



A Predictable and Preventable Path:
Views from
Aboriginal People and Communities



UNSW
AUSTRALIA

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Never Stand Still

Arts & Social Sciences





Indigenous Australians with mental and cognitive disabilities in the CJS Study

- ARC Linkage Project 2011-2014
- Investigators: Prof Eileen Baldry, A/Prof Leanne Dowse, Prof Julian Trollor, Prof Patrick Dodson, Dr Devon Indig.
- Project Partners: NSW Justice Health; Housing NSW, NSW Ageing Disability and Home Care and Legal Aid NSW
- Project Researchers: Peta McGillivray, Elizabeth McEntyre, Ruth McCausland, Han Xu, Julian Trofimovs.

What we did





• **Data-Linkage Study**

- Linked data on 2371 people who had been in the CJS and examined their service interactions and pathways into the CJS
- 676 of this group were Aboriginal people (25%)
- Analysis showed that Aboriginal people were more likely to have experienced earlier and more frequent contact with the CJS and greater levels of disadvantage across all measures.
- Aboriginal women experienced the worst outcomes of all.

• **Community-based Research**

- Consulted with key people in indigenous-informed research
- Established research partnerships and worked in collaboration with 4 communities in NSW and 1 in Northern Territory
- Interviewed aboriginal people with MHDCD, their families, Aboriginal Community members, Aboriginal and non-aboriginal service providers
- Verified and validated findings with all communities
- Developed education and advocacy resources for community use.

What people told us

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- Institutional Racism especially in Policing
 - Poor identification of cognitive impairment
 - Lack of diversion options
 - Stigma
 - Systemic normalisation of disadvantage, disability and offending
 - Over-policing
 - Intergenerational incarceration issues are significant
 - Siloed service provision
 - Families have multiple and complex support needs
 - Need for culturally appropriate, holistic, integrated response
 - Complex trauma
 - Pervasive Violence
 - “We take care of our own”
 - Lack of capacity in services and systems

Where do I get the report?



A Predictable and Preventable Path: Aboriginal people with mental and cognitive disabilities in the criminal justice system.

<https://www.mhdcd.unsw.edu.au/>