

the response from the young people from OASIS was generally consistent with the other three groups. No differences were reported between the response of males or females to the resource.

Some of the suggested changes to the booklet such as concern that 'the stories and characters might not appeal to someone who hasn't used cannabis yet or for someone who isn't really a heavy user' seem to reflect a desire to broaden the appeal of the booklet beyond the target audience for whom it has been designed. In terms of design of the booklet there were obviously a range of both positive and negative comments. Nevertheless it is unrealistic to think there would ever be total agreement on these design aspects of any resource.

In light of the positive responses to the individual response surveys, and from the group discussions, it is not recommended that any changes to the resource from its current form are warranted at present. Further, it would seem that a number of the comments made about the resource such as 'mixed feelings about the advice to avoid friends who use', 'that stating that withdrawals or cravings will only last up to a week or 10 days is unrealistic' and 'mixed feelings about the change or quit date' would be discussed through the process of working through the booklet with a counsellor. Note that around half of the young people had not used the resource with a counsellor yet.

Other suggestions would be worth considering in future versions of the booklet or for supportive resources to be used in combination with it, such as having more contact details for youth specific helpline numbers and other ways of seeking help such as online or via email or mail; more information for why the characters in the booklet wanted to seek help and their 'significant moment' that made them realise the need for help; more stories from people that have successfully given up or cut down their cannabis use; and more space in the booklet for young people to make their own plan and to record their thoughts as they work through the resource.

5 Evaluation of the *Cannabis: It's Not Our Culture* Indigenous Project components

5.1 The *Cannabis: It's not our culture* project

NCPIC developed a multi-component project titled 'Cannabis: It's not our culture' to address the issue of increasing cannabis use in Indigenous communities. Three components of this initiative will be included in this evaluation project:

- Community-based artworks and stories produced as A3 artwork posters;
- Cannabis fact sheets; and
- The Indigenous Music Competition.

Community-based artworks and stories (Artwork poster series)

NCPIC worked with seven communities from around Australia as part of the *Cannabis: It's not our culture* project: Kintore (Northern Territory), Thursday Island (Queensland), Lockhart River (Queensland), Griffith (New South Wales), Jubullum (New South Wales), Nowra (New South Wales) and Geelong (Victoria). Each community was commissioned to produce a solution-focussed artwork and story on the theme of how cannabis affects their culture and community. An exhibition was held in March 2010 with invited artists and community liaison contacts attending. The Aboriginal artworks about cannabis from the seven different artists were then developed into A3 posters.

In May 2010 a set containing each of the posters was sent to 191 Aboriginal Medical Services and other Aboriginal health and key community organisations across Australia. The database of 191 Aboriginal Medical Services and key organisations was developed by the NCPIC communications team over a period of more than a year, utilising internet searching and contacts developed from previous projects. NCPIC was advised by the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council in New South Wales that there was no existing comprehensive database of these organisations.

Artwork poster sets have been made available for order at no cost from the NCPIC website since May 2010.

Community development projects

Each of the seven communities was also eligible to apply for a small grant to develop and run a community development project aimed at addressing cannabis-related issues faced by the community.

The diverse range of community projects have included:

- A travelling art exhibition;
- A health-promotion band in the Northern Territory outback;
- The printing of 'Yukiri Wanti' (Leave it! Gunja) on the back of the Kintore Blues' football Guernseys;
- Women's and men's events dealing with cannabis-related issues; and
- Youth camps.

It is planned that reports and photos from these projects will be made available on the *Cannabis: It's not our culture* project website: www.notourculture.org.au but these were not available for inclusion in the current evaluation project.

Cannabis fact sheets

As part of the *Cannabis: It's not our culture* project a set of cannabis fact sheets was designed solely for service providers working with Indigenous communities.

The twelve fact sheets cover:

- What is cannabis?
- Cannabis and the law;
- Cannabis and mental health;
- Cannabis potency;
- Cannabis and driving;
- Cannabis dependence;
- Cannabis and tobacco use;
- Cannabis use and reproduction;
- Looking after a friend on cannabis;
- Mixing cannabis and alcohol;
- People at risk of developing problems with their cannabis use; and
- Cannabis and young people.

In May 2010 a package containing ten copies of each fact sheet was sent to the same 191 Aboriginal Medical Services and other Aboriginal health and community organisations that the poster series was sent to. Fact sheet sets have been available for order or as downloadable files at no cost from the NCPIC website since March 2010.

Indigenous Music Competition

NCPIC also launched a national Indigenous Music Competition in 2010. The competition was open to Indigenous Australians and required entrants to record a song onto CD or tape expressing their ideas about the negative impact of cannabis on their community. The aim of the competition was to encourage young Indigenous Australians to discuss cannabis and the potential negative effects the drug may have on their families, relationships and educational attainment. Music was chosen as a medium in which young people would feel more comfortable expressing their ideas. NCPIC plans to make the competition an annual event.

The competition received a diverse range of songs submitted by 13 entrants, including young teenagers, young men and women, mothers and older men. An Indigenous Music Competition CD

featuring the 12 finalists' songs was produced². Young Aboriginal people were involved with 10 of these competition entries. Publicity about the CD was generated through Indigenous media outlets such as Koori Radio and Koori Mail, as well as ABC radio.

In November 2010 a total of 191 copies of the compilation CD were sent to the NCPIC database of Aboriginal Medical Services and other Aboriginal health and community organisations. Copies of the compilation CD have also been available for order at no cost from the NCPIC website since that mail-out.

5.1.1 Target audience/s for the *Cannabis: It's not our culture* project

The target audience for the *Cannabis: It's not our culture* project are:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; and
- Agencies providing services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

5.1.2 Fit within the NCPIC strategic plan

This initiative fits under the NCPIC Strategic Framework Goals of achieving:

- An Australian community well informed about cannabis use and related problems; and
- A reduced level of cannabis use and related problems among the Australian community, in particular, amongst young Australians and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

5.1.3 Fit with Activities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

Components of this initiative fit under the NCPIC Strategic Framework Activities as follows:

Community-based artworks and stories (Artwork poster series)

- Develop and update high quality, well targeted resources that disseminate the evidence base on cannabis and related harms; and
- Raise awareness of the patterns of use and harms associated with cannabis use among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Cannabis fact sheets

- Develop and update high quality, well targeted resources that disseminate the evidence base on cannabis and related harms;

² One song could not be included on the CD due to copyright reasons.

- Improve access to evidence-based information about the harms associated with cannabis use via web-based information services;
- Raise awareness of the patterns of use, harms and interventions associated with cannabis use among the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; and
- Provide evidence-based materials to those working to prevent or reduce cannabis use and the families of cannabis users among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Indigenous Music Competition

- Raise awareness of the patterns of use and harms associated with cannabis use among the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

5.2 Research questions

The evaluation project sought to address the following research questions regarding resources from the *Cannabis: It's not our culture* project:

For the community-based artworks and stories (Artwork poster series):

- What is the level of awareness and level of interest in the posters?
- What do Indigenous peoples perceive the posters to be communicating?
- How effective are the posters in raising awareness of harms associated with cannabis use among Indigenous peoples?
- How culturally competent are the posters across different Indigenous communities?

For the cannabis fact sheets:

- What is the level of awareness of the fact sheets?
- What is the level of comprehension of the content of the fact sheets?
- How culturally appropriate are the fact sheets in presentation and language?
- How effective are the fact sheets in raising awareness of harms associated with cannabis use among Indigenous peoples?

For the Indigenous Music Competition:

(Amongst competition entrants)

- What was the level of participation in the competition, including the proportion of entries from young people?
- What was the outcome of participating in the competition in relation to generating greater consideration and discussion of cannabis-related harms in their community?

(Amongst Indigenous young people)

- What is the level of awareness of the Indigenous Music Competition and resulting compilation CD?
- What do young people perceive the songs to be communicating?
- How appealing and effective are the songs in raising awareness of harms associated with cannabis use?

(For services, agencies and event organisers)

- What is the perceived effectiveness of the competition, songs and resulting CD in raising awareness of cannabis-related harms?

5.3 Research methods

A number of complementary research methods were employed to address these research questions. These included:

- Specific metrics of poster and fact sheet orders from the project website www.notourculture.org.au;
- An online survey of contacts who had previously ordered *Cannabis: It's not our culture* project materials from the project website www.notourculture.org.au;
- Community visits incorporating:
 - ❖ Observational measures of posters and fact sheets on display in communities;
 - ❖ Group discussions with young people in community settings;
 - ❖ Interviews with adults in community settings; and
 - ❖ Interviews with service providers.
- Telephone interviews with music competition participants and local organisers.

5.4 Results

5.4.1 Orders of *Cannabis: It's not our culture* resources from the project

website: www.notourculture.org.au

A total of 706 sets of the artwork posters, 631 sets of the cannabis fact sheets and 163 copies of the compilation CD from the 2010 Indigenous Music Competition were ordered and distributed from the *Cannabis: It's not our culture* website to the end of April 2011. See Table 3 below.

Table 3: Distribution of *Cannabis: It's not our culture* resources

<i>Cannabis: It's not our culture</i> project resources	No. distributed
Artwork poster series	706
Cannabis fact sheets (sets)	631
Indigenous Music Competition CDs	163

5.4.2 Online survey of people who had *Cannabis: It's not our culture* resources from the project website www.notourculture.org.au

An online survey was developed to assess the perceptions of *Cannabis: It's not our culture* resources from people who had placed an order for these resources from the project website between March 2010 and April 2011. Emails with a link to the survey were sent to contact addresses for people who had ordered resources. Initial emails were sent on April 17 2011, with a reminder email sent on April 29. A total of 117 responses had been received by 31 May when the survey was closed. The online survey provided at Appendix 2.³

Survey respondents

Table 4 shows the range of occupations that the 117 respondents to the survey could be grouped.

Just less than half of the survey respondents indicated that they were in a counsellor role or an alcohol or other drug worker. Fourteen per cent indicated that they were youth workers and the same proportion indicated being in a managerial or administrative role. Nine per cent identified

³ On 18 April a link to a separate survey was emailed to 189 Aboriginal Medical Services and other Indigenous health and community agencies that had been sent out NCPIC resources. A reminder email was sent on 29 April but only 5 responses had been received by 31 May when the survey was closed.

themselves as nurses, six per cent as teachers or other educators and four per cent identified themselves as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Health Workers.

Table 4: Breakdown of occupations of survey respondents

Occupation of respondents	Respondents (n=117)
Alcohol and other drug workers/counsellors	46%
Youth workers	14%
Managers or administrators	14%
Nurses	9%
Teacher/educators	6%
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Health Workers	4%
Others	7%

Cannabis fact sheets

Awareness of the cannabis fact sheets

When asked about their service being sent a set of the fact sheets, 87 per cent of respondents recalled receiving them. Seventeen respondents (15% of the total sample) indicated that they had ordered further copies of the fact sheets.

Respondents were then asked what they did with the fact sheets when they received them.

Of the 76 respondents who answered the question (65 per cent of the total sample):

- 40% put them on display in their service for clients and community members to take away;
- 32% used them with clients;
- 30% made them available or distributed them to staff in own service;
- 20% used them as information sheets when running workshops, presentations, training;
- 12% included them in information packs/goodie bags handed out to clients or distributed to clients or carers at conferences or open days; and
- 11% passed on to other allied services.

From a full list of the cannabis fact sheets series, respondents were asked which, if any of the fact sheets they had seen before today. Results are provided in Table 5 below. Twenty-one per cent of respondents indicated that hadn't seen any of the fact sheets.

Table 5: Awareness of fact sheets

Fact sheets	Have seen fact this sheet before (n =117)
Cannabis and mental health	75%
What is cannabis?	74%
Cannabis and young people	70%
Cannabis and the law	63%
Cannabis dependence	53%
Mixing cannabis and alcohol	48%
Cannabis and tobacco use	47%
Cannabis and driving	44%
Looking after a friend on cannabis	42%
People at risk of developing problems with their cannabis use	38%
Cannabis potency	34%
Cannabis use and reproduction	32%

Where fact sheets had been seen

Those who had seen the fact sheets were asked where they had seen them. Of the 86 respondents who answered this question (74% of the total sample):

- 47% indicated on the NCPIC website or ordered them from NCPIC;
- 9% online search or on another website;
- 26% at work, in own service;
- 19% on display at other services;
- 17% whilst attending a workshop or training;
- 5% at external conference or symposium; and
- 3% were given some by another service.

Impressions of the fact sheets

Those who had seen the fact sheets were asked about their impression of the fact sheets. Eighty-two of the 87 respondents (94%) who answered the question gave positive impressions of the fact sheets (70% of the total sample). The most common responses were:

- Interesting and informative /appealing 44% of responses
- Very good / fantastic / excellent / liked them 36%
- Well set out and easy to read/concise/clear 31%
- Appropriate for my service 10%
- Useful / helpful 11%

The five respondents (6%) who indicated negative impressions of the fact sheets commented that the fact sheets:

- Completely overlooked the medicinal and recreational benefits of cannabis 1%
- Were visually unappealing for young people 2%
- Were too wordy 1%
- Had colours that look “sinister” to some parents 1%

Appropriateness of the fact sheet design

When asked whether the design of the factsheets is appropriate ‘for people in your community’, 68 per cent of respondents indicated that they were, 10 per cent indicated that they were not and 21 per cent gave no response. Of the 19 people who gave a reason for their response, 15 people gave reasons why the fact sheets weren’t appropriate, primarily because they were not colourful or visually interesting enough or not suitable for low literacy clients. Four people who gave reasons why the fact sheets were appropriate for their communities, primarily because they were clear, factual, professional and good for clients with low literacy levels.

Appropriateness of the fact sheet language level

When asked about the appropriateness of the language level of the fact sheets ‘for people in our community’ 69 per cent said the language level was appropriate, nine per cent said it wasn’t appropriate and 21 per cent gave no response. Of the 22 people gave a reason for their response, the main reason given for why the language level of the fact sheets were appropriate was ‘good, simple language (given by 5 respondents). The main reasons given for why the language was not appropriate (by 13 respondents) were because it was not suitable for low literacy clients and that

more visuals and fewer words would be more appropriate. A further four respondents said the language was appropriate for some community members and not for others.

Usefulness of the fact sheets

Respondents were asked which of the fact sheets they had found most useful. The fact sheets identified by the highest proportion of the 85 people (73% of the total sample) who responded to this question were:

- Cannabis and mental health 74%
- What is cannabis?' 60%
- Cannabis and young people' 59%

The proportions of respondents nominating fact sheets as amongst the most useful are shown in Table 6 below. The most common reason given for rating fact sheets as most useful was because they were appropriate for the respondent's client group.

Table 6: Most useful fact sheets

Fact sheets	Rated as amongst the most useful of the fact sheets (n= 85)
Cannabis and mental health	74%
What is cannabis?	60%
Cannabis and young people	59%
Cannabis and the law	47%
Cannabis dependence	37%
Mixing cannabis and alcohol	47%
Cannabis and tobacco use	26%
Cannabis and driving	28%
Looking after a friend on cannabis	34%
People at risk of developing problems with their cannabis use	32%
Cannabis potency	19%
Cannabis use and reproduction	14%

Respondents were next asked which, if any, of the fact sheets they found to be not useful. Twenty-one respondents (18% of the total sample) nominated fact sheets that they had found to be not useful. The fact sheets most commonly identified as being not useful by these respondents were 'cannabis and driving' (10 respondents), 'cannabis use and reproduction' (9 respondents) and 'cannabis and the law' (7 respondents). The most common reasons given for rating fact sheets as not useful was because clients were not interested in them or they were not relevant for the clients (7 respondents).

In response to whether the factsheets are 'useful for all people in your community', 61 per cent thought that they were useful for all their community, 12 per cent thought that they were not useful for all their community and 25 per cent gave no response.

Amongst the 70 people (60% of the total sample) who gave a response about which groups the fact sheets are useful for, the most commonly suggested groups were:

- Young people 39% of responses
- Drug users/cannabis users 20%
- Parents/adults 16%
- Indigenous Australians 11%
- Service providers 9%

Twenty per cent of these respondents said the fact sheets were suitable for all people.

Amongst the 40 people (34% of the total sample) who nominated a group for whom the fact sheets are least useful, the most commonly suggested groups were:

- People who are illiterate or who have low literacy 40% of responses
- Culturally and Linguistically diverse groups 18%
- Older people 13%
- Younger adolescents 10%
- Users who are not seeking help 10%

Cultural relevance

In response to the question of whether the factsheets are 'providing information to people in your community in a culturally relevant way', 67 per cent indicated that they were providing information in a culturally relevant way, 12 per cent indicated that they weren't and 21 per cent gave no response.

Suggested change to the fact sheets

When asked what changes, if any, respondents would suggest for the fact sheets, 30 respondents (26% of total respondents) gave a suggestion. The most commonly suggested changes were to:

- Add more pictures 43% of responses
- Make them like a comic / cartoon drawings 17%
- Make them more colourful 17%

A further 20 people responded that no changes should be made 'because it's not possible to cater for everyone's specific needs'.

Artwork posters

Next the survey asked about recall of 'your Service being sent a set of posters featuring artworks from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as part of the *Cannabis: It's not our culture* project'. Seventy-six per cent (76%) of respondents indicated that they did recall receiving the posters, 12 per cent indicated that did not recall receiving them and 12 per cent gave no response.

When then asked 'what did you do with the posters?' 36 of the 45 people who gave an answer to this question (80%) replied that they displayed the posters in the reception area or somewhere else. Other responses were that people gave them to an Indigenous specialist worker (4 responses), supplied them to other Services (3 responses), or used them in workshops (2 responses).

The Indigenous Music Competition

Next the survey asked 'Before today have you heard of the 2010 Indigenous Music Competition?' Thirty-three per cent (33%) of respondents indicated that they had heard of the competition, 67 per cent indicated that they had not and one per cent gave no response. Twelve respondents (10%) recalled their service being sent promotional flyers for the competition, while 90 per cent did not. When these 12 respondents were asked what they did with the flyers, one each described distributing them in the community, posting them online, putting them on a noticeboard, giving them to the art teacher, giving them to the youth justice worker and giving them to the local high schools. The other six respondents did not identify what they did with the flyers.

Twenty-one respondents (18%) had heard of the compilation CD from the Indigenous Music Competition and 13 had ordered a copy of the CD. Four of these respondents indicated that they had played the CD or given the CD to clients, while two reported passing the CD onto youth workers. Four respondents indicated receiving positive feedback about the songs or the whole CD. Only 13 people provided a response to the question of whether a Music Competition is a good way to increase awareness about cannabis-related harms. Twelve of the 13 responses indicated that they did think it was a good way to raise awareness, primarily because songs can be an effective way to

send a message and the competition can focus on the positives of not using cannabis. One respondent suggested that the competition CD should be distributed more widely.

5.4.3 Community visits

The following section on community visits is drawn from a summary report of the findings from community visits prepared by Karina Hickey who managed this component of the evaluation project.

Selection of locations for community visits

Throughout the Cannabis: *It's not our culture* project, NCPIC worked closely with seven communities across Australia, as outlined earlier. It was anticipated that these communities would be familiar with NCPIC's work and therefore more likely to have greater awareness of the artwork posters, fact sheets and Indigenous Music CD.

Table 7: Location selection for community visits

Communities previously involved with NCPIC in 'Not Our Culture' project	Communities with no previous involvement with 'Not Our Culture' project matched on population size	Interview focus	Evaluation domains
Geelong	Newcastle	Cannabis fact sheets, artwork posters, Indigenous Music Competition and compilation CD	Receipt and familiarity; cultural appropriateness, message recall and response, utility of resources
Nowra	Wyong	Cannabis fact sheets, artwork posters, Indigenous Music Competition and compilation CD	Receipt and familiarity; cultural appropriateness, message recall and response, utility of resources
Griffith	Dubbo	Cannabis fact sheets, artwork posters, Indigenous Music Competition and compilation CD	Receipt and familiarity; cultural appropriateness, message recall and response, utility of resources

As shown in Table 7, three of these communities were selected for community visits based on accessibility within the limited evaluation project timeline: Geelong, Nowra and Griffith. Three further communities were selected: Newcastle, Wyong and Dubbo, matched on the basis of population size against the initial three communities. These communities had not been involved in NCPIC projects previously and it was therefore anticipated that people in these communities would not be as familiar with the NCPIC resources. Nevertheless, sets of the resources had been sent to

these communities during the national distributions to the NCPIC database of Aboriginal Medical Services and other Aboriginal health and community organisations.

Teams of two NCPIC staff visited each community with the lead researcher, Karina Hickey, being a member of each team. The aim of the community visits was to interview service providers, community members and young people about their awareness of the NCPIC resources, perceptions of the cultural appropriateness and usefulness of the resources and how, if at all, they had been utilised to date. Community visits took place during April and May 2011.

Data Collection and Interviews

Service providers

Within the short time frame available for the evaluation, two days were allocated to each community visit to conduct interviews and site visits and to speak with community members. In organising these visits Aboriginal Medical Services and additional drug and alcohol and other community organisations were initially contacted through email and phone. The interview team was hoping to meet with Aboriginal Medical Service staff and to also ask for assistance for organising interviews with Aboriginal community members and young people. While response to these requests was modest despite repeated follow-up attempts, staff members were very supportive of the visits and willing to accommodate the teams once they arrived. The teams reported creating valuable relationships and building networks with new services by visiting their sites and 'having a chat.' Drug and Alcohol services were generally willing to allocate a time to see NCPIC staff and discuss the *Cannabis: It's not our culture* project. Consistent with the responses received at Aboriginal Medical Services, drug and alcohol staff and other service providers were very supportive of the visit and were very willing to discuss the *Cannabis: It's not our culture* project, the work of NCPIC and the services and resources available to their staff.

The teams reported that in some instances interviews elicited personal stories of familial cannabis use or mental health problems and often lead to a broader discussion about social disadvantage, drug use in general and discrimination. The teams found that service providers were passionate about the topic and wanted to share their views and discuss the solutions they saw.

Aboriginal young people

The team reported that Aboriginal young people were relatively easy to locate and speak to during the community visits. In some cases, service providers acted as mediators between the team and young people and arranged small groups to interview on the spot or allowed the teams to wait in their services for appropriate opportunities. More commonly the team adopted an intercept approach, opportunistically accessing young people in the street, inside shopping malls and at skate parks and inviting them to participate in an interview. The team offered \$20 gift card incentives for participating in the interviews. More young males than females were interviewed through this approach as more young males were present in drop-in centres, youth centres and at skate parks.

The team found that the young people were quite willing and interested to participate in the interviews, particularly in discussing the Indigenous Music Competition CD.

Aboriginal community members

With short notice to arrange their community visits, the teams found they were best able to interview Aboriginal community members through existing community meeting arrangements. For instance, in Griffith the team participated in the Griffith Aboriginal Medical Service women's group. However, due to cultural reasons it was inappropriate for the female interview teams to attend a men's group. The teams had to take any available opportunities to meet with community members rather than expect them to conform to specific interview arrangements. To compensate for only modest opportunities to discuss the NCPIC resources with community members, the teams sought to maximise opportunities to interview service providers with an Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander background and to explore the resources from both a service provider and community perspective.

Awareness and perceptions of artwork posters

Awareness of the artwork posters

In the majority of interviews the artwork posters were not recognised and none of the young people interviewed had seen the posters before. Some Aboriginal Medical Service staff had seen the posters before (or the original artwork) but rarely had any external alcohol and other drug services staff seen them.

Perceptions of the artwork posters

Despite this, the teams reported that when shown the posters, people generally expressed a positive 'liking' for them, including many positive comments about being graphic, attention grabbing, visual and appealing. Amongst the poster series the team reported that the Griffith artwork 'Walk away' by Deon Jones was the most popular and most easily understood artwork. It was commonly viewed as having the best written description that expressed the meaning of the artwork in brief concise language. It was suggested in many interviews that a similar concise summary be written for each of the other artworks to assist in interpretation and understanding of the messages in the artworks. Generally the text accompanying artworks was perceived to be too small and to contain too many words to be effective in its communication. The team reported that people generally felt the artworks would start a conversation but not go as far as to initiate any form of behaviour change.

Cultural appropriateness of the artwork posters

The teams further reported mixed opinions regarding the cultural appropriateness of the series of artwork posters. They reported that while some people felt the artwork posters were entirely appropriate since they had been created by Aboriginal artists, others expressed the view that they were 'tokenistic' Aboriginal art. Other Aboriginal people said that they would not display a poster unless the artwork was created within their own immediate community.

Messages of the artwork posters

Message interpretation from the artwork posters varied through interviews and communities. Aboriginal people seemed much more adept at interpreting messages from the artworks and understanding cultural symbols than service providers in the communities who were non-Aboriginal people. A key component of the artworks that generated significant discussion was the presence or absence of a cannabis leaf. In particular, concerns were expressed by a number of Aboriginal people about the presence of a cannabis leaf in an artwork.

These related to perceptions that displaying a cannabis leaf in the artwork could:

- Trigger cravings in smokers;
- Signify that cannabis is a part of Aboriginal culture; and
- Suggest that the artwork is encouraging cannabis use and representing supportive views about cannabis use.

Alternate views were expressed by some Aboriginal people that displaying a cannabis leaf in the artwork could demonstrate that the artwork is communicating messages against cannabis use and that cannabis use is not good for their culture. A further view was expressed that not displaying a cannabis leaf in the artwork would result in the artwork being simply another piece of Aboriginal art.

Awareness and perceptions of fact sheets

The teams found that the majority of service providers were not recognising that the fact sheet resources were intended for themselves (rather than clients) and that consequently the service providers consistently suggested including more colour, artwork and graphics to the fact sheets to identify that they were for an Aboriginal audience and to appeal to those with low literacy. Service providers continually emphasised that Aboriginal people are visual and that making resources based on pictures and stories is more effective than simply using text.

Amongst those who did recognise that the fact sheets were for use by health workers, the perception was that the language was generally appropriate. However they suggested that the statistical information included in fact sheets should be specific to Aboriginal people rather than for the Australian population as a whole. Further, they suggested that even for a service provider audience, more colourful graphics and Aboriginal art should be included.

Other specific suggestions were made to improve the utility of the fact sheets:

- Binding the fact sheets into a single booklet-style resource for use in a face-to-face clinical session ;

- Making the fact sheets available online in a format that could be edited so that health workers could delete points that weren't relevant for the client; and
- Having space on the online editable version of the fact sheets to be able to personalise the facts sheets for the client.

Awareness and perceptions of the Indigenous Music Competition

The interview teams reported that while the level of awareness of the Indigenous Music Competition was low amongst the young people they spoke with, the concept of the competition and the songs from previous entrants on the compilation CD had a very broad appeal for the young people, regardless of Aboriginality. They reported a great deal of enthusiasm amongst young people for creating song entries, especially due to financial incentives offered for competition winners. When young people listened to the songs they were able to identify messages and lyrics but there were mixed views about the relative merits of individual songs. The teams indicated that due to the song style, the young people found the lyrics of the competition winning song were difficult to identify. However, when read the lyrics, which are included in the CD insert, the young people were able to understand and interpret these. The general perceptions of the competition and song entries were that the music may start a discussion but would be unlikely to initiate behaviour change on its own.

Perceptions relating to cultural relevance

The teams reported that there were a range of discussions relating to the project name *Cannabis: It's not our culture*. They found that a number of the Aboriginal people they interviewed felt that the 'Not Our Culture' was inappropriately implying that the problem of cannabis use was specifically an Aboriginal problem and theirs alone, arguing that cannabis had been around for centuries in many different cultures.

In terms of relevance of the poster artworks across communities, a range of responses were reported by the teams, with some Aboriginal people perceiving them as culturally relevant since they were created by Aboriginal artists, others viewing them as simply artworks but not particularly relevant, and still others perceiving them as only relevant to particular areas or clans.

A suggestion for future resources reported by the teams was production of a 'kit' for individuals to create their own artworks and fact sheets that discuss specific cultural concepts such as effects on family and spirituality.

Comparison of communities NCPIC had worked with previously and the matched communities

The lead researcher on the community visits reported that there were not any consistent differences between awareness and perceptions of the NCPIC resources in the communities that NCPIC had previously worked with (Geelong, Nowra and Griffith) compared with the other matched

communities (Dubbo, Newcastle and Nowra), reporting consistently low levels of awareness of the resources across the communities. In the Griffith Aboriginal Medical Service that NCPIC had directly worked with, the service providers were all familiar with NCPIC's work and resources but other community members and other service providers in Griffith were not. For Geelong and Nowra, where NCPIC had worked with other Aboriginal Services than the Aboriginal Medical Services the interview teams reported mixed levels of awareness of the *Cannabis: It's not our culture* project or the resources amongst the staff of the nearby Aboriginal Medical Services.

The teams also reported that in each of the six communities they visited, they found at least one of the service providers had been exposed to NCPIC and its work through the Centre's training sessions, health promotion activities or free resources. Examples of the range of ways these service providers had been reached by NCPIC included a psychologist in Nowra and a counsellor in Dubbo who were aware of NCPIC and some of the Centre's resources through attending a free training seminar. A youth worker in Newcastle was aware of NCPIC because of the location of a cannabis clinic next door but not specifically aware of the *Not Our Culture* resources.

5.4.4 Interviews with Indigenous Music Competition participants and organisers

The following section is drawn from a summary by Clare Chenoweth of telephone interviews with a sample of music competition participants and community-level competition organisers.

Interviews with Indigenous Music Competition participants

Telephone interviews were undertaken with three of the 2010 Indigenous Music Competition entrants during April 2011 to explore their perceptions of their experience in the competition. While some of the competition participants became aware of the competition online, most were alerted to the competition by their teacher, or a service provider such as a youth worker. The most common reasons mentioned for entering the competition were for fun, to do something new and because they liked music.

When asked about the best part of participating in the competition, the most common responses were the group work aspect, having fun making music, and the chance to practice music in order to improve music skills.

Most respondents reported that they enjoyed being part of the competition but that their participation didn't influence their thinking or actions. One participant added that it helped him learn about the local Indigenous culture as he was not from the area he was living in and that working on the song also provided a valuable opportunity to discuss cannabis use with community elders.

While some said that their participation in the competition had helped them think about the negative effects of cannabis and helped them talk with people about issues related to cannabis use,

this was not universal. Overall involvement in the competition was viewed positively and a keen interest expressed in participating again in future events.

Interviews with Indigenous Music Competition organisers

Telephone interviews were conducted with five people who had acted as competition organisers at the community level assisting participants to enter the competition.

Most of these competition organisers reported that the participants from their area found the competition very appealing, were enthusiastic in their participation and enjoyed their experience of song writing and the recording process very much. The most common themes that their participants were working on were described as the negative effects of cannabis on health and community and other drug and alcohol issues.

While organisers felt that participation in the competition was appealing for the young people they worked with, there was less confidence about what effect this experience would have on influencing attitudes and behaviour regarding cannabis use on its own. It was suggested that the competition would be most effective if it was part of a broader cannabis program and that the CD could be accompanied by other program resources. Linking the competition and the CD to school drug prevention programs was specifically mentioned. One organiser highlighted the fact that the local school drug prevention program had highlighted the cost of cannabis to health, family and users and had given the students excellent ideas and themes to write about.

It was noted that many of the participants had very complex lives and that participation in this competition would not be expected to have a major impact on participants' behaviour. Nevertheless there was a sense that participation at least encouraged young people to be aware of issues related to cannabis use. A common theme reported from the interviews was the positive impact that participation in the competition had made to participants' personal confidence.

An important cultural outcome of the competition was also emphasised. This related to the point made by one of the competition participants about the competition opening up channels of communication about sensitive issues between young people and elders. One organiser noted that in her community, participation in the competition by young men was highly valuable as it had allowed them to engage with Aboriginal Elders in a very meaningful way. The young men visited the cultural and language centre to discuss with elders what they thought were the harmful impacts of 'gunja' and then, together, the young Aboriginal men and elders worked out an appropriate translation in local language for lines in the song. She also noted that the song is now played on Waringarri Radio which spans across the East Kimberley.

5.5 Discussion

The large number of orders for the project's resources (706 for the artwork poster series and 631 for the cannabis fact sheet sets) indicate the popularity of these resources. Fewer orders for the

Indigenous Music Competition CD have been received (163), consistent with the relatively low level of awareness of this resource.

From the occupations provided by the respondents to the online survey, (alcohol and other drug workers, counsellors, youth workers, nurses, teachers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and service managers and administrators) the sample appears to represent very appropriate target audiences for the resources. The NCPIC website is clearly the most likely place where respondents had seen the cannabis fact sheets.

It is somewhat surprising that the level of awareness of the project resources across the community visits was generally modest amongst service providers when sets of the artwork posters and fact sheet sets had been sent out to 191 Aboriginal organisations in addition to the orders from the NCPIC website.

Cannabis fact sheets

As would be expected, awareness of the fact sheets was quite high amongst the online sample of people who had placed orders for NCPIC resources, with nearly nine in ten recalling receipt of the resources. Fact sheets are sent out from NCPIC website in packages of ten of each of the twelve fact sheets. It is not clear then, why there would be such wide differences in awareness of some fact sheets such as 'Cannabis and mental health', 'What is cannabis?' and 'Cannabis and young people' which were recalled by seventy per cent or more of the respondents, compared with 'Cannabis potency' and 'cannabis and reproduction' which were only recalled by approximately one-third of respondents.

Seventy per cent of the total online sample (94% of those gave their impressions) provided positive impressions of the fact sheets generally describing them as interesting, informative and easy to read.

Around seven out of ten respondents indicated that they thought the design and language level in the fact sheets was appropriate for their communities, and that the fact sheets were providing information to people in their community in a culturally relevant way. One in ten respondents felt they were not appropriate or were not culturally relevant. The reasons given for this lack of appropriateness were that the fact sheets were not colourful or visually interesting enough or not suitable for low literacy clients. These responses clearly suggest a misunderstanding of the intended purpose of these resources. That is, believing that the resources are intended for distribution to community members rather than for use by the service providers.

This is further evident in the high proportion of respondents (approximately half of those who answered the question about what they did with the fact sheets when they received them) who indicated that they either put the fact sheets on display for clients or community members to take away or included them in information packs for clients or distributed them at open days. This suggests the misunderstanding of the intended purpose of these resources is widespread. This misperception of the purpose of the fact sheets was also evident during the community visits where

the teams reported that many of the comments from service providers about the fact sheets clearly indicated that they thought the fact sheets were for distribution through their community rather than for use by the health workers in their service.

The four fact sheets which were most recalled were also the four that were rated as most useful: 'Cannabis and mental health', 'What is cannabis?', 'Cannabis and young people' and 'Cannabis and the law'. 'Mixing cannabis and alcohol' was also rated relatively highly amongst the most useful of the fact sheets even though only half of the respondents had indicated being aware of this fact sheet. The fact sheets that were nominated as not useful, albeit by ten or less respondents, were 'cannabis and driving', 'cannabis use and reproduction' and 'cannabis and the law'. The fact that the 'Cannabis and the law' fact sheet was nominated amongst the most useful and least useful indicates the range of uses of the fact sheets by different service providers for different client groups.

Six in ten of the respondents indicated that they thought the fact sheets were useful for all groups in their communities while one in eight felt this wasn't the case for their communities. The groups for whom the fact sheets were nominated as being useful were young people, cannabis users, parents, Indigenous Australians and service providers. The groups for whom the facts sheets were considered not useful were people with low literacy, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) groups, older people, younger adolescents and people who are not interested in seeking help. The concern about appropriateness of the fact sheets for low literacy and CALD community members once again reflects a misunderstanding about the expectation of giving the fact sheets to community members rather than service providers using them with clients.

Consistent with the findings discussed earlier, the most common suggestions for making changes to the fact sheets were to add more pictures and make them more colourful. While this would seem most relevant if the fact sheets were being designed for distribution to community members, service providers who were discussing the fact sheets during the community visits suggested that adding more colour and Aboriginal art would also increase the appeal of the fact sheets amongst the Indigenous service providers.

Other very practical suggestions for increasing the utility of the fact sheets included the binding of the fact sheets into a booklet-style resource for use in clinical settings. Producing a bound 'fact sheet resource' such as this could serve to reinforce the purpose for the fact sheets in the counselling setting. Being able to adapt the online fact sheets to edit and personalise them into a form that would be suitable to give to clients also seems a useful technical extension for the fact sheets.

Artwork posters

Three-quarters of respondents recalled receiving the set of artwork posters sent from NCPIC and the majority of those who provided information about what they had done with the posters when they received them indicated that they had displayed the posters in reception areas or other locations. Once again it seems surprising that in light of this there was such a low level of awareness of the