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OCHRE

The Continuing Conversation

Evaluation | Stage 1:
Implementation and early outcomes

Campbelltown Opportunity Hub

Stage 1 Summary Report

Prepared for members of Campbelltown Aboriginal communities

June 2018

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This report belongs to members of Campbelltown Aboriginal communities.

The Opportunity Hub operates on Dharawal Country.

The research team from the Social Policy Research Centre acknowledges the Dharawal people as the traditional custodians of the land we are working on and pay our respect to Elders past, present and future and all Aboriginal peoples in the region.

Acknowledgements

We thank the Aboriginal Communities for their support and participation in this evaluation.

We would like to thank Tony Dreise and Dr Lynette Riley – both members of the Evaluation Steering Committee – for reviewing the report.

The *OCHRE* Evaluation was funded by Aboriginal Affairs NSW. The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and may not reflect those of Aboriginal Affairs NSW or the New South Wales Government. We would like to acknowledge the contribution of Aboriginal Affairs NSW for their support.

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The Social Policy Research Centre is based in the Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences at UNSW Sydney. This report is an output of the *OCHRE* Evaluation, funded by Aboriginal Affairs NSW.

Suggested citation:

Katz I, Idle J, Bates S, Jopson W, Barnes M, (2018). *OCHRE Evaluation Stage 1: Implementation and early outcomes. Campbelltown Opportunity Hub (SPRC Report 13/18)*. Sydney: Social Policy Research Centre, UNSW Sydney. <http://doi.org/10.26190/5b4289706e944>

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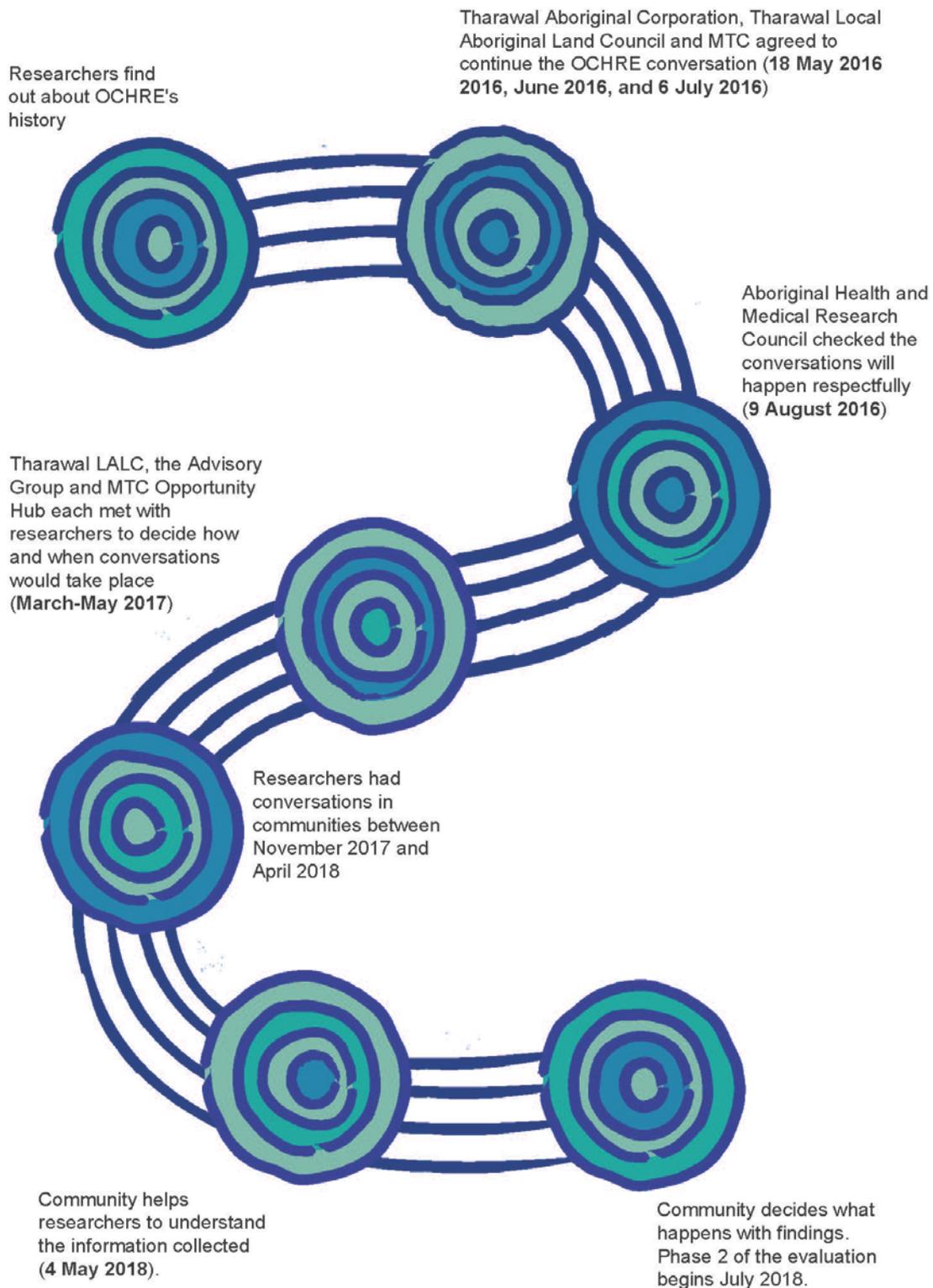
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The biggest thing at community's heart is our kids. So, we're dealing with a really, valuable commodity to all.

The OCHRE Campbelltown Opportunity Hub: What we have found

<p>What is working?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people involved in the Opportunity Hub and members of the Campbelltown Aboriginal community value the Hub and believe it is making a difference to student engagement with school and transition from school to employment and further education. • The Campbelltown Opportunity hub Advisory Group has a guiding influence and oversight on the Hub activities and has networks throughout the area to support the work of the Hub. • MTC has existing services and training facilities and builds on their networks with employers to provide opportunities for young Aboriginal people. • Campbelltown Opportunity Hub have good relationships with schools and with students. They adapt and are flexible in program delivery and facilitate access to other support programs. <p>Important messages to NSW Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Opportunity Hub has been successfully implemented in Campbelltown and the model has worked well. 	<p>What needs further work?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hub would like flexibility to provide services to other nearby schools outside the Campbelltown areas where they have relationships and have identified a need. • Relationships with Government and establishing clear lines of responsibility in Government agencies. • Increased support from local businesses for training opportunities. • Holistic approach to young people's wellbeing – encourage government services to support and liaise with the Hub. • The Hub, through their Advisory Group continues to develop their relationships with local Aboriginal peak bodies. <p>Important messages to NSW Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure and long-term funding is important for Aboriginal communities to trust Government is serious about supporting young Aboriginal people. • Better transport is needed in the area so that young people can access opportunities. • Long-term capacity building for local Aboriginal organisations to benefit the operations of the Hub.
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Summary of the *Continuing Conversations*



The *OCHRE* Campbelltown Opportunity Hub

The *OCHRE* Evaluation adopts the approach of ‘continuing conversations’. Over the past two years, SPRC evaluators have continued the conversations with members of Aboriginal communities in Campbelltown about the Campbelltown Opportunity Hub – part of *OCHRE*. This includes conversations with community members for the co-design of the evaluation, as well as one on one conversations with Aboriginal community members and others involved in the Opportunity Hub in late 2017 and early 2018. The researchers have used culturally acceptable methods as much as possible and facilitated community-control of the research.

Community-controlled research involves co-design – this is a way of conducting research with, and not on, communities. The evaluation team asked communities how they would like information collected, what they think would be a measure of the program’s success, who researchers should talk to, and what is the best approach to contact people to be a part of the evaluation. We trained local community members to be researchers to have these conversations. As part of co-design we have returned to communities to ask for feedback about the findings (validation of findings), which have been added to the report.

This is a summary of what we were told and what we heard about the *OCHRE* Campbelltown Opportunity Hub. Members of Campbelltown Aboriginal communities involved in the evaluation have reviewed and accepted the final report for presentation to the NSW Government. The report will be provided to Aboriginal Affairs NSW (30 June 2018) and then presented formally to the Minister on 15 August 2018.

The researchers will draw lessons from all *OCHRE* sites being evaluated and present a Synthesis Report to the NSW Coalition of Aboriginal Regional Alliances (NCARA).

What people told us about the Campbelltown Opportunity Hub

What is working well?

[The Hub is] ... a united support base for the kids, without being overwhelming for them. They get support from four people, and they've got structure. They know that there's four people working on them to get them into something.

The Opportunity Hub not only effects the child that you're working with, it's those kids around them, it's the community around them, it's the support'.

We focus on getting young people ready [for work] and so looking at transition, making positive relationships with local employers and I guess employment providers so that we can then refer these young people to them.

... I think the competency of MTC as an organisation to put the right people in the right roles, and have the right connections, and the right respect for community in rolling out the program, is a key to its success, particularly in this community, because different communities have different heartbeats, and the community in Tharawal is one.

I think having the resources at MTC could bring to the table from its experiences in that employment space and the services that they've delivered outside of the Opportunity Hub, has helped the Hub in its delivery, in how they work with our kids.

Findings

- The Campbelltown Opportunity Hub has support from community, students, schools and the Advisory Group.
- Hub activities are well attended and well regarded.
- Students (most) are positive about their engagement with the Hub.
- Schools and community members look to the Hub for advice and support for local young Aboriginal people.
- The Hub is building good local relationships, is well organised and staff are working well together.
- Hub organisation is transparent and seeks to build on established and developing relationships with employee and training services, the Campbelltown Opportunity Hub Advisory Group, and people in the Aboriginal communities of Campbelltown.
- Staff are committed, well-supported and working well.
- Campbelltown Opportunity Hub Advisory Group is made up of members who strongly support the work of the Hub for Aboriginal communities in Campbelltown.
- The Advisory Group has a guiding influence and oversight on the Hub activities.
- Advisory Group networks throughout the area support the work of the Hub.
- MTC has existing services and training facilities and builds on their networks with employers to provide opportunities for young Aboriginal people.
- Campbelltown Opportunity Hub adapt to the needs of the students and the schools in flexible program delivery and facilitates access other support programs.

What needs further work?

One of the biggest issues that we initially faced, and I think we'll continue to always face, is that MTC Australia is not an Aboriginal specific service.

... I think that that was an initial issue and I think it will always be something that we have to really work hard [at] ...

Yeah, they [the Hub] are forever facilitating and hosting community meetings and asking for community feedback... This community in particular can be difficult, but they [the Hub] seem to be able to manage it and bring people in...

Findings

- The Campbelltown Opportunity Hub is run by a non-Aboriginal organisation, which has created challenges to relationships with Aboriginal communities and organisations in the Campbelltown area.
- The Opportunity Hub is funded for 65 schools but is unable to access all of these. The Hub would like to provide services to other nearby schools outside the Campbelltown areas where they have relationships and have identified a need.
- Relationships with NSW Government, especially a need for clear lines of responsibility in government agencies.

How can the Campbelltown Opportunity Hub be improved?

[The Hub] does need to be sustainable, and it needs to have some longevity.

... It should get a lot more investment. It [the Hub] is under-invested, someone has made that point as well. They do a lot with not a lot, I think, to provide big value.

The government in the past has sort of divided and conquered and made sure there wasn't a bank of intellectual property, or skills, or a network that lasted long enough. This is a 15, 20, 30- year plan. If we can keep that IP and that momentum together, we actually will get something done, particularly in a generational sense with young kids.

We'd like more community and more local support because a lot of restraints on our kids travelling to the city or to even Parramatta is a big fear for a young person who's never had to take the responsibility of catching transport locally. So, it's really [important to] start small, which is a huge step for these kids.

[There are not] many activities for our kids in our area too. There needs more for kids to do specially on the weekends. This is why they get into trouble they get bored so easily.

Other factors need to be addressed before [many Aboriginal students] can even think about a career. Jobs are the last thing on the mind, they need to get healthy.

I think they should have psychologist or people that can help kids with personal issues whether it be drug and alcohol related or abuse at home and feel they can't talk to anyone.

I would like to see Elders come to the school and talk to us about our culture and stuff do some activities with our Elders.

Findings

- Increase capacity building through the Opportunity Hub for Aboriginal communities and organisations to have more involvement with Hub operations and planning.
- Ensure sustainability through secure long-term funding.
- Promote Campbelltown Opportunity Hub more broadly and more publicity about the Hub activities.
- Increase access to Campbelltown Opportunity Hub and increase the number and range of programs.
- Increase access and more programs in schools, including a focus on Aboriginal wellbeing, culture and knowledge programs with Aboriginal Elders.
- Increase transport support and provision for students to attend Campbelltown Opportunity Hub activities.
- Geographic context means that increased access to local jobs is critical as there is no public transport in the area.
- Include social, cultural, education and career pathways for local Aboriginal young people.

Community views of success

Findings

The success of the Opportunity Hub is understood differently by different stakeholders who participated in the evaluation. We heard that short-term and long-term outcomes are part of the expectations of the Hub.

The Campbelltown Opportunity Hub Advisory Group, which includes a cross section of Aboriginal organisations and representatives, school staff, AEOs, NSW AECG Inc. and Hub staff identified the following measures of success:

- Better student engagement with programs.
- Improved transition for Aboriginal students to high school, and from high school to further education or training and employment.
- Students have access to adults who will support them.

Opportunity Hub should fill in the gaps of other services. Success is also seen through effects on the broader community.

We heard the Opportunity Hub should lead to:

- Improved individual and community wellbeing.
- Improved self-confidence in young Aboriginal people.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on what we heard was working well and what could be improved.

Recommendations for NSW Government

Theme	Recommendation
Tendering process for <i>OCHRE</i> program contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change the tendering process for <i>OCHRE</i> programs to a collaborative capacity building and co-design approach to program operation and commissioning rather than a competitive process.
Governance - Aboriginal ownership and determination of <i>OCHRE</i> Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore and include options for greater Aboriginal participation and capacity in the operations of the Campbelltown Opportunity Hub and long-term sustainability of the Hub.
Capacity building of Aboriginal organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide capacity building support and resources to local Aboriginal organisations.
Governance- clarity on government lines of responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve clarity regarding government lines of responsibility and decision-making about the Opportunity Hub.
Sustainability of the Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure commitment to financial certainty of the Hub for long-term planning. • Secure long-term funding arrangements.
Continuing Professional Development and career pathway support for Aboriginal staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish career pathways and continuing professional development for Aboriginal staff within the Hub.
Expand the access to the Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and activate strategies to ensure equitable access for all local Aboriginal young people to participate in Campbelltown Opportunity Hub programs and activities. • Increase transport support and provision for students to attend Hub activities.

Theme	Recommendation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hub would like to provide services to other nearby schools outside the Campbelltown areas where they have relationships and have identified a need. • Hub area boundaries should respond to need and be flexible. • Schools with identified needs outside the designated Campbelltown region should be able to access the Hub.
Need to address wider and systemic barriers of access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address the wider barriers to employment in the Campbelltown area, including providing transport options and support for young Aboriginal people in Campbelltown trying to access work and education. • TAFE to establish more free trainee programs and short courses.
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase transport options and support for participants to attend Hub activities, education opportunities and connected services.
Training and education pathways for Aboriginal youth in Campbelltown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local employers to work with young Aboriginal people and provide local opportunities. • Establish, support and resource local employment, training and education pathways in the Campbelltown local areas.
Inclusion of Aboriginal Cultural and Wellbeing outcome indicators into HUB planning and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase programs and activities that focus and support Aboriginal wellbeing, culture and knowledge programs with Aboriginal Elders. • Data should be expanded to address areas such as family relationships, peer relationships, self-esteem and connection to country.
Include long-term outcome indicators into Hub planning and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow up Hub participants in relation to long-term as well as short-term outcomes.

Recommendations for Campbelltown Opportunity Hub programs

Theme	Recommendation
Expand access to the Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase presence in schools, more programs, more often. • Provide weekend activities and programs for children and young people.
Expand range of support services provided by the Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain an understanding and recognition that for many Aboriginal students, many factors need to be addressed that effect their opportunities for education and employment. • Explore options and mechanisms for the Hub to either provide broader services that include counselling and wellbeing support or to develop MOUs or partnerships for referrals and outreach youth services with primary health providers such as the Aboriginal Medical Service, Primary Health Network, Local Health District and headspace. • Provide more Aboriginal social and cultural programs. • Provide more education and career pathways for local Aboriginal young people.
Include service co-ordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to include service and connected referral pathways development into Hub support for participants. Explore options as to best staff/site/organisation to provide this. • Most of the young people at the Hub have multiple issues and or needs including family, mental health and substance issues and these needs are integral to Hub support for participants.
Need to incorporate and follow local social and cultural Aboriginal protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a cultural competency framework for all organisations working with the Hub.

Directions for next conversations

There are two more stages to the evaluation:

- Stage 2, from July 2018 to June 2021 will identify changes experienced by communities, outcomes and make recommendations for improving the initiatives.
- Stage 3, from July 2021 to June 2024 will assess the contribution the initiative has made in meeting long-term goals and make recommendations for improving the initiative.

Based on the conversations to date (including co-design), we propose the next conversations include and discuss:

- What long-term data should be captured and how?
- What Aboriginal cultural programs could be made available as part of the Campbelltown Opportunity Hub?
- How can all Opportunity Hub staff (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff) be best supported? Both Aboriginal and Non Aboriginal staff.
- Process for more Aboriginal community control and partnership in the operations and governance of the Campbelltown Opportunity Hub whilst respecting and incorporating the strengths of a collaborative governance approach with MTC, Tharawal LALC, and Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation Aboriginal Medical Services.

