

Evaluation scope

The objectives of the evaluation are to:

- Evaluate the project delivery model and its implementation, funding and costs. (Effectiveness)
- Document the project model highlighting significant systemic positive/negative changes, information gaps and sustainability factors. (Efficiency & sustainability)
- Consider the extent to which the model and lessons may apply to other outreach projects (Relevance)

The Foundation aims to increase access to and improve the quality of specialist eye services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders people. This will result in improved rates of early detection, treatment and management.

Project Team

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The Fred Hollows Foundation and Menzies Collaborations

The Fred Hollows Foundation has engaged Menzies School of Health Research over a number of years to assist with project monitoring and analytical support of the remote service delivery eye health programs.

Background

The Fred Hollows Foundation (The Foundation) and Menzies School of Health Research have a long standing relationship in the evaluation of eye health programs. One of the projects undertaken early in the relationship was the evaluation of the Remote Service Delivery (RSD) Cataract Intensive Pilot Project.

In 2013, The Foundation funded the Top End Health Service to administer the RSD Cataract Intensive Project to facilitate access for up to 200 cataract surgery procedures for Aboriginal people from remote areas.

Findings

The evaluation found:

- The true need for cataract surgery was unknown due to limited availability of outpatient clinics acting as a bottleneck
- Regular outreach specialist services increased community access and improved knowledge
- Taking services to people was preferable to bringing people to the services
- Services models should provide culturally appropriate care
- Aboriginal Liaison Officers facilitate increased communication with patients

Top End Ophthalmology Outreach Resources Project (TEOORP)

The findings from the RSD Cataract Intensive Pilot Project and the associated recommendations influenced the development and implementation of the Top End Ophthalmology Outreach Resources Project (TEOORP).

In 2014, The Foundation entered a funding agreement with the TEHS to establish the TEOORP. The TEOORP sought to enhance and increase the delivery of culturally appropriate outreach ophthalmology services by providing funding for an Ophthalmology Fellow, an Outreach Ophthalmology Coordinator and an Indigenous Liaison Officer.

While a number of implementation issues were identified in the first year evaluation, the Monitoring report concluded the TEOORP had:

- provided greater access to eye health services for people living in remote areas
- significantly increased the number of communities visited by an ophthalmologist
- increased community awareness of eye health.



Top End Ophthalmology Outreach Resources Project (TEOORP)

Over the 3 year life-span of the project, Menzies has provided a series of interim evaluations and is now preparing for the final evaluation of the TEOORP.

The evaluation team will interview members of the Ophthalmology team, key health service stakeholders as well as other eye health service providers. Activity data over the life of the project will also be analysed.

