



Central Australian
Aboriginal Congress
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION | ICN 7823

Submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training *Inquiry into Adult literacy and its importance* **5 March 2021**

Background

Central Australian Aboriginal Congress (Congress) is a large Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service (ACCHS) based in Alice Springs. We are one of the most experienced organisations in the country in Aboriginal health, a national leader in primary health care, and a strong advocate for the health of our people.

Congress delivers services to more than 14,000 Aboriginal people living in Alice Springs and remote communities across Central Australia including Ltyentye Apurte (Santa Teresa), Ntaria (Hermannsburg), Wallace Rockhole, Utju (Areyonga), Mutitjulu and Amoonguna.

This submission is based on our experience of delivering comprehensive primary health care including multidisciplinary clinical care; health promotion and disease prevention programs; and action on the social, cultural, economic and political determinants of health and wellbeing.

We have focused on literacy as one of the key determinants of health and wellbeing, addressing the Inquiry's Terms of Reference as follows:

- 1: Adult English literacy in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia
- 2: Effect of literacy and numeracy on labour force participation and wages
- 3: Links between literacy and social outcomes
- 5: Adult literacy and COVID-19
- 6: Adult literacy programs in Aboriginal Australia

We have also included quotes from community members talking about their experience of literacy, taken from published sources.

Note that in this document we use the term 'Aboriginal' as the most appropriate terms in the Central Australian context to refer to Australia's First Peoples.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1. Any approach to improving the literacy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults must recognise the rights to self-determination of Aboriginal peoples as established under international agreements to which Australia is a signatory, including the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

Recommendation 2. That the Australian Government establish a First Nations Voice to Parliament as recommended in the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* as the overarching framework under which the literacy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults may be addressed.

Recommendation 3. That the Australian Government funds the ongoing gathering and publication of national, State/Territory and regional data on the prevalence of low literacy in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to inform policy, planning and services.

Recommendation 4. That the Australian Bureau of Statistics is resourced to establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander committee to advise on the collection of data on English literacy levels in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Recommendation 5. Considering the inadequacy of JobSeeker payment levels and inflexible systems which are driving higher levels of poverty and ill health for Aboriginal families, the Australian Government should redesign citizenship entitlement program requirements and systems to ensure they are socially and culturally appropriate and at an appropriate level of literacy for Aboriginal people, especially those in remote areas.

Recommendation 6. That Governments recognise the greater resilience of community-based (rather than centre-based) adult literacy programs in dealing with service delivery challenges such as those caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure that these advantages are considered in tendering and funding processes.

Recommendation 7. That the Australian Government funds the extension of community controlled adult literacy campaigns (such as the Yes I Can! program delivered by the Literacy for Life Foundation) across Australia to improve adult literacy, support literacy practices in families, build a culture that values learning amongst adults and children, and address multiple targets of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap

Summary of key points

Context

Central Australian Aboriginal people can commonly speak several Aboriginal languages as well as Aboriginal English. However, the failure of governments at all levels to effectively address the historical legacy and contemporary experience of colonisation means that literacy in Standard English remains low.

Adult English literacy in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia

There are no reliable national data on English language literacy in Aboriginal Australia. However, it has been estimated that around 35% of the Aboriginal population has very low levels of English language literacy, two-and-a half times the rate in the non-Indigenous population.

Poor English language literacy is much more common in regional and remote areas. In the Northern Territory over 85% of Aboriginal people do not have a level of English literacy needed to engage fully with the English speaking world.

Low English literacy is often 'normalised' in Aboriginal communities. Relying on self-reported English-language literacy ability is therefore likely to significantly under-estimate the scale of the problem. Years of completed schooling is also a poor indicator of literacy skills of Aboriginal adults.

Effect of literacy on employment, wages and poverty

In Australia it has been estimated that an increase in literacy and numeracy by one skill level increases the likelihood of employment by between 2% and 4% and an increase in wages of around 10%.

While Vocational and Education Training (VET) contributes to employment, its impact is severely limited by low course completion rates for Aboriginal people, particularly in remote and very remote areas.

Large numbers of Aboriginal families are dependent on citizenship entitlements such as the Jobseeker Allowance. The payments are not enough to keep families out of poverty, especially in remote areas where the cost of living is high. As well as the inadequacy of the payments, it is very common for Aboriginal people to not receive their entitlements due both to inflexible and inappropriate program rules and to the relatively high level of literacy required to access and navigate the Centrelink payments system.

Literacy and social outcomes

Higher levels of literacy can be expected to lead to a wide range of social benefits including improved early childhood development / childhood literacy practices; better engagement with schools and further education; improved housing;

reduced contact with the criminal justice system; and increased ability to manage and govern community organisations.

There are many links between literacy and health. The literacy of mothers is especially important as it empowers and enables them to act on behalf of their own health and that of their children.

Increased literacy can be expected to lead to better health and wellbeing through increased access to and appropriate use of health services.

Improving adult literacy also empowers people to take control of their lives and to address unemployment, inequality, poverty and other social determinants of health.

Adult literacy and COVID-19

Australia's network of Aboriginal community controlled health services has helped ensure that Aboriginal communities have been substantially protected from the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

However, the restrictions on movements and gatherings which have been necessary to protect all Australians have had a disproportionate effect on education and training for those living in poverty, or in remote and very remote areas.

In these circumstances, community-based adult literacy education is a more resilient model of delivery than formal, centre-based study.

Adult literacy programs in Aboriginal Australia

Literacy is strongly related to health, employment, income, and community capacity. However, there has been no focused government effort on increasing adult literacy in Aboriginal Australia.

Since 2012, the Yes I Can! mass literacy campaign run by the Literacy for Life Foundation (LFLF) has been implemented in 9 Aboriginal communities in New South Wales and one in the Northern Territory. It has completion rates four times greater than those of formal VET courses, and shows significant improvements in literacy, in self-confidence for participants, in increased school engagement from families, and in decreased criminal activity.

Local Aboriginal community control and engagement are central to the success of mass adult literacy campaigns such as Yes I Can! The *National Agreement on Closing the Gap* commits governments to building the Aboriginal community-controlled sector and increasing the proportion of services delivered by community controlled organisations.

Context

1. Central Australian Aboriginal people commonly speak several of the many Aboriginal languages in the region. Maintaining Aboriginal languages and culture is fundamental to wellbeing [1]. Many people in Central Australia also speak Aboriginal English which has its own structures and vocabulary.
2. However, despite the multilingual abilities of our peoples, literacy in Standard English remains low (see below). This reflects the failure of governments at all levels to effectively address the historical legacy and contemporary experience of colonisation, including the dispossession and impoverishment of our communities; the forcible removal of children from their families and its intergenerational effects; the suppression of culture and language; and the ongoing experience of personal and structural racism and discrimination.
3. Given this context, any approach to improving English literacy for Aboriginal adults must recognise the rights to self-determination of Aboriginal peoples as established under international agreements to which Australia is a signatory, including the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* [2].
4. Self-determinant structures are needed at an Australian national level to give full effect to these rights. This includes the establishment of a constitutionally enshrined national representative body for Australia's First Nations (a 'Voice to Parliament') plus a Makarrata Commission to supervise a process of agreement-making and truth-telling between governments and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as recommended in the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* [3]. These proposals have the overwhelming support of Aboriginal people. A constitutionally enshrined Voice to Parliament would provide the overarching framework within which the literacy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples may be addressed.

[I need English] because I need to understand the language that governments use. The language that we don't, that we haven't... We don't understand. True story.

Evonne Mitjarrandi
Galiwin'ku Community [6]]

Recommendation 1. Any approach to improving the literacy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults must recognise the rights to self-determination of Aboriginal peoples as established under international agreements to which Australia is a signatory, including the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

Recommendation 2. That the Australian Government establish a First Nations Voice to Parliament as recommended in the *Uluru Statement from the Heart* as the overarching framework under which the literacy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults may be addressed.

Term of Reference 1: Adult English literacy in Aboriginal Australia

Prevalence of low English language literacy

5. In 2011-12, in Australia as a whole about one in every seven adults (14%) had low levels of English language literacy¹ [4]. While no reliable national data is available, we know that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have, in general, much lower English literacy than the non-Aboriginal population. Nationally it has been estimated that as many as 35% of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population has very low levels of English language literacy [5]. This figure is certain to be much higher in some areas, particularly in regional and remote Australia.
6. For example in the Northern Territory it has been estimated that over 85% of Aboriginal people do not have a level of English literacy needed to engage fully with the English speaking world [6]. This includes around one in five (between 20% and 22%) people who would need to be fully supported to complete any English literacy tasks, and a further two in five (between 38% and 45%) who would have trouble participating in Certificate Level I and II training.

Sometimes I always not confident to talk to other Balanda [non-Aboriginal] mob, because I always putting in front shame and I don't like, feel like to talk. That's why. If I learn more in L&N, I get more and more talent to speak to all the Balanda in confident way.

Chris Wanambi
Galiwin'ku Community [6]
7. A recent investigation into the prevalence of low literacy in eight Aboriginal communities in New South Wales found that almost seven in ten people (68%) self-reported low English-language literacy. However, formal assessment of these same community members found that all of them (100%) had low or very low levels of English-language literacy [7]. The study pointed towards two significant issues:
 - a. in communities marked by intergenerational disadvantage, the lack of English literacy is normalised, and even low levels of literacy are significant achievements. Relying on self-reported English-language literacy ability is therefore likely to significantly under-estimate the scale of the problem.
 - b. half (50%) of those formally assessed as having low or very low levels of English-language literacy had completed education to Year 10 or higher. Years of completed schooling is therefore not a good indicator of literacy skills in the community.

¹ Level 1 or below using the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) scale.

Data to inform action

8. No reliable national figures on the levels of English literacy amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are available.
9. The main national source of data on English language literacy is the survey carried out under the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) [4]. The PIAAC survey was last conducted in Australia by the ABS in 2011/12. We understand it is planned to carry out the survey again in 2022.
10. Unfortunately, the PIAAC specifically excludes people who live in very remote areas of Australia, or who lived in discrete Indigenous communities. Although Indigenous status was collected in the survey, the ABS does not report on English literacy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities [6].
11. As a result, policy makers, service providers and Government have no means of reliably knowing the prevalence of low Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander English literacy at a national, state/territory or regional level (though see above for estimates); no reliable basis for allocating resources to tackle the issue; and no data on which to base an assessment of the effectiveness of policies and programs.

Recommendation 3. That the Australian Government funds the ongoing gathering and publication of national, State/Territory and regional data on the prevalence of low literacy in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to inform policy, planning and services.

Recommendation 4. That the Australian Bureau of Statistics is resourced to establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander committee to advise on the collection of data on English literacy levels in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Term of Reference 2: Effect of literacy and numeracy on labour force participation and wages

Adult literacy, VET and employment

12. The link between low adult literacy and employment outcomes is well-documented, including in Australia as a whole where it has been estimated that an increase in literacy and numeracy by one skill level increases the likelihood of employment by between 2% and 4% and an increase in wages of around 10% [8].

13. Completion of Vocational and Education Training contributes to employment, with around 40% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who were not employed before such training reporting that they were in work after they had completed a formal VET course. However, the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduates employed after completing a VET course is not improving with around three-quarters (74%) reported being employed after training in 2006, and two thirds (68%) in 2016 [9].
14. Most importantly, the limiting factor for VET as a pathway to employment is the very low course completion rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly in remote and very remote areas. In very remote areas only around 1 in 6 (17%) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who enrol in a VET course completes it and even in major cities the completion rate is only 1 in 3 (33%). Completion rates are lowest for those undertaking Certificate I and II courses [9]. These figures are consistent with the findings from the Northern Territory (see para. 6 above) that around two-thirds of those in remote areas do not have the literacy skills to complete such courses.

Figure 1: VET course completion rates, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous students, by remoteness, 2014

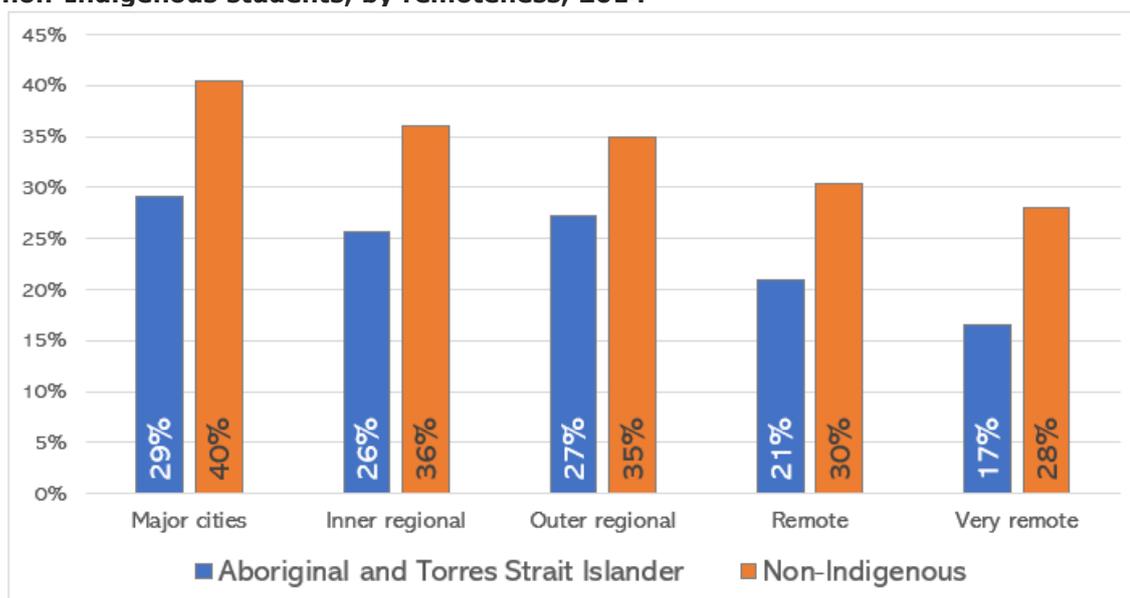
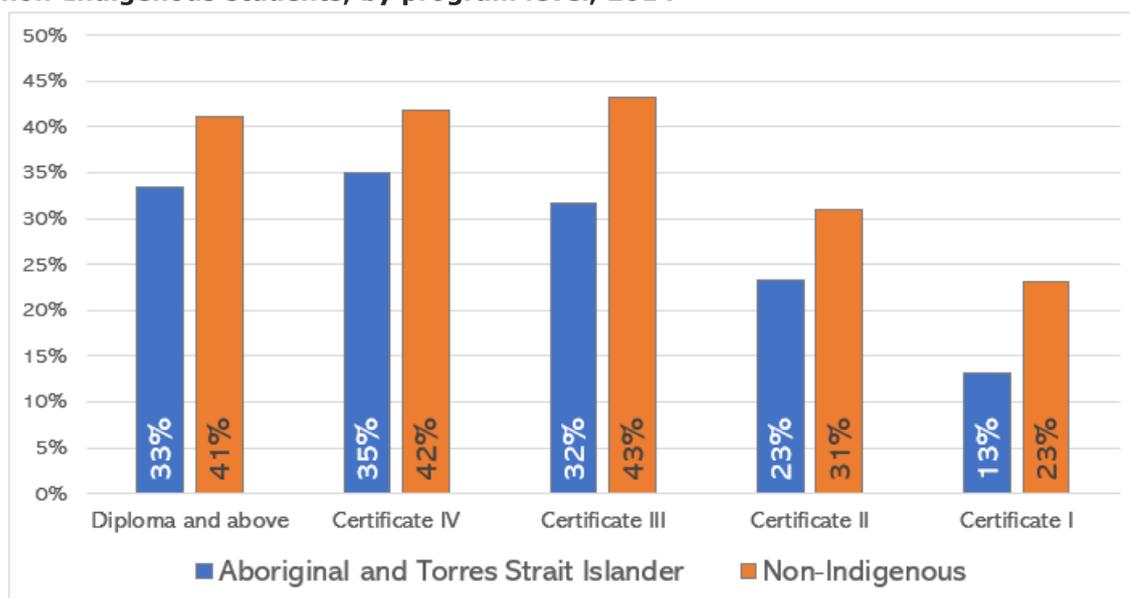


Figure 2: VET course completion rates, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous students, by program level, 2014



15. Community-based adult literacy programs (as described below under *Term of Reference 6*) are therefore essential, not just for the direct literacy and social benefits they bring, but also to ensure Aboriginal people, especially in remote areas, have the skills to undertake and successfully complete VET courses.

Literacy, citizenship entitlements, poverty and health

16. Poor health is not evenly distributed across a society: those with lower incomes tend to be sicker and die earlier than those with higher incomes [10]. As well as absolute deprivation (poverty), relative deprivation (inequality) is related to higher infant and adult mortality rates, to reduced life expectancy, and to higher rates of illness [11]. In the Northern Territory it has been calculated that between a half- and a third- of the gap in life expectancy between Aboriginal and non-Indigenous Territorians is due to socioeconomic disadvantage [12].
17. Australia is a wealthy country with a Gross Domestic Product well above the OECD average, but on average, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people receive a personal income that is only two-thirds that of the non-Indigenous population [13]. The situation is considerably worse in Central Australia where the median weekly personal income for Aboriginal people is \$281: barely more than a quarter of that for non-Indigenous people in the region (\$1,080) [14].
18. Both absolute poverty and relative inequality are worsening for Aboriginal people in remote Australia, with Aboriginal incomes are falling in real terms, and the income gap widening [15].
19. The proportion of Aboriginal people in remote areas who are employed has stalled, increasing reliance on citizenship entitlements such as Jobseeker, the Parenting Payment and the Youth Allowance. These payments are inadequate

to meet basic needs: in 2014-15, almost a third (29%) of Aboriginal families in remote areas reported that they had run out of money for basic living expenses at least once in the previous year [16].

20. In addition to the inadequacy of the payment levels, it is very common for Aboriginal families to not receive their entitlements due both to inflexible and inappropriate program rules and to low English literacy. As one study in a remote Aboriginal area found:

Most people do not have sufficient English language and literacy to independently fill in Centrelink forms, negotiate the MyGov website or handle over-the-phone interactions with Centrelink ... Those who report to Centrelink by phone often do not understand what is said to them; they often guess the answers, or say yes to obligations they cannot meet because they think it is the 'correct' answer [17]

21. As a result, many Aboriginal people have their entitlements stopped or find it impossible to meet program requirements in the first place, leading to reduced income and/or income insecurity for Aboriginal families.

Recommendation 5. Considering the inadequacy of JobSeeker payment levels and inflexible systems which are driving higher levels of poverty and ill health for Aboriginal families, the Australian Government should redesign citizenship entitlement program requirements and systems to ensure they are socially and culturally appropriate and at an appropriate level of literacy for Aboriginal people, especially those in remote areas.

Term of Reference 3: Literacy and social outcomes

22. The links between literacy and the capacity of Aboriginal communities to address many of the challenges that they face in contemporary Australia are complex. However, it is expected that higher levels of literacy will lead to a wide range of social benefits including [18]:
- a. improved early childhood development especially through encouragement and support for childhood literacy practices
 - b. better engagement with schools and further education (see Term of Reference 4)
 - c. improved housing, for example through increased family and community capacity to interact with and respond to housing providers / landlords
 - d. reduced contact with the criminal justice system, for example by enabling Aboriginal people to avoid criminalisation (such as by

undertaking driving tests and obtaining licenses) and to understand the processes and realise their rights within the criminal justice system

- e. increased capacity to engage effectively in the management and governance of community organisations.

Since the commencement of this program in Bourke I have observed tremendous outcomes ... many of those involved in the program have demonstrated a transition from involvement in criminal activity toward positive activities such as championing social justice issues of behalf of other less literate community members.

Greg Moore
NSW Police Force [18]

23. We would identify two additional important benefits of literacy of particular interest to Congress as an Aboriginal community controlled health service: literacy and health, and literacy and empowerment.

Literacy and health

24. The importance of education – and particularly maternal education – in improving health and life expectancy has been documented over many decades

I am so glad I joined the Yes, I Can program. ... Now I can help my kids with their homework from school. It's just really good we learned so much from this program

Stephanie Gillon
Literacy for Life
participant, NSW [18]

[19]. More recently, it appears that the critical pathway by which this takes effect is specifically through maternal literacy: mothers who are literate may be more empowered and able to advocate on behalf of their own health and that of their children, and are certainly more health literate:

The more we learn about maternal literacy, the more it looks like an indispensable passport to life-saving services for mothers and children [20]

25. Health literacy itself has two main components: at the level of individual skills, it reflects the capacity to find, understand and use health information; at the level of systems, it describes the features of health care policies, processes, and materials which enable the individual to engage effectively with care. At the individual level, those with low health literacy are more likely to have lower engagement with health services, including preventive services; higher hospital re-admission rates; poorer understanding of medications and their use; and a lower ability to self-manage care [21].

26. Increased literacy may therefore be expected to lead to better health and wellbeing through increased access to and appropriate use of health services.

Literacy and empowerment

27. There is a strong relationship between disempowerment and poor health and wellbeing: the consistent exposure to stress due to an inability to exercise control in life can profoundly undermine physical and mental health [22, 23]. Improving adult literacy in English is critical to empowering people to take

control of their lives and to addressing unemployment, inequality, poverty and other social determinants of health. [24].

28. The Yes I Can! literacy campaign in Western New South Wales (see Term of Reference 6) provided numerous examples of individual and community empowerment for both student participants and locally trained and supported literacy facilitators, especially for women [25, 26].

I think we need to take our rightful place in relationships, in community as women. In your relationship there's problems going on or domestic violence but we can step up and say "I'm not going to do that anymore; this is how it's going to be".

Tannia Edwards
Literacy for Life Educator, NSW [26]

Term of Reference 5: Adult literacy and COVID-19

29. Unlike many Indigenous peoples elsewhere in the world, Aboriginal communities have been substantially protected from the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Australia's network of Aboriginal community controlled health services have played a significant role in this success [27].
30. Nevertheless, the restrictions on movements and gatherings which have been necessary to protect all Australians have a disproportionate effect on education and training for those living in poverty, or in remote and very remote areas. People in these circumstances frequently do not have access to online learning to continue their studies; are unable to travel the long distances to centre-based courses; do not have safe and reliable housing to support studying from home; and do not have the money to address any of these issues [28]
31. In these circumstances, community-based adult literacy education is a more resilient model of delivery. By being based in the community, it does not require travel for participants, is able to provide the space and materials for their study and is founded on continuing community engagement and solidarity. We understand, for example, that despite some inevitable challenges, the Literacy for Life Foundation community-based adult literacy campaign in Ltyentye Apurte (Santa Teresa – a remote community in Central Australia) was able to remain operating during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020.

Recommendation 6. That Governments recognise the greater resilience of community-based (rather than centre-based) adult literacy programs in dealing with service delivery challenges such as those caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure that these advantages are considered in tendering and funding processes.

Term of Reference 6: Adult literacy programs in Aboriginal Australia

32. Despite the well-known evidence about literacy being strongly related to health, employment, income, and community capacity (all of which are central to the Australian Government's Close the Gap targets), there has been no focused government effort on increasing adult literacy in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia. Most attention instead has been on schooling, but school completion rates are only poorly related to functional English literacy (see para. 7). The ability of formal VET courses to address the literacy gap is also limited due to low completion rates (see para. 14).
33. While a number of programs have been identified that focus specifically on the adult education and training needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, only one that we are aware of has been implemented in several contexts and has been formally evaluated to show significant gains in adult literacy. This is the Yes I Can! mass literacy campaign run by the Literacy for Life Foundation (LFLF).

The Yes I Can! mass literacy campaign

34. The Literacy for Life Foundation (LFLF) is a not-for-profit organisation working in partnership with Aboriginal communities and community-controlled organisations and service providers to raise levels of adult literacy.
35. The Yes I Can! campaign is based on a model originally developed in Cuba and adapted for delivery in Aboriginal Australia. It has a strong community development approach, and is based around training local Aboriginal people to be adult literacy educators and to deliver literacy classes in their communities with the support of qualified adult educators [29]. The program has three phases:
- a. Socialisation and mobilisation: a community development campaign to build local leadership and commitment throughout implementation and beyond
 - b. Literacy lessons: 64 basic reading and writing lessons using a simple audio-visual method delivered by trained and supported local facilitators
 - c. 'Post-literacy' activities: to consolidate confidence and literacy skills amongst graduates, empowering them to use English literacy in their daily lives and enabling them to access pathways into further learning and employment.

I'll never forget going up to the Shire Council Chambers for an excursion with the students. We'd never stepped past the front counter ... So to see the students sit down in the council meeting room, a place that they knew was making decisions about us, about our community, I knew I couldn't stop

Mary Waites
Literacy for Life Educator, NSW [26]

36. Since 2012, LFLF has run adult literacy campaigns in 9 Aboriginal communities in New South Wales and from 2019 one in the Northern Territory at Ltyentye Apurte (Santa Teresa)². Key results from the campaigns include:

- a. over 250 Aboriginal people have graduated from the campaigns [30]
- b. retention rates ranging from 40% to 89% of students depending on the community and intake [18, 25] and averaging 63%, over four times higher than VET retention rates for Aboriginal students
- c. significant improvements in literacy, with most participants entering at pre-level 1 or level 1 on the ACSF and successfully completing at ACSF level 1 or 2 [31]
- d. Aboriginal graduates reporting very positively on the program, not just in improved literacy skills but also increased self-control and confidence [25]
- e. community benefits reported by local schools and police including greater family engagement in the education of children and reduced criminal activity amongst participants [18].

More parents are talking to me about school and asking for their kids to be given homework. It's been a great thing for the community: it's given the adults who did miss out on their schooling a chance to catch up and have a way to relate to their children.

Melissa Harrison
School Principal, NSW [18]

37. The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) included an assessment of the Yes I Can! campaigns in western New South Wales and identified the following factors for success of the program:

- a. a community development approach that involves the whole community rather than focusing on individual students
- b. training local Aboriginal people as adult education facilitators who share in the benefits of the program
- c. a focus on culturally safe and supportive learning environments.

38. Literacy for Life Campaigns are funded from a variety of Australian and State government programs, and through private and corporate donors. We understand that during 2021, LFLF has been funded by the Australian Government Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet to run a campaign in Tennant Creek in the Northern Territory.

² Recognising the link between literacy and health, Congress played a key role in sponsoring and supporting the establishment of the Ltyentye Apurte campaign.

The importance of Aboriginal community control

39. Local community control of literacy programs such as the Yes I Can! campaigns is critical to their success. The *National Agreement on Closing the Gap* (July 2020) [32] commits all Australian Governments to:

building formal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sectors to deliver services to support Closing the Gap [clause 42], and

increase the proportion of services delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, particularly community-controlled organisations [clause 55]

40. The 2020 House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training report on *Education in remote and complex environments* [28] examined the evidence around the LFLF campaign model and recommended that:

As part of its 2021 policy commitments to Closing the Gap, the Commonwealth ... provide adult literacy campaigns in communities with low levels of adult English literacy [Recommendation 11]

Recommendation 7. That the Australian Government funds the extension of community controlled adult literacy campaigns (such as the Yes I Can! program delivered by the Literacy for Life Foundation) across Australia to improve adult literacy, support literacy practices in families, build a culture that values learning amongst adults and children, and address multiple targets of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap

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