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| **ISA ISPID  Abstract Submission  Nº: 162**   |  | | --- | | Topics: **SIDS/SUID** | | Type: **Oral** | | **Advice to Action: uniting cultural practices and safe sleep environments for vulnerable Indigenous Australian infants** | | **Young, Jeanine**1; **Watson, Karen**1; **Craigie, Leanne**2; **Cowan, Stephanie**3; **Kearney, Lauren**4 *1 - University of the Sunshine Coast. 2 - Children's Health Queensland Hospital & Health Service. 3 - Change for our Children Limited. 4 - Sunshine Coast Hospital & Health Service.* | | **Introduction** Sudden unexpected death in infancy (SUDI) is four times higher for Australian Indigenous compared to non-Indigenous babies. Co-sleeping is a culturally valued practice used by many Indigenous families however is associated with an increased risk of infant death in hazardous circumstances. Risk factors associated with co-sleeping are more common in the Australian Indigenous population and are frequently associated with social determinants of health. Portable sleep spaces that allow for a separate surface adjacent to close parental contact on the adult sleep surface have been used successfully in high risk populations in New Zealand, with infant mortality reductions observed. Indigenous communities identified this area as a priority for investigation. **Objectives:** This study aimed to determine a) safety and feasibility of the New Zealand Pēpi-Pod® Program within Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families identified at higher risk for SUDI; b) effectiveness of Pēpi-Pod® Program in achieving safer sleep environments for vulnerable infants as measured by use of a separate infant sleep surface in the context of shared sleep with identified risk.  **Material and Methods** The Pēpi-Pod®Program comprised a portable sleep space, safe sleeping parent education and safety briefing; and a family commitment to share safe sleeping messages within social networks. The NZ Program was adapted for an Australian context and delivered to consenting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families with identified SUDI risks, recruited through government and nongovernment maternal child health services (n=11 services, 27 communities) who undertook Pēpi-Pod®competency training**,** across Queensland’s metropolitan, regional and rural/remote areas, encompassing a geographical area of 1,727,000 square kilometres. Parent questionnaires were administered face-to-face or by telephone within 2 weeks of receiving the Pēpi-Pod®; then monthly thereafter until Pēpi-Pod use ceased.  **Results** Data collection continues; 241 families recruited to date. Of 208 respondents, all (100%) had SUDI risk factors; 76% (n=158) had ≥2 known risks including smoking during pregnancy(53%), LBW(15%), prematurity(14%), alcohol use(8%), recreational(3%) and prescription drugs(4%), crowded living conditions(35%). Most families intended to cosleep(79%); shared infant sleep with a maternal smoker was common(41%). Responses to Pēpi-Pod related to three key themes: safety, convenience and portability. Safe sleeping awareness was raised within families (99%) and through community social networks (90%). Most families utilised the pod beyond infant age 4 weeks (71%); 14.5% beyond >17weeks. Pēpi-Pod use reduced co-sleeping with known risk factors including: smoking, drug and alcohol use, multiple bed-sharers, prematurity, low birth weight.  Health professional feedback relating to implementation indicated that the Pēpi-Pod® Program was feasible, accessible, sustainable, and built local workforce capacity with integration into current service models.  **Conclusions** This is the first evaluation of a safe sleep enabler in Australia. The Pēpi-Pod® Program was accepted and used appropriately by parents living in Queensland Indigenous communities and reduced the risk of SUDI in the context of co-sleeping with known risk factors. Program principles are applicable to mainstream services which care for vulnerable families. Innovative strategies which allow for co-sleeping benefits, respect cultural norms and infant care practices, whilst enabling safe sleep environments are necessary to further reduce SUDI. | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | **CONTACT** | | | Name: | **Jeanine** | | Lastname: | **Young** | | E-mail: | **jyoung4@usc.edu.au** | | Country: | **Australia** | | Institution | **University of the Sunshine Coast** | | Cellphone: | **+61 7 438903511** | | City: | **Sippy Downs** | |