Working safely within the research context of intergenerational trauma in Indigenous communities in Australia: Healing the Past by Nurturing the Future (HPNF)

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The aims of this study are to co-design acceptable, safe and feasible perinatal strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents experiencing complex trauma, including:

1. Recognition and assessment.
2. Awareness and support

Values and principles

1. Safety*
2. Trustworthiness*
3. Empowerment*
4. Collaboration*
5. Culture
6. Holistic
7. Compassion
8. Reciprocity

Type and trauma prevalence among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

- ‘Type 1’ = acute exposure to a single event, with supportive adults to help child make sense of experience
- ‘Type 2’ or ‘complex trauma’ = cumulative exposure to multiple traumatic experiences that often involves interpersonal violation and occurs within the child’s care giving system.\(^1\)
- Current prevalence unclear as no clear criteria\(^2\)
- Aboriginal children seven times more likely to be assessed as exposed to ‘substantiated’ child abuse\(^3\)
- Aboriginal people experience as high as 10 -12 different traumatic events in a lifetime\(^4,5\)
- Elevated rates of PTSD in Aboriginal communities: 58\(^%\), 40\(^%\)\(^4\)

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Aspects of the safety framework

• Consultation at HPNF workshop 1 (March 2018)
• Feedback at HPNF workshop 2 (Sept 2018)
• Continued investigator and partner feedback

General themes

- Understanding context of complex trauma
- Trauma informed care
- Two-way learning and training
- Appropriate communication
- Reciprocity and being valued
- Connectivity and relatedness
- Flexibility and governance
- Cultural support - ensuring Aboriginal safe spaces

- Participating and recognising community expertise
- Support and practical resources (parents & elders)
- Supervision, debriefing and reflexivity
- Immediate response to trauma
- Therapeutic care and referral
- Self-care
HPNF Safety protocol


[Diagram of safety protocol]

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Practicalities for developing and actioning a safety protocol

- Publication protocols (inclusive) including by-line inclusion for workshop attendees
- Diversity of people involved in the project
- Care inviting group members – can they work in this way?
- Challenges of different workloads, different expectations, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal team members adjusting to changes in roles AND responsibilities...and more
- Understanding responses to trauma and cultural needs
- Pro-active cultural and emotional safety protocol to help manage all these challenges

Thank You

Contact: hpnf@Latrobe.edu.au
https://www.latrobe.edu.au/jlc/research/healing-the-past