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| **An evaluation of a safe sleep health promotion strategy amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health care providers** |
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| **Introduction** Indigenous Health Care Providers play a key role in the delivery of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health services and in increasing access to, and acceptability of, care for the communities they work within. Support of Aboriginal Health Workers in leading health promotion initiatives within their communities facilitates culturally appropriate program implementation and achievement of meaningful outcomes. Commencing in 2013, the Queensland Pēpi-Pod® Program has seen 11 health service sites undertake the program within 27 different communities targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families identified as being most vulnerable to SUDI. While the core components of the Program remain intact, it has been implemented in locally relevant ways. Gaining perspectives of the Aboriginal Health Workers implementing the program within their communities was seen as an integral component of the Pēpi-Pod® Program evaluation. **Objectives** This study aimed to determine the influence of the Pēpi-Pod® Program on Indigenous Health Workers personally, on their role as a Health Worker within Maternal and Child Health Nursing and Midwifery Teams, and on the community partnerships in which they work.  **Material and Methods** Using a mixed method design that included photovoice and focus group interviews, participant experience of the Pepi-Pod® Program, the components of which included the distribution of a portable sleep space, parent safe sleeping education and an undertaking by participants to spread the safe infant sleep message amongst their social networks, was explored.  **Results** Photovoice images captured by a Health Worker on community that related to their experiences of the program informed the focus group session. Themes relating to the community they work within, their role as a health worker, what a safe sleep environment is in the context of their community, and how being part of the Pēpi-Pod® Program and introducing it into their communities has influenced their practice, were identified.  **Conclusions** The Queensland Pēpi-Pod® Program is the first in Australia to evaluate the acceptability and feasibility of a portable sleep space partnered with Safe Sleep Education within a vulnerable population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. An examination of the Indigenous Health Workers’ perspectives and experience of the Program as a health promotion initiative and enabler of culturally appropriate safe sleep has provided valuable perspectives, together with sustainable and effective strategies that will be used in future health service program implementation and delivery for vulnerable population groups. |
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