Reviewer's report

**Title:** Integrating Aboriginal community and research expertise to tailor a response to youth binge drinking: A grounded theory study

**Version:** 3  **Date:** 24 June 2013

**Reviewer:** Angus Cook

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General comments: This innovative study outlines a new conceptual model for defining health challenges and evaluating interventions in Aboriginal community settings. The community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach is an ideal choice in this context because - in contrast to more traditional research methods – community members are encouraged to become active partners through the entire project cycle. The methods described by the authors therefore provide an important template for ensuring community engagement, priority-setting and identification of locally relevant solutions.

The stages of the study are thoroughly explored and are well supported by input and feedback from partners, including direct quotations. However, there are some changes in the article that would provide greater clarity, especially to the Results and Discussion sections, and would help to highlight that the key achievements and outcomes of the study.

- **Major Compulsory Revisions**

1. It was difficult to quickly ascertain the main stages of this Project and over what time period they occurred. A brief timeline/diagram needs to be included in the Methods section, showing the key events/pathways relating to the consultation and intervention processes.

2. The Results section needs to be separated into at least three or four clear components.

The first component, from the bottom paragraphs of page 8 to the end of page 9, would seem to primarily involve the identification of key community priorities. Therefore I recommend a heading reflecting this – such as:

“Results:

1. Establishment of community frameworks for engagement and priority setting

The second component, from the top of page 10 to the middle of page 13, involves the development of the theoretical model. Again, this stage needs to be carefully identified – perhaps along the lines of: “2. Development of community-based theoretical model” ….after which the first two stages (Assembling expertise; Understanding the local situation) are outlined.

The third component, from the middle of page 13 to the top of page 17, focusses
more on the implementation stage, and therefore perhaps needs the title: “3. Implementation” ....after which the next two stages (Getting the message out; Reframing the message) are outlined.

The last component should capture any follow-up and later outcomes, such as bottom two thirds of page 17 – maybe: “4. Community responses and outcomes”

3. A few quotations, while informative, are too long and need to be edited. This quote on page 9. “...There are different types of evidence…” could even be removed or summarised.

4. The Limitations section is rather cursory. Each stage in the process should be carefully critiqued.

- Minor Essential Revisions

5. The word “data” is plural. Therefore, phrases such as “data was…” need to be changed to “data were…” throughout the paper.

6. A number of long sentences to be broken up, such as this example on page 3:

While local evidence from community consultations is fundamental to tailoring and implementing feasible and acceptable health improvement initiatives, and needs to be at the forefront of research endeavours that are both ethical and cost-effective [2], nevertheless, once Aboriginal community service providers have identified needs, it is not always possible for them to independently design evidence-based health improvement programs or services or robust evaluation plans.

Could be rephrased:

Local evidence from community consultations is fundamental to tailoring and implementing feasible and acceptable health improvement initiatives, and needs to be at the forefront of research endeavours that are both ethical and cost-effective [2]. Nevertheless, once Aboriginal community service providers have identified needs, it is not always possible for them to independently design evidence-based health improvement programs or services or robust evaluation plans.

7. The Results section in the Abstract (p.2-3) is confusing, especially if the reader has not read the full article beforehand. Suggest changing this somewhat complicated description:

Results: A theoretical model of Tailoring a community-owned response by negotiating knowledges and meanings was constructed. Tailoring a community-owned response to alcohol-harm occurred through a four-stage process of negotiating knowledges and meanings: assembling expertise, understanding the local situation, getting the message out and reframing the approach. These four stages prompted clarification of the underlying local determinants of binge drinking, and a shift in the project design from a social
marketing awareness campaign based on short-term events to a more robust advocacy for youth mentoring into education, employment and training.

To simply:
Results: A theoretical model was constructed through a four-stage community-based process. This prompted clarification of the underlying local determinants of binge drinking, as well as a shift in the project design from a social marketing awareness campaign (based on short-term events) to a more robust advocacy for youth mentoring into education, employment and training.

8. The Methods section on the bottom of page 4 should start:
This research partnership used a strengths-based approach implemented through Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) as the qualitative component…

9. Methods section, page 6, para 1: Rephrase:
Led by Gindaja, eight community organisations got together to plan a whole-of-community approach to harm reduction.
To:
Led by Gindaja, eight community organisations assembled to plan a whole-of-community approach to harm reduction.

10. Methods section, page 6, para 2: This statement>Description needs references:
Beat da Binge was a two-year project, commencing April 2010 designed to prevent harm from binge drinking for Yarrabah young people. It aimed to alleviate boredom and a sense of futility and anger among youth and other community members; and promote self empowerment, achievement and pride.

11. Methods section, page 7, para 2: Reword/simplify/break up this sentence:
As well, the steering committee reflected on the results of a survey of young Yarrabah people, designed by the Beat da Binge project officer in consultation with young people, refined and augmented in partnership with researchers to ensure survey items were reliable, valid and comprehensive, and implemented by Yarrabah young people who were trained and remunerated as research assistants.

12. Methods section, page 7, para 2: Start a new paragraph here:
Secondly, theoretical constructs identified through early analysis of the CBPR data were further explored….

13. Analysis section, page 8: Reword/simplify/break up this sentence:
The process of examining the themes and their interrelationships was repeated until the theorist was satisfied that higher order constructs and their relationships could be modelled in such a way that explained the great majority of the data and that she had identified the central concern of those involved in the project and the basic process that facilitated that concern [1].

14. This sentence on page 9, last para:
Negotiating knowledges and meanings was experiential and required four inter-related and transformative stages: assembling expertise, understanding the local situation, getting the message out and reframing the approach to optimise the effectiveness of the project.

would be amended to:
Negotiating knowledges and meanings was experiential and required four inter-related and transformative stages (to be discussed in detail in the subsequent sections): ....

- Discretionary Revisions

15. Do all the components of Table 1: Attributes of tailoring a community response by negotiating knowledges and meanings: challenges and benefits directly and demonstrably flow from this particular study and analysis? The material presented in Table 1 is complex and could possibly form the basis of a separate article.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests