



# Wellington Aboriginal Corporation Health

## INCREASING AWARENESS OF BREAST SCREENING



**"We had women coming to the breast workshop that are in their 50s, early 60s, and had never had a mammogram and they turned up - it was good."** Lai Peckham, Aboriginal Health Worker

Wellington Aboriginal Corporation Health Service is engaged in a project to raise awareness of breast cancer and screening amongst women in the town of Wellington, and to increase screening and treatment. Understanding that local women need knowledge and support, the service promotes local breast screen check-ups through workshops for women, and provides them with transport to and from these events.

Focus on community needs  
Use data to evaluate programs  
Evidence can help with funding



The program has run for several years and has been improved over time to better meet women's needs. The staff of Wellington AHS track the data for each event in terms of how many women needed appointments, how many turned up to appointments, or who cancelled or failed to appear, and follow-up arrangements. They have used this evidence to show what works, to measure the engagement of community members and this has been useful for funding applications. A successful funding bid has meant that Wellington AHS has been able to extend the program.

Going out into the community, taking posters and brochures has helped to break down barriers. Wellington AHS workers take pride in supporting community members, allaying their fears about treatment and assisting with processes such as filling in forms. Providing transport provided a great opportunity to boost attendance and make the experience more social and less intimidating. Workshop attendance was also improved by tailoring the workshop content to women's needs. The importance of early detection is reinforced by guest speakers, and having a local doctor who the women felt comfortable with was a big hit. Another success was having a woman who had gone through a double mastectomy as a guest speaker.

Reaching out to the community and encouraging local women to attend the workshops is an ongoing activity for the service staff; getting out and mixing with the community is seen as key to building trust.

**"They're our older generation but they still need awareness."**  
Loretta Stanley, Youth Health Worker

