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Midlife factors and successful ageing

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Abstract

"Spending less on people with worse health is poor national policy and its time we stopped doing it."

Keywords

factors, midlife, ageing, successful

Publication Details

I. Ring (2008). Midlife factors and successful ageing. Growing Old Well: A Life Cycle Approach for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, Inaugural National Aboriginal Ageing Workshop, University of NSW, Sydney, 15 Aug 2008.

Workshop participants

Workshop planning was based on attracting a maximum number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants from Aboriginal communities and service organisations as well as Government bodies and researchers. For this reason no charge was made for attendance or catering and sponsorship was therefore essential. The Workshop venue had to be changed from an initially donated venue at the Prince of Wales Hospital Lecture Theatre to a larger University lecture theatre to accommodate approximately 200 people who expressed their intention to attend at the University of New South Wales.

Reflections on keynote presentations

These presentations allowed the four presenters to provide a summary of transitional ageing across the Aboriginal life cycle. The intention of these presentations was to provide evidence and in some cases controversial facts for further discussion in the break out workshops to be held in the afternoon.

A full video and audio transcript on DVD of these presentations can be obtained by emailing a request to: Sandra.Forster@sesiahs.health.nsw.gov.au

The following summary represents some reflections of each of these presentations by looking at highlighted points as well as potential questions raised.

1 **Early life factors and successful ageing. Associate Professor Lisa Jackson Pulver from Muru Marri Indigenous Health Unit**

"All of these issues have impacted on the hearts and spirits and souls of indigenous peoples...we are whole and complete peoples of health and spirit."

This paper highlighted;

- ▶ Changing health patterns of indigenous peoples
- ▶ Longevity rising/fertility falling
- ▶ In a period of health transition
- ▶ An ageing Indigenous population means more dementia

There are more risks in mid life for Aboriginal people today - than for non-Indigenous people going through

a similar transition 60 years ago, at a time when non-Indigenous life span was also around 60 years.

And raised the questions;

What factors across the life cycle help Indigenous Australians to grow and keep their cognitive abilities?

2 **Early life factors and successful ageing Professor Tony Broe from the NHMRC Aboriginal Population Health Research Group based at Prince of Wales Medical Research Institute**

We hope to identify both risk factors and protective factors for successful ageing, as well as for dementia, in non-remote Aboriginal people."

This paper highlighted;

- ▶ The importance of the mind for Aboriginal health and well being
- ▶ The importance of research into this area
- ▶ An overview of the current research agenda

And raised the questions;

What does growing old well mean for Aboriginal people?

3 **Midlife factors and successful ageing - Professor Ian Ring, Professorial Fellow, University of Wollongong**

"Spending less on people with worse health is poor national policy and its time we stopped doing it."

This paper highlighted;

- ▶ Importance of middle aged factors and Aboriginal longevity
- ▶ Key mid life health factors and evidence for these
- ▶ The importance of self determination
- ▶ High death rates in middle age
- ▶ The significant impact of smoking
- ▶ The importance of resilience
- ▶ Circuit Breakers which may make a difference

And raised the questions;

How do we empower Aboriginal men and boys?

How do we improve access to primary health care options?

