

# CheckUP Patient Reported Measures (PRM) Project

Using Patient Reported Experience Measures (PREM) and Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROM) evaluation results to increase access to culturally safe eye and ear surgery for rural and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

## 1. Where we started

CheckUP is a not-for-profit organisation working with health professionals to deliver outreach health services in rural and remote Queensland. CheckUP is committed to identifying and addressing barriers to service access by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients. Providing services that are experienced by mob as culturally safe and returning stories of positive surgical visit experiences to other potential patients in community, is crucial to addressing concerns and fears relating to the health service pathway.

## 2. What were we aiming to achieve?

In 2021 CheckUP developed a suite of Patient Reported Measures (PRMs) to evaluate Eye and Ear Surgical Support (EESS) services from the patients' perspectives with an aim to:

- Embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patient voices in service provider and hospital and health service continuous quality improvement efforts
- Provide positive feedback to visiting clinicians and hospital theatre staff to keep them motivated to provide services under often difficult conditions
- Return patient feedback to communities with an aim to increase potential patients' confidence and engagement and reduce Failure to Attend rates
- Engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners in evaluation activity

## 3. PREM/PROM Development

### PREM Tool

A lengthy consultation and questionnaire development phase with guidance from an Advisory Group including Aboriginal Health Service Providers, survey design and statistical experts, led to the now validated CheckUP Cultural Safety Patient Reported Experience Measure (PREM) tool (see Figure 1):

- 11 items grouped under 3 domains quantitatively measure cultural safety constructs adapted from AIHW *Cultural safety in health care for Indigenous Australians: monitoring framework* <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/indigenous-australians/cultural-safety-health-care-framework/contents/summary>
- Qualitative feedback captures anticipated quality of life changes, health service strengths and recommendations for improvements

### PROM Tools x 2

2 x existing Patient Reported Outcomes Measures were identified for trial with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients:

- the CatPROM-5, validated in European populations to measure sight-related quality of life changes following cataract surgery, and
- the COM-5, validated in European populations to measure hearing-related quality of life changes following surgery for complicated otitis media conditions

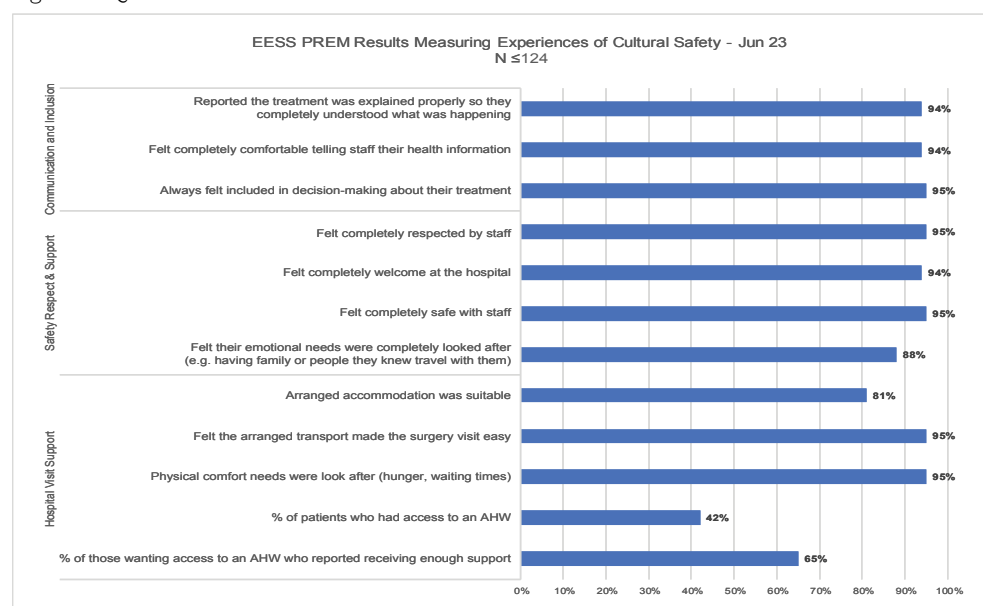
## 4. Data collection

- CheckUP evaluators travelled to remote Queensland surgery locations to yarn with patients before and after surgery using the PREMs and PROMs questions and scales to guide conversations.
- Attempts to phone patients to repeat PROMs were made at 6-8 weeks post-op with varying levels of success.
- Over time, available Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers/Practitioners were also recruited to administer the surveys.
- The tool was able to be validated as a reliable measure of cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patient cohorts undergoing outreach ear and eye surgery in rural and remote locations.
- A larger sample size would increase the strength of these findings.
- Further data collection to increase sample sizes is required to re-validate Cat-PROM5 and COM-3 for this patient cohort.

PRM	No of patients	Number of surgeries	No of surgery locations
PREM (eye and ear)	124	14	5
Cat-PROM5 pre/ post-op (eye)	109 / 71	9 / 7	4 / 4
COM-5 PROM pre/ post-op (ear)	23 / 4	5 / 2	2 / 2

Overall, PREM results demonstrated high levels of cultural safety under the EESS service model delivered by CheckUP funded eye and ear surgical providers:

Figure 1: Qld-wide EESS PREM Results 2022-2023



"I told my family I was afraid of getting the needle, but the doctor was really supportive, and my fear was gone. I'm telling other people now that I was really looked after and that there is nothing to fear. I can't wait to have my other eye operated on now. I know and trust the optometrist and he told me to trust the doctor, so I did, and he was right."

"It isn't right for me to give that kind of informatino to a woman. There needs to be a male health worker or doctor."

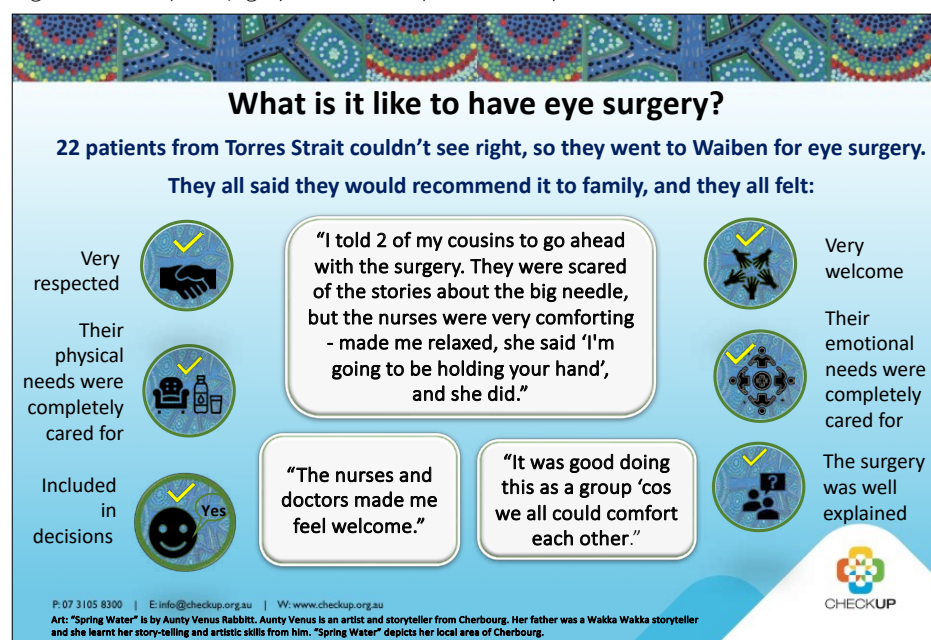
"Staff don't know enough about our situations. They are only thinking of my eye problem. I would feel more welcome if they looked at all my needs (holistic approach)"

"I like this hospital. Everyone treats you well. Some other hospitals tell you that you're not welcome."

## 5. Reporting to stakeholders and patients

2 x report templates were created for providing patient feedback to (1) Service Providers, and (2) potential patients via community health clinics (PHCs and ACCHOs) following each surgery.

Figure 2: Example infographic PREM report sent to patient communities



## 6. Key patient recommendations to service providers

- Increase access to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners in surgical pathways.
- Improve transport arrangements, including flight bookings better aligned with appointment times and taxi vouchers for local travel in hospital locations.
- Expand accommodation options to support cheaper meal arrangements, including in-room kitchens, grocery and meal vouchers.
- Decrease waiting times at hospital.
- Provide private spaces and appropriately gendered staff for health information taking.
- Provide clearer post-surgery instructions.
- Undertake greater communication between stakeholders across differing sections of the group surgical pathway.

## 7. Adding value and improving health service planning and delivery

- 94% of service providers reported finding their individualised reports useful
- 71% of service providers reported making changes to the way they delivered services as a results of their PREM feedback

"All future clinics will have an Indigenous Health Worker."

"Managed the way that we gave patients expectations and made the travel process more streamlined."

"Ensured community came to assist on subsequent Cape York eye surgery cohort trip to Cairns."

\*Stakeholder feedback survey June 2023

## 8. Next steps for CheckUP

- Collaborate with other health service providers to develop, adapt and deliver Cultural Safety PREMs for use in their continuous quality improvement efforts.
- Provide data analysis and report writing services to service providers who can administer their own PREMs.

For further information please contact Philippa Hawke on [phawke@checkup.org.au](mailto:phawke@checkup.org.au)