



Aboriginal Health Council
of South Australia Inc.

'Our health, our choice, our way'

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release
20 August 2008

First Aboriginal Graduates of Research Course Media Invitation & Release

The Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia (AHCSA) along with James Cook University will be celebrating the graduation of the first graduates of the *Certificate IV in Indigenous Research Capacity Building* in Adelaide this Friday. The course, which was developed and nationally accredited by James Cook University, has been piloted by AHCSA over the past 12 months.

The purpose of the course is to provide accredited, practical, community-based research and evaluation skills development for Aboriginal health and community services workers. Jenine Bailey (Godwin), who facilitated the development of the course stated that it aimed to empower Aboriginal people to: ... carry out their own research within their own service/community; involve themselves in the analysis and critiques of research to address and determine the outcomes of their social, cultural, economic and political issues; and fulfil their self-determination and self-management destinies.

The pilot run of the course has demonstrated immense benefit for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. For the first time, people are receiving formal training in research which is specifically targeted for them, and apply their skills in Aboriginal communities as they see fit and according to their communities' priorities. In addition, the course provides much needed pathways into research careers and university education for Aboriginal people as well as providing the knowledge to evaluate their own programs and research proposals from other organisations.

There is a severe lack of Aboriginal researchers in Australia and also a widespread distrust of researchers by many Aboriginal people throughout Australia. This places great responsibility on any course aiming to increase the number of Aboriginal researchers and promote rigorous ethical participative methodologies.

Despite this mistrust, Aboriginal health and community services professionals in South Australia have enthusiastically embraced the research capacity building course which has emphasised appropriate consultative, participative research and evaluation methodologies. The course encourages community services workers to incorporate a continuous improvement of practice or ongoing evaluation process into their strategic plans and their daily work thus strengthening the quality of the services.

The 12 graduates of the research course come from as far afield as Port Augusta, Port Lincoln, Murray Bridge, York Peninsula, Port Pirie and Adelaide.

The graduation ceremony will be held at the **Warriparinga Wetlands and Kurna Living Cultural Centre**, on Sturt Road (near the corner of Marion Road) at Bedford Park, on **Friday 22nd August** from **12:30 to 3pm. All media welcome.**

Contact Person: Merridy Malin Phone: (08) 8132 6700 Mob: 0447482549 Email: merridy.malin@ahcsa.org.au

Media Release distributed by: Dreamtime Public Relations, www.dreamtimepr.com