

Mrs Glenda HUMES

G Humes¹, D Kickett², V O'Donnell³.

¹South West Aboriginal Medical Service, Bunbury WA, ²Aboriginal Health Council of WA, ³Derby Aboriginal Health Service, WA.

We Are The Ones We Are Waiting For

Abstract:

In September 2007, an Aboriginal Health Study Tour from Western Australia was funded through Aboriginal Health Council of WA, Derby Aboriginal Health Services, OXFAM and South West Aboriginal Medical Service to visit New Zealand, Canada and Alaska. The scope of the study tour incorporated investigating health outcomes across the continuum of care and health areas. A focus of the study tour was to explore the planning, development and implementation of key strategies that led to reducing the differences in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in their respective countries.

The group visited rural and remote regions in these countries, met with academics, policy makers, community elders, Indigenous and non-Indigenous service delivery people/organisations and consumers of health services/programs. They toured facilities and communities to gain an understanding of the best practice programs across the continuum of health care; and the environments in which they are implemented. An analysis of their priorities and health focus has been undertaken as part of this project. A critical overview of these countries and their funding arrangements, cultural and health programs have been analysed as an outcome of this project.

The presentation will provide an overview of the similarities and differences between the countries in terms of philosophies, culture, environments and health programs. It will also cover the collective learning from the group on their recommendations for change and a future direction for meeting the health needs of Aboriginal people in Australia and more specifically in Western Australia.