive impact of the Campaign in Roebourne.

Taken together, along with other Campaign reports,¹⁰ the above findings indicate that the Act-Belong-Commit cultural adaptation in Roebourne has the potential to meet the need for culturally secure, community-wide interventions by providing an evidence-based best practice model for mental health promotion for Aboriginal communities, including the development of a culturally appropriate communication framework and Aboriginal-specific positive mental health promotion resources. It is suggested that the community-wide Act-Belong-Commit Standing Strong Together adaptation could be an efficient way of reinforcing and amplifying the workshop-based approach of the National Empowerment Project for Cultural, Social and Emotional Well-being.^{9,23,41}

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Robert Donovan is an Editorial Board member of *Health Promotion Journal of Australia* and a co-author of this article. To minimize bias, he should be excluded from all editorial decision-making related to the acceptance of this article for publication.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

ETHICS STATEMENT

This study conforms with the 14 AIATSIS ethical principles, and particularly with respect to consultation, collaboration and giving back to the community. The project received ethics approval from Curtin University's Human Research Ethics Committee (HR02/2016) and the Western Australian Aboriginal Health Ethics Committee (HREC Reference #574).

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