

Kimberley Empowerment, Healing and Leadership

PROGRAM EVALUATION



The Rural Clinical School
of Western Australia



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Acronyms

KAMS	Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services
RCSWA	Rural Clinical School of Western Australia
UWA	University of Western Australia
KEHLP	Kimberley Empowerment, Healing and Leadership Program
SEWB	Social and Emotional Wellbeing
WKRP	West Kimberley Regional Prison

Executive Summary

Background

The Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services (KAMS) commissioned the Rural Clinical School of Western Australia (RCSWA), University of Western Australia (UWA) to:

1. Evaluate the Kimberley Empowerment, Healing and Leadership Program (KEHLP) to understand if the KEHLP improves the Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) of participants.
2. Refine and enhance the KEHLP to best achieve its aim of improving participant SEWB.

The evaluation report will be the primary outcome of the first deliverable for this project and will provide a foundation for progressing the second deliverable.

The KEHLP

The 2011 Kimberley 'Hear Our Voices' Report (1) highlighted the impact of suicide for Kimberley Aboriginal people. The report provided the principles and framework for the development of an Aboriginal specific empowerment program as an upstream approach to suicide prevention, which led to the development of the KEHLP.

The KEHLP is the only Aboriginal designed and delivered psycho-social education program which aims to improve the SEWB of participants across the Kimberley region. The KEHLP consists of three 'modules' or learning areas: Self, Family and Community. The KEHLP is generally delivered two days a week over a four-week period.

Evaluation approach

The evaluation utilises a multi methods approach to explore:

- the process of delivering the KEHLP,
- the context and content of the KEHLP, and
- the impact of the KEHLP for participants.

The evaluation sought evidence from multiple sources including

- a scan of program documentation,
- analysis of program administrative and operational data, and
- interview-based consultations with key stakeholders.

Key stakeholders were defined as KEHLP facilitators (6 interviews) and KEHLP participants (12 interviews).

The findings and recommendations presented in the evaluation are informed by the analysis and synthesis of these data sources.

Findings and areas for further consideration

The evaluation findings indicate that the KEHLP is highly valued by participants and facilitators and is positively impacting participants' SEWB. That the program is Aboriginal designed and delivered was found to be very important in participants' overall satisfaction with the program. The KEHLP fosters high amounts of participant reflection and sharing of lived experience. This type of participant engagement was found to be essential in assisting participants to engage with and learn from the KEHLP's psycho-social educational

content. Several stakeholders shared stories of KEHLP contributing to their own, or others', significant positive behaviour change.

Participants identified a desire for the KEHLP to be more responsive of local contexts; including:

- involving local community members in the delivery of KEHLP and,
- better utilising Kimberley based examples and resources.

Facilitators expressed a strong interest in the KEHLP being delivered 'on Country'. This included running the KEHLP as a camp, or including more outdoor activities in the current classroom style delivery. Strong support to develop a KEHLP tailored for young people in a school setting was evident by stakeholders.

Notwithstanding the high value of the program, the evaluation found a high level of participant attrition, weak record keeping and duplicated processes for collecting participant feedback. The Train the Trainer component of the KEHLP also requires further clarification and development.

List of reflections and recommendations

Based on the review of the evidence the evaluation made the following reflections and recommendations.

Reflections

Reflection 1:	A high level of participant attrition is evident in the data.
Reflection 2:	The KEHLP attracts a diversity of participants with different course aspirations, experiences and levels of education.
Reflection 3:	KEHLP participants overwhelmingly identified that having KEHLP facilitators who are Aboriginal is important to them. The Aboriginal identity of facilitators and participants promotes and enables a culturally safe sharing of lived experience.
Reflection 4:	KEHLP improves participants' knowledge of SEWB and may act as a platform for improved SEWB through increased confidence and sense of empowerment, healing or other positive behaviour change.
Reflection 5:	KEHLP accreditation is not practical or desirable at this point in KEHLP's history.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1:	Strengthen administrative processes and systems to ensure KEHLP data are accurately recorded and stored.
Recommendation 2:	Develop a participant support strategy to improve participant retention and support learning outcomes.
Recommendation 3:	Review and revise KEHLP learning objectives and outcomes using a SMART approach.
Recommendation 4:	KEHLP delivery to better incorporate local Elders and local history.
Recommendation 5:	Replace non-Aboriginal KEHLP materials, resources and videos with Aboriginal-specific content, prioritising local content where available.
Recommendation 6:	KAMS to consider delivering the KEHLP according to participant need (e.g. 'on Country', outdoors or school-based) or as individual modules rather than as a default four week program.

Recommendation 7:	Develop guidelines to assess if, or when, gender matched facilitators are required.
Recommendation 8:	Clarify participation pathways for the KEHLP, develop targeted recruitment strategies, and refresh promotional materials.
Recommendation 9:	Develop a streamlined approach to participant evaluation, incorporating funding-based participant feedback requirements and course objectives.
Recommendation 10:	Further develop the KEHLP Train the Trainer program, considering eligibility, learning objectives, course content, and ongoing support and mentoring of new facilitators.

Evaluation overview

Evaluation objectives

The Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services (KAMS) has commissioned the Rural Clinical School of Western Australia (RCSWA), University of Western Australia (UWA) to evaluate and the Kimberley Empowerment, Healing and Leadership Program (KEHLP).

KAMS have specified that the evaluation address the objectives, effectiveness and impact of the program to determine if the KEHLP is successfully improving the SEWB of participants.

The findings from the evaluation will be used to inform the second stage of the project, refining and enhancing the KEHLP.

Evaluation context

KAMS have been delivering the KEHLP since 2012 and, over the years, the KEHLP has been subject to a range of revisions and amendments. This evaluation collected and analysed data related to the delivery of the KEHLP during 2018 and 2019. The focus on the last two years ensured the KEHLP was evaluated in its current form.

It is important to note that the data presented in this evaluation report reflect the data provided to the evaluators for the 2018–2019 period. As a real-world evaluation of a community program and it is noted that some data is missing and/or incomplete. Missing or incomplete data is the result of administration processes, workforce turn over, competing work priorities, and the voluntary nature of participants completing feedback/evaluation forms.

Ethics and regional approvals

This project has been endorsed by the Kimberley Aboriginal Health Planning Forum Research Subcommittee and approved by the Western Australian Aboriginal Health Ethics Committee (project 977).

Evaluation team

The evaluation team included a Research Fellow and a Research Associate from the RCSWA and two Research Officers seconded from the KAMS Research team. One of the KAMS Research Officers is a local Aboriginal woman and her role was essential in ensuring the cultural security of the project, including the design, data collection, and interpretation of the evaluation findings.

Evaluation design and data sources

The KEHLP evaluation used a multi methods design (1). This included:

- Program document review
- Program data analysis
- Stakeholder consultation, including interviews with KEHLP facilitators and participants.

Program document review

The document review analysed a range of internal documentation relevant to the program design, delivery, and evaluation of the KEHLP including the PowerPoints presentations used by facilitators to deliver the KEHLP, KEHLP Facilitators Manual, the funding contracts, KEHLP promotional materials and other associated documents.

This material orientated the evaluators to the KEHLP, was used to inform the design of the stakeholder consultation tools and informed the overall evaluation analysis.

Program data analysis

The evaluation drew on the following data:

- De-identified register of KEHLP participant registration, attendance and program completion data
- Anonymous participant self-survey forms
- Anonymous feedback/evaluation forms

KEHLP Register

The KEHLP register contained de-identified data for KEHLP registration, attendance and completion for the calendar years of 2018 and 2019. The register contains basic socio-demographic data for participants including age, gender and the location/delivery site where the course took place. The register was analysed using descriptive statistics to explore KEHLP participant demographics and rates of attrition and completion.

Self-Survey Forms

The participant self-survey forms consisted of a suite of six forms:

- a pre course self-survey,
- module specific self-surveys (Self, Family, Community),
- a camp self-survey and
- a post course self-survey.

The evaluators understand the 'camp' self-survey form was often used to capture participant responses to the healing day activity embedded in Module 2 (Family). The self-survey forms ask a series of questions and require the participant to write a brief narrative response to each question.

The self-survey forms ask for participants to be identified on the form via a unique non identifying code. It is unclear who was meant to generate the code or how. The unique non identifying codes were not recorded on the forms and as such we were unable to track each participant's individual KEHLP journey. However, the responses to these self-survey forms provided a rich account of participant aspirations and experiences throughout the KEHLP at the group level.

Qualitative description (2) was used to ensure the perspectives of the participants were honoured in the data analysis while recognising the limitations of the data (namely that the responses were brief and forms were often incomplete). Where direct verbatim quotes are presented in this report, they are identified through the use of italics (longer quotes) or quotation marks (shorter quotes).

Feedback/evaluation forms

A KAMS pre and post workshop form, SEWB training survey, and SEWB training feedback form have all be used collect KEHLP participant feedback. These forms have been reviewed and analysed using descriptive statistics (3). This approach was adopted as these forms largely ask participants to rate or rank their response to a question using a predefined numerical or categorical response.

A complete breakdown of the feedback/evaluation form data analysis can be found at Appendix A.

Stakeholder consultations

KEHLP facilitators and participants were identified as key stakeholders. As both stakeholder groups consisted of Aboriginal people, yarning (4) was adopted as a culturally secure approach to progressing the consultations (4-7). Yarning promotes sharing of stories between the researcher and the participant, utilises open ended questions, and respects a participant's silences (4, 8). Yarning is also a way to help ensure Aboriginal people are engaged, informed and active participants in the consultation process (5-7). Where possible the Aboriginal Research Officer led or was involved in the yarns.

KAMS KEHLP facilitators were informed of the evaluation at a workplace meeting. The evaluators discussed the project and invited questions and afterwards approached for individual facilitators to establish their willingness to participate the consultation process. A former KEHLP facilitator was also approached due to a longstanding history in delivering the KEHLP. A total of six KEHLP facilitators were involved in the in-depth yarning (Table 1). All facilitators were residing in Broome and the yarns took place face to face.

KEHLP participants were recruited via the KEHLP facilitators and through word of mouth via our Aboriginal Research Officer's community contacts. A total of 12 participants were interviewed. Participants were primarily recruited from places the KEHLP had been delivered in 2018–2019 (Table 2).

All stakeholders were provided with a participant information sheet outlining the purpose of the yarn and provided written informed consent prior to yarning about the KEHLP.

Table 1: KEHLP facilitator demographics

Aboriginal/ Torres Strait Islander	Gender	Years working in KAMS Social and emotional wellbeing	Number of KEHLPS delivered or assisted in the delivery
Yes	M	5	7
Yes	M	2	4
Yes	M	10	10+
Yes	F	15	10+
Yes	F	10	10+
Yes	M	3	4

Table 2: KEHLP participant demographics

Aboriginal/ Torres Strait Islander	Gender	Age	Completed the KEHLP	Community of residence	Face to face, video or telephone based yarn
Yes	Female	>25	Y	Kununurra	Phone
Yes	Female	<25	Y	Broome	Face to face
Yes	Male	>25	Y	Broome	Face to face
Yes	Female	>25	Y	Kununurra	Face to face
Yes	Male	<25	N	Broome	Face to face
Yes	Female	>25	Y	Bidyadanga	Phone
Yes	Male	>25	Y	Halls Creek	Face to face
Yes	Male	<25	N	Broome	Face to face
Yes	Male	>25	Y	Broome	Face to face
Yes	Male	<25	N	Broome	Face to face
Yes	Female	>25	Y	Broome	Phone
Yes	Male	>25	Y	Halls Creek	Phone

KEHLP overview

In 2011, the Kimberley 'Hear Our Voices' Report (1) was published highlighting the impact of suicide for Kimberley Aboriginal people. The report provided the principles and framework for the development of an Aboriginal specific empowerment program as an upstream approach to suicide prevention. KAMS collaborated with the authors of the report and Kimberley communities to regionally adapt the proposed empowerment program. The outcome of this process was the KEHLP which has been delivered by the KAMS SEWB team since 2012. KAMS have full ownership and copyright of the program.

KEHLP objectives

The KEHLP is described as a psycho-social education program featuring three 'modules' or learning areas: Self, Family and Community. There are a total of nine participant learning objectives and outcomes listed in the three KEHLP PowerPoint presentations.

Overall, these learning objectives and outcomes are very long (wordy) and lack clarity. Broadly the objectives prioritise increasing participant's knowledge, self-reflection and confidence.

The learning objectives are available in full at Appendix B.

Program delivery: participation, mode and course length

The KEHLP is available to any Aboriginal person residing in the Kimberley area who is able to attend a course in person.

The KEHLP is delivered face to face with two facilitators present. One facilitator takes a teaching lead, with the other facilitator engaging and supporting participants learning and wellbeing. KAMS require all KEHLP facilitators to: 1) be Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander members of the KAMS SEWB team; 2) have completed the KEHLP as a participant.

A minimum of four and a maximum of 10 participants are required for a program to be delivered.

The KEHLP is promoted as a four week course in which participants attended two days each week, totalling eight full days of course materials. However, the KEHLP Self module is also delivered as a single module course for Aboriginal students completing the Aboriginal Health Worker training program over two days.

The KEHLP is non-accredited training. A KEHLP facilitator's manual, and a PowerPoint presentation for each module (Self, Family, and Community) is available and provides a structure and content to guide program delivery.

Pathways to registering/attending the KEHLP

During 2018–2019 the KEHLP was delivered as a training program through three KAMS SEWB contracts.

One contract was specific to the delivery of five KEHLPs in the West Kimberley Regional Prison (WKRP) over each 12 month period. Pathways for participation were managed by the WKRP and Centacare Kimberley, who provide a program to help prisoners transition back into community.

The delivery of the KEHLP for the other two contracts is determined opportunistically, in response to regional relationships, or as a result of a specific request from a service or agency. Opportunities for delivery are recorded in the KAMS SEWB training calendar.

Promotional materials and registration information is generally disseminated on line, via social media and through relevant organisations. At times trainers might deliver an 'introduction to the KEHLP' PowerPoint presentation as part of a promotion/recruitment strategy.

Findings

KEHLP participation

During 2018 and 2019 a total of 126 participants registered to participate in the KEHLP (Table 3). Fourteen courses were delivered across the Kimberley; six in Broome, five in the West Kimberley Regional Prison, two in Kununurra, and one in Bidadanga.

A total of 35 registered participants were Aboriginal Health Worker students who complete KEHLP Module 1 (Self) only as part of their training.

Of the remaining 91 registered participants, 38 completed the KEHLP and four completed the Train the Trainer. The records do not indicate when the KEHLP Trainer the Trainer participants completed the KEHLP so they have remained a distinct category of participant.

A total of 49 registered participants did not complete the KEHLP. Of these, 19 did not attend any sessions and 19 attended one or more session. Information for the remaining 11 participants was not recorded.

It is noted that in 2019, 48 participants registered in the KEHLP, as opposed to 78 in 2018. A detailed yearly breakdown is available at Appendix C.

Table 3. Age and gender of registered KEHLP participants 2018–2019.

	Completed Module 1 only	Completed KEHLP course	Completed Train the Trainer	Did not complete KEHLP	Total
Female <25	11	3		6	20
Male <25	1	3		10	14
Female 25-44	5	6		6	17
Male 25-44	3	7	2	13	25
Female 45-65	9	5		3	17
Male 45-65	1	10	2	4	17
Female 65+	1	1			2
Male 65+	1				1
Age or gender unknown	3	3		7	13
Total	35	38	4	49	126

Reflection 1: A high level of participant attrition is evident in the data.

Recommendation 1: Strengthen administrative processes and systems to ensure KEHLP data are accurately recorded and stored.

KEHLP participant profile

Three relatively distinct groups of KEHLP participant were identified via a review of the pre course self-survey which was completed by 32 respondents.

1. Self-referred (16 participants): Aboriginal people who the heard about the KEHLP and identified it as a learning opportunity:

I suffer depression and from thoughts of suicide. I want to learn how to not go down that road again like how to look at a situation in a different way and think more positive.

I wanted to stop drinking this year and I did and I wanted to learn more.

2. Professionally motivated (12 participants): Aboriginal professionals who attended the KEHLP as part of a workplace opportunity:

I wanted to take a strong, holistic and health approach in my knowledge of my people, Aboriginal people. To provide further knowledge of upskilling those around me- to educate. My work has supported me to be here.

Through my employer. I want to support other women in [name of community]. Learn how to

apply psychological theories and ways of working in a culturally secure way.

3. Service referred (4 participants): Aboriginal people who were encouraged to enrol by a service provider:

I did not enrol in this course, my councilor [sic] put me here because she thinks this course will help me be a better man in the future.

Respondents identified wanting to learn new 'knowledge' and 'skills through the KEHLP in order to:

1. Improve interpersonal relationships, particularly with respect to children.

Be a good parent. Be fair to kids, not growling all the time (have more time). Learn to better myself.

Change my weekend habits. Spend more outdoor time with my kids.

2. Improve self-efficacy; this was expressed as the aspiration to have more self-control/ make the right choices/ and better regulate emotions. Participants identified healthier lifestyle, creating boundaries around family members and improving self-care practices as means to achieve improved self-efficacy.

Better myself, educate myself, stress less about other people. Cut negative people.

To make the right choices and be a better person. More confident.

Weight loss, fitness, stable life, no alcohol, financially stable.

3. Increase ability to assist their community to be proud and self-determined.

Full support in handling issues re: family and domestic violence. Knowledge in how to protect family/community members.

To change the way of our clients that are incarcerated and hopefully change them to better themselves.

Themes of wanting to be a 'better person' and more 'confident' were noted by over a third of the respondents.

Reflection 2:

The KEHLP attracts a diversity of participants with different course aspirations, experiences and levels of education.

KEHLP content and context

Stakeholders consistently expressed the value of the KEHLP. It was described as a program which promotes reflection and improves participant's SEWB related knowledge, behaviours and attitudes:

KEHLP helps our people understand and be able to explore ways that they can change their behaviour but, in that process, we help them understand where they are. It could be historical events that have taken place, colonisation and the transgenerational trauma, learned behaviours. So we look at lots of aspects to help a person understand who and where they are. Especially with our Aboriginal people who have never ever give thought to who they are and what their strengths are (Facilitator 06, female).

KEHLP facilitators noted that participants often have limited knowledge of major policies that have impacted on Aboriginal Australians. Facilitators noted that KEHLP's emphasis on Aboriginal Australian political history provided a platform for participants to understand and reflect on their current context, experiences, and behaviours:

[Participants have said] *“Shit, I didn’t know that.” And that’s when you know it’s working. This is starting to kick in, it’s starting to make sense. “Yeah, I do that.” “I really didn’t know why I did it.” “I’m angry. I don’t know why I’m angry.” They just know that something’s happened. They just don’t know what, and to the extent that it’s happened. And that’s when we talk about our transgenerational stuff. Which plays a huge part. We know something happened. But to the actual details – how it happened, when it happened. When you ask these young people about the 67 Referendum. That’s only 52 years ago. Nobody hardly knows about it. Such a significant date. My mob want to know this stuff. If you don’t know it, you’re not going to know how to heal (Facilitator 02, male).*

Consultations with participants also emphasised the positive and important impacts of KEHLP’s focus on teaching Aboriginal political history. Participants described it as ‘surprising’, ‘eye opening’ and ‘challenging’. These participants felt that this ‘true’ history had not been taught in schools and many Aboriginal people do not have ready access to this information growing up. Having access to this information was seen as fundamental to concepts of identity, empowerment and healing.

Several stakeholders reflected on the political history component of KEHLP being delivered in a way that is strengths based and future facing.

And we do it in a way that we don’t end up hating every single white person that’s on the street. It’s about understanding what happened to be able to deal with it better and to know how you can understand yourself better and move forward in your life and understand the system (Facilitator 05, male).

Stakeholder consultations described the content, delivery and outcomes of KEHLP as deeply situated in the Aboriginal lived experience. Having an Aboriginal KEHLP facilitator was seen as fundamental in the knowledge exchange and learning.

Yes definitely [KEHLP has to be delivered] by an Aboriginal person, because they understand too. They go through traumas, and we understand each other. So, yes, it has to be delivered by Aboriginal people (Participant 04, female).

Analysis of the KAMS SEWB training feedback form further emphasised the importance of having an Aboriginal trainer/facilitator (Figure 1).

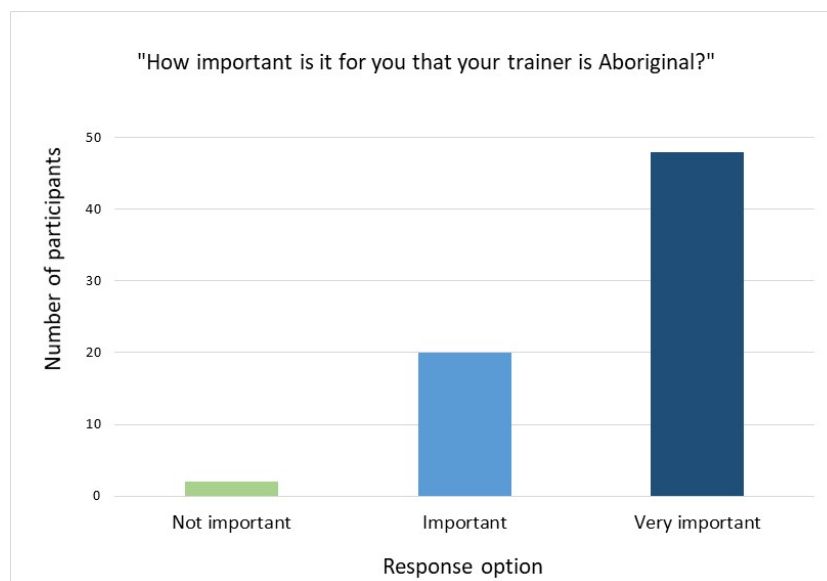


Figure 1. Importance of having an Aboriginal KEHLP facilitator, as stated by participants on SEWB training feedback form (n=70 participants).

Reflection 3:

KEHLP participants overwhelmingly identified that having KEHLP facilitators who are Aboriginal is important to them. The Aboriginal identity of facilitators and participants promotes and enables a culturally safe sharing of lived experience.

KEHLP participant support

The importance of Aboriginal lived experience and the active sharing of lived experience (via group discussions) positions the KEHLP as a dynamic space for participants' SEWB. The KEHLP can be understood as a culturally specific and unique adaptation to peer-based psycho-therapeutic group work (9-12).

Some participant feedback emphasised the 'triggering' or 'hard' nature of the program. Several participants reflected on the course raising their own or their family's stolen generation history and the other participants talked more broadly about the course bring back 'troubling' memories or thoughts. For most participants the 'confronting' or 'hard' nature of the course was balanced by the 'healing' and 'empowerment' that came with the discussions:

It was just a group of us boys and us boys, we turned to men after that course. It was hard stuff to talk about but we ended up talking about everything and we empowered each other and we were behind each other (Participant 03, male).

It was the best thing, to be listened to and encouraged (Self-survey post course).

I found it healing, those trainers held me (Self-survey post course).

Facilitators are aware of the emotions and feelings that can be raised for participants during the course. The course is delivered with two facilitators to ensure participants SEWB is being observed and supported. Facilitators identified that it was common to spend time with some participants providing psychosocial support when aspects of the course had touched on their own personal traumas. Facilitators spoke about this with great empathy and consideration for participants. They also spoke with clarity about their own brief intervention skills and knowledge of SEWB referral pathways for participants showing signs of distress.

Two participants who 'dropped out' of the KEHLP spoke about their desire for a 'check in' from their KEHLP facilitators after they were absent from the course. Both participants identified this level of support could have helped them to re-engage in the KEHLP:

Some days I'll have a very low, low mood and I don't want to move from bed. But if I had someone call me and ask me how I was going, because I was there from the start, and like, 'did you want to come back'? 'We're here, we're always here'. Just show that I'm needed or wanted because I just felt like they just didn't care who came and left so it was like, kind of, whatever (Participant 10, male).

Many participants involved in the stakeholder consultations suggested it would have been 'good' for facilitators to make contact with them after the course had finished; most suggested this should be around one month after they have completed the KEHLP. Participants suggested a 'check in' would provide a valuable space for reflection and be helpful for motivating for them to sustain the learnings of the KEHLP.

Some facilitators and participants spoke about various informal approaches to follow-up support. Most facilitators identified that this was an area requiring more careful attention.

Recommendation 2:

Develop a participant support strategy to improve participant retention and support learning outcomes.

Clarity and measurement of program objectives

The materials reviewed during this evaluation demonstrated that the KEHLP has multiple objectives relating to participants' improved SEWB knowledge, self-reflection and confidence.

It was found that these objectives lack conceptual clarity and would benefit from a detailed review with facilitators. It is recommended that a SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound) approach to the revision of the learning objectives be undertaken to clarify the objectives. Clarity on the objectives of the KEHLP will help determine any future revisions to the program, streamline evaluation/feedback processes and assist with KEHLP promotion.

Recommendation 3: Review and revise KEHLP learning objectives and outcomes using a SMART approach.

KEHLP outcomes

Participant evaluation/feedback forms demonstrated the KEHLP is achieving the overall objective of increasing participants' knowledge of SEWB.

KAMS workshop evaluation forms completed by some participants before and after the KEHLP, focusing on confidence and knowledge of relevant SEWB concepts, showed improvements in each domain after completing the KEHLP (Figure 2).

The KAMS SEWB training surveys showed a similar pattern. Participants generally identified that the completion of the KEHLP increased positive aspects of their social and emotional wellbeing and decreased negative aspects (Figure 3). This form needs to be interpreted with caution as many participants chose not to answer all of the questions on the form and the questions are complex in their wording and concepts.

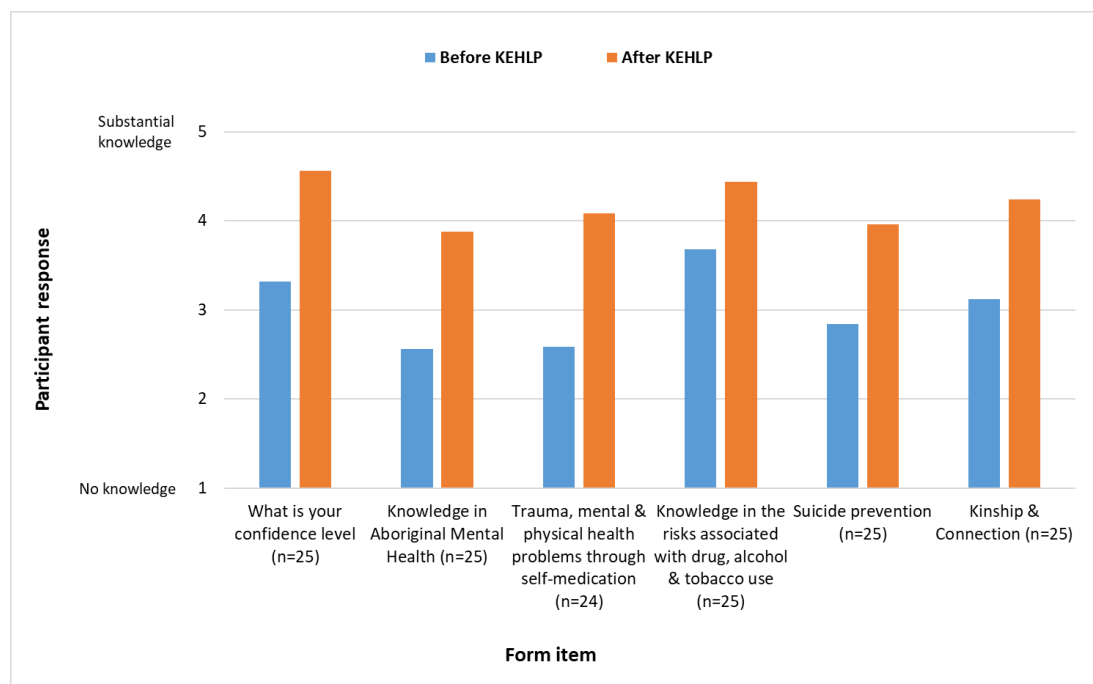


Figure 2. Participants' self-reported knowledge of KEHLP concepts pre and post course, as recorded on workshop evaluation forms (n=25 participants).

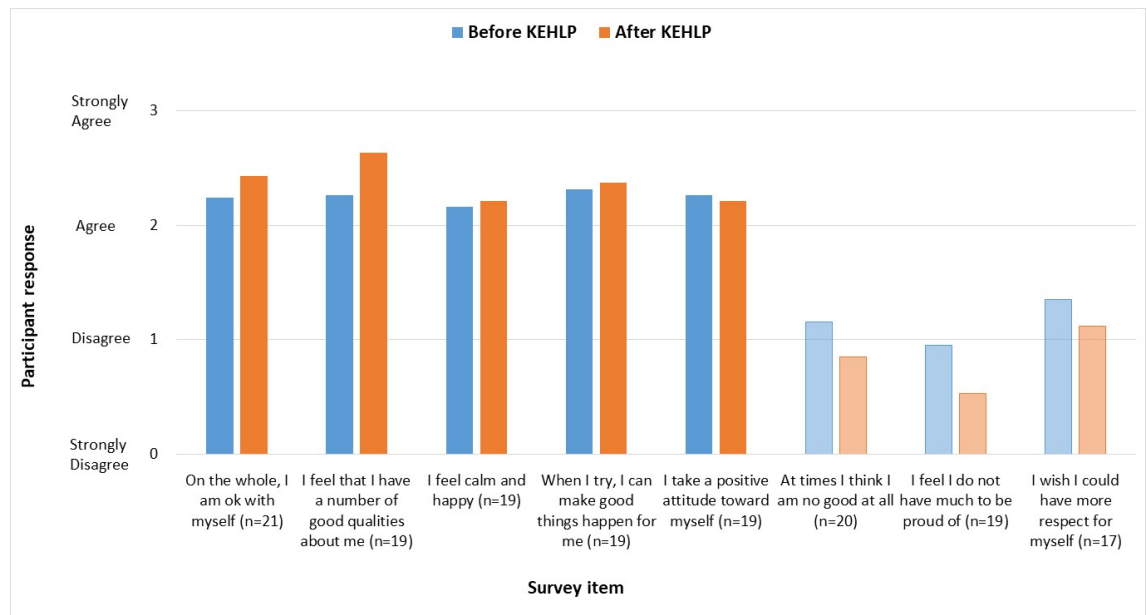


Figure 3. Participants' self-reported SEWB pre and post KEHLP, as recorded on training surveys (n=21).

Notes: Not all participants provided complete responses for each question.

For the last three questions, lower post-course scores indicate an improvement in SEWB.

A narrative review of the post-course self-survey form (completed by 18 participants) provides more exploration on KEHLP outcomes for participants. The majority of participants identified that attending the KEHLP had increased their knowledge and/or confidence:

I achieved a bit more self confidence heaps of knowledge, empathy. Don't let shame hold us back help to push others to achieve their beliefs (Self-survey post course).

I have achieved courage, knowledge and confidence. And only I can make change to move forward (Self-survey post course).

These results are consistent with the stakeholder participation consultations which routinely identified the KEHLP as positively increasing participant's knowledge:

Well, for me, I didn't know what social and emotional wellbeing is. And [for] me learning about that really changed my perspective—it made my liyan feel good (Participant 02, female).

Several participants offered examples of how the KEHLP not only increased their knowledge of SEWB but provided them with some skills and tools which contributed to them making positive changes to their own behaviours:

Well, I had 40 years without my mum. And when I came back for her 40 year anniversary, I was able to cope better because of this program. And all that healing, after 40 years, just came right out, and it's just lifted me, spiritually to see how strong we can be as Aboriginal women (Participant 04, female).

.. It's weird now after doing that course and the relationship that I have with dad. Even though we're still a bit iffy here and there, but we're comfortable. He wasn't there for the majority of my life and I just don't understand why. Why wasn't he there? But that's me as a kid. I didn't understand. Adults, I guess they go through things. There's probably answers I'll never get but it was like, well, I can't keep running back to the past. I can either build something out of this or just keep having a hatred (Participant 03, male).

I got pregnant at 15, had my first child at 16. So, we had three by the time I was 21. Because we were quite young, he would still be going out drinking, coming back to the house, making noise, cooking things and everything, and we've got three kids. So, then I put in a boundary to say that, "If you are going to go drinking, and you're drunk, you need to be able to stay somewhere else and not come home". So, obviously, it didn't work straight away, but over time, that's what he started to do, and then he didn't want to drink anymore because he didn't want to sleep at someone else's house ... That was one of the things that I learned [from KEHLP] about boundaries, if I set them and stick to it, then eventually it works (Participant 11, female).

KEHLP facilitators had numerous anecdotes about participants experiencing positive behaviour change after the KEHLP. These included stories of participants who stepped into community leaderships roles, started a business and progressed in their careers.

Reflection 4:

KEHLP improves participants' knowledge of SEWB and may act as a platform for improved SEWB through increased confidence and sense of empowerment, healing or other positive behaviour change.

Localising the KEHLP resources and examples

Participant feedback consistently identified a desire for the KEHLP to include more localised examples, resources and content. Specific suggestions included:

1. Incorporating visits from local Elders to share cultural stories and skills (including tool making and art).
2. Replacing non-Aboriginal anecdotes, videos and examples used in the KEHLP PowerPoint with Aboriginal, and where possible Kimberley Aboriginal, resources/examples.

One participant stated that while the KEHLP was a powerful program it needed a stronger focus on Aboriginal culture, specifically cultural lore and spirituality. This participant stated that since colonisation there has been a breakdown for many Aboriginal people's identity and that in order for Aboriginal people to heal they first need to understand their identity. He recommended working with cultural lore bosses at each site to help participants fully explore their identity and commence their healing journey.

Recommendation 4:

KEHLP delivery to better incorporate local Elders and local history.

Recommendation 5:

Replace non-Aboriginal KEHLP materials, resources and videos with Aboriginal-specific content, prioritising local content where available.

Course delivery

Course mode: outdoor and on-Country

Participants routinely suggested more outdoor learning or 'being on Country' as part of the KEHLP.

It kind of feels a bit closed in, but if we have an outing or something and I think the people would be more relaxed and more out there and they'd be able to talk and to share things (Participant 06, female).

I did Year 12. I sat in a lot of classes. When I did this course, it was class room style, I don't like it,

I'm a bit over that way. I'm not in school, like that's little kid way, you know little kid style. I like something different, outside, you know, like a local Aboriginal tour bloke, you know where they lead, you follow. Like they tell you a story, show you things on Country, [or] an outside place in a circle to yarn (Participant 05, male).

All facilitators and participants expressed interest in the KEHLP being delivered as an 'on-Country' camp. Participants spoke about learning distractions being minimised and people's 'liyan' (spirit) being uplifted and optimised to learn. Facilitators reflected on previous KEHLPS that had been delivered on Country and how participants assumed leadership roles within the group and were very engaged in the course content. Facilitators suggested the course could be shortened for an on-Country camp context and flip charts of key learning areas would be required.

KEHLP for young people

Facilitators/trainers identified the need for the KEHLP to be delivered in a school setting for Aboriginal students. It was recommended that the KEHLP could be delivered from Grade 7 and up, helping to positively contribute to young Aboriginal people's sense of identity in a way that embraced and celebrated their strengths and history. The school based Clontarf and Girls Academy programs were nominated as ideal settings for the KEHLP to be delivered. It was recognised by stakeholders that the current course content would need to be modified and tailored to the needs of young people.

Gender

KEHLP is often delivered to a single gendered group (i.e. a men's group or a women's group), by facilitators of the same gender. However, during 2018 and 2019 mixed gender classes and gender opposite facilitators were identified in the document review. Stakeholders typically discussed that gender matched facilitators was the ideal but several facilitators spoke about how much of a revelation it was to be able to discuss topics such as shame and jealousy to a group of opposite gender participants.

To give that perspective, to provide that for them, and see them comfortable to ask question after question. It was probably the best one [KEHLP] I have delivered (Facilitator 02, male).

Support for mixed gender classes was limited, suggesting delivery ideally should remain separate for men and women.

Length/format

Consultations with stakeholders found little consensus regarding the length of the program, although all agreed it was long. Many facilitators believed it was essential for the course to remain in its current format of two days over a four week period. Several stakeholders reflected that the original KEHLP was offered as an eight week program and it had already been shortened to ensure viability of the program (having facilitators away for eight weeks was unsustainable). These stakeholders felt any further reductions would negatively impact the course ability to engage, inform and change participants SEWB.

Many participants reflected that the length and spacing of the program ensured that topics were addressed in depth and they did not require changes to be made. Some participants suggested more time was needed to further explore areas in more depth.

Participant attrition however remains significant, and it is noted that many of the participants who did 'complete' the KEHLP did not attend all classes.

Given the positive feedback from the Aboriginal Health Worker students who completed module one (Self) and the stakeholder suggestion to develop a shorter 'on Country' KEHLP provides a starting place to consider the KEHLP being delivered in response to participant need or as modules that can be built on rather than as a default four week program.

Recommendation 6: KAMS to consider delivering the KEHLP according to participant need (e.g. 'on Country', outdoors or school-based) or as individual modules rather than as a default four week program.

Recommendation 7: Develop guidelines to assess if, or when, gender matched facilitators are required.

KEHLP administration

Accreditation

Discussions with stakeholders valued the dynamic and flexible approach of the KEHLP. The majority of stakeholders believe that progressing KEHLP accreditation would place unwanted barriers on KEHLP delivery and potentially marginalise some Aboriginal people from participating in the program. It was also suggested that moves to formalise the KEHLP could fundamentally change the context and content of the KEHLP with more value being placed on formalised learning outcomes and less value on the peer-based, lived experience discussions and reflections that are central to the KEHLP.

Stakeholders identified a range of accredited programs and courses for Aboriginal people and emphasised the KEHLP was often a first step for many Aboriginal people returning to formal study or work.

Participants did value certificates of completion that were handed out at the end of the program. Many participants suggested these should be offered at the end of each module. The evaluators were unable to locate a template of the certificates of completion or a register of who the certificates have been given to.

Pathways to participation and completion

The promotional materials that have been reviewed in the scan of KEHLP documentation appear long and resource intensive, such as a PowerPoint presentation delivered by facilitators at the proposed KEHLP location. The information in the PowerPoint does not clearly identify the course structure, approach and objectives. Copies of social media posts or other flyers were not found in the program documentation provided to the evaluators. Discussions with facilitators indicate an ad-hoc approach to KEHLP promotion and recruitment strategies.

Using the KEHLP/ SEWB contracts to strategically plan KEHLP delivery including mapping of possible KEHLP recruitment sites and site specific participant need would help identify specific promotion and recruitment strategies and inform the delivery of the KEHLP (i.e. modular, condensed, full course).

Monitoring and reporting

The document review of KEHLP materials demonstrated that the participant feedback process is onerous and duplicated. The development of a single comprehensive set of feedback document templates that meet funding body requirements, based on clarified course objectives, will likely increase reporting efficiency and capture better data.

Reflection 5: KEHLP accreditation is not practical or desirable at this point in KEHLP's history.

Recommendation 8: Clarify participation pathways for the KEHLP, develop targeted recruitment strategies, and refresh promotional materials.

Recommendation 9: Develop a streamlined approach to participant evaluation, incorporating funding-based participant feedback requirements and course objectives.

KEHLP Train the Trainer

The KEHLP Train the Trainer was developed in 2016 as an innovative approach to the sustainability of KEHLP and Aboriginal community control of the program. It aims to work with graduates of the KEHLP to build their skills in facilitation with the view to these graduates delivering the KEHLP in their own communities.

During 2018–2019 four participants are recorded as having completed the Train the Trainer. One of these is a KAMS SEWB team member and is now delivering the KEHLP.

Presently the Train the Trainer component is open to any KEHLP graduate. The interested graduate completes 2–3 days of facilitator training (guided by a PowerPoint) with an existing KEHLP facilitator. This includes the graduate facilitating a session based on existing KEHLP topics for their trainer. The graduate is then offered 2 days of Aboriginal Mental Health First Aid training. The final steps are shadowing a KEHLP facilitator, then co-facilitating with KEHLP facilitator to a group of participants.

As it stands this approach to Train the Trainer is insufficient, while facilitators undoubtedly do their best to develop the skills of new facilitators, this component of the KEHLP needs to be clarified and lacks structure. The safety of new facilitators and their potential participants needs to be of paramount concern. The centrality of lived experience, group discussion and the potential for participants to be distressed by KEHLP materials means that it is not appropriate for every graduate to deliver the KEHLP. Determining eligibility requirements for participants interested in the Train the Trainer component is an essential first step. It would be pragmatic, in the first instance, to limit this to Aboriginal people already involved in the delivery of SEWB, mental health or Alcohol and other drug services. These professionals will have the existing skills and abilities to manage sensitive information and conduct group work.

The Train the Trainer PowerPoint does not mention the SEWB of participants, the role of Aboriginal lived experience, safe principles in group work discussion or managing participant distress. These are fundamental components for a Train the Trainer of this nature. Other key learning outcomes of the Train the Trainer need to be identified and the program refined to include these areas. Video resources embedded in the PowerPoint appear to use unnecessary jargon such as ‘constructivist learning models’ and there is no Aboriginal specific content.

The Train the Trainer program, as it stands, does not mentor or support the new trainer/facilitator after the first co-facilitation. This requires further consideration.

Recommendation 10: Further develop the KEHLP Train the Trainer program, considering eligibility, learning objectives, course content, and ongoing support and mentoring of new facilitators.

Conclusion

The KEHLP program is highly valued by participants who complete the program and the facilitators who deliver it. The findings of this evaluation demonstrate the KEHLP positively improves Aboriginal participants' SEWB and can provide a platform for ongoing positive behaviour change.

The KEHLP is unique approach to healing and empowerment in which the Aboriginal lived experience is central to the context, content and delivery of the program. The KEHLP combines peer based group work and education to engage participants in deep reflection and discussion about their identity, behaviours and abilities.

The KEHLP has the potential to be more locally contextualised and responsive to participant need (e.g. incorporating local Elders in the delivery of the program). It would benefit from a range of other quality improvement measures as outlined in the recommendations.

Given the high levels of participant attrition from registration to completion, KAMS SEWB could benefit from developing a KEHLP delivery plan that maps potential participant pathways and delivers the KEHLP according to need, i.e. a modular or 'on Country' approach as opposed to the full four week course being the default approach to offering the program.

Clarifying and enhancing the KEHLP Train the Trainer program will potentially allow for more site-specific KEHLP facilitators and increase local responsiveness. Developing eligibility criteria and ongoing support for the Train the Trainer program is essential in ensuring the wellbeing and safety of the new facilitators and their participants.

Strengthening the recruitment and retention pathways will positively impact on KEHLP completion rates and ultimately allow more Kimberley Aboriginal people to experience the benefits of this program.

Next Steps

The recommendations from evaluation will be used to guide Phase 2 of the project - KEHLP refinements and enhancements. This component of the project will be completed by December 2020 and will involve participation from KEHLP trainers, administrators and participants. A draft action plan for KAMS consideration is available at Appendix D.

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