



MEDIA RELEASE

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Indigenous Health Project Off To A Great Start In Cairns

An innovative training program was launched by Family Planning Queensland (FPQ) in Cairns this month, the FPQ Indigenous Health Workers Sexual Health Skills Project.

Ten Indigenous Health Workers from Cairns, Innisfail, Atherton, Kuranda and Mt Isa attended a three day workshop at FPQ Cairns to increase their skills and confidence in addressing sexual and reproductive health issues.

The FPQ program aims to help reduce the high rates of sexually transmitted infections, unintended pregnancies and sexual assault which have been documented in local Indigenous communities.

Participants will be able to improve their skills and confidence in dealing with these issues through a comprehensive training and workshop program plus clinical placements in local FPQ regional centres.

Ongoing mentoring and support will be included in the program to enable Indigenous Health Workers to implement a health promotion activity in their local community.

Jenni Harmony, Project Officer, FPQ Cairns, said, "feedback from participants has been really positive with lots of comments on how this is a great opportunity for them to build-up their skills and knowledge about sexual health."

"We believe that skilled Indigenous Health Workers are the best advocates for sexual and reproductive health in their communities, and FPQ is committed to supporting the development of those skills through this project," said Ms Harmony.

The FPQ Indigenous Health Workers Sexual Health Skills Project is funded through the Rio Tinto Aboriginal Fund and will be delivered throughout regional Queensland over a three year period.

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About FPQ (www.fpq.com.au)

FPQ has been a leading provider of sexual and reproductive health services to the population of Queensland since 1972. FPQ offers clinical, education, information and training services from metropolitan and regional locations throughout the state.

**For further information or to arrange an interview, please contact:
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