



Alcohol and Pregnancy & FASD Research Team



PREVENTION



DIAGNOSIS



THERAPY & MANAGEMENT

RESEARCH SUMMARY

Making FASD History in the Pilbara:

An evidence-based prevention intervention

Funded by a National Health & Medical Research Council Project Grant (APP:110500)

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is characterised by brain damage from prenatal alcohol exposure, the effects are lifelong and may not be seen at birth.

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What is this research about?

The aim of this research is to develop, implement and evaluate an evidence-based culturally appropriate model of prevention aimed at reducing the rates of alcohol consumption among women in three communities in the Pilbara region of Western Australia. We are working with Aboriginal women of childbearing age, their partners and families.

We also aim to enhance the capacity of health professionals (community midwives, community health nurses, general practitioners, Aboriginal Health Workers, community health workers) working with women.

How is this research taking place?

We are working in partnership with Aboriginal community controlled health services and groups using a community based participatory action research (CPAR). We aim to empower community partners, leaders, and members in designing, implementing and evaluating the intervention in three sites in the Pilbara.

The research has a number of components:

1. Formative research
2. Baseline data collection
3. Intervention - using the evidence-based, holistic and women-centre Four Part Model for Prevention framework
4. Evaluation

More information about the research process and project can be found [here](#)

Target Groups

Our primary target group is pregnant women.

Our secondary target groups are:

- Aboriginal women of childbearing age and their partners and families, community leaders and young people; and
- Health professionals who are providing ante-natal care in the Pilbara.

Where will the research take place?

- Port/South Hedland and the communities of Yandeyarra and Warralong
- Newman and the communities of Jigalong, Parnngurr, Punmu and Kunawaritji
- Roebourne

Who is taking part in this research?

Chief Investigators

- Dr James Fitzpatrick
- A/Professor Roz Walker
- Professor Rhonda Marriot
- Mr Glenn Pearson
- Professor Sven Silburn
- Professor Mike Daube

Project Team

- Michelle Gray, Project Officer
- David Tucker, Senior Research Officer

Project Partners

- Wirraka Maya Health Service Aboriginal Corporation (Hedland)
- Puntukurnu Aboriginal Medical Service (Newman)
- Mawarnkarra Health Service (Roebourne)
- Mental Health Commission (Drug and Alcohol Office)
- Western Australian Country Health Services

How do consumers and the community participate in this research?

A Steering Committee comprised of the Chief Investigators, the Project Manager and representatives from our Project Partners oversees issues relating to research and integrity, activities, reporting and achievement of objectives.

Extensive stakeholder and community engagement has been conducted in the three sites. Support and advice has been sought from existing stakeholder groups, the Hedland FASD

Network and Community References and elders in the communities.

How will this research help?

The project will:

- Improve the health, quality of life and social and economic potential of the next generation of children living in the Pilbara.
- Empower local people and provide local solutions while building community and workforce capacity for FASD prevention.
- Facilitate a context for the Pilbara that is receptive to promoting healthy public policy and supports community-driven alcohol restrictions and other legislative change with regard to alcohol availability, access and promotion.
- Enhance health workforce, embedding screening processes to track alcohol use before and during pregnancy using AUDIT-C, and provide brief intervention and support of women at high risk of drinking in pregnancy.
- Increase capacity of Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services to implement and evaluate evidence-based population health programs.



Alcohol and Pregnancy & FASD Research Team at Telethon Kids Institute

We have a comprehensive program of research in partnership with community & stakeholders to achieve our goals of developing prevention strategies; building the capacity of health, justice and other professionals to recognise and diagnose FASD; and implementing and evaluating programs for children and young people with FASD and their families.

For information on alcohol & pregnancy, FASD, our research projects, resources and publications visit our website: www.alcoholpregnancy.telethonkids.org.au

There is no safe time or amount of alcohol to drink while planning a pregnancy, when pregnant and when breastfeeding which is why the Australian Guidelines state 'not drinking alcohol is the safest choice'.

