

# HAVING THE HARD CONVERSATIONS: Good practice in addressing individual and institutional resistance to Indigenous health and cultural safety education

12 noon till 1.30pm Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2015,  
Hugh Dixon Theatre, AGSM Building, Gate 11, UNSW Kensington

Never Stand Still

Medicine

Centre for Primary Health Care and Equity

**Professor Dennis McDermott and Mr Dave Sjoberg**

**Poche Centre for Indigenous Health and Wellbeing (Adelaide), Flinders University**

Many students and health professionals, alike, struggle to engage fully with Indigenous health curricula. Both content and the learning process can disturb. Where students respond with resistance – and in particular with disengagement - teaching and learning can fail (McDermott & Sjoberg, 2012)<sup>1</sup>. The development of an effective, culturally safe practitioner is jeopardised.

Institutions can also resist. Whether overt or covert, institutional resistance can operate to constrain, or deny the validity of, Indigenous leadership and pedagogical approaches. Funding, staffing, curriculum space, time-tabling, inclusion of strengths-based / non-deficit approaches, and Indigenous-preferred curriculum can all be compromised.

Dennis and Dave will draw on their current collaboration in a National Senior Teaching Fellowship (OLT). They will discuss what successful Indigenous health teaching looks like and invite participants into a conversation on how best to make it happen. They will particularly outline the development of a Good Practice Framework (GPF) that aims to clarify and address barriers to, and enablers of, student progress along an often disquieting educational journey. Additionally, the framework aims to embed investigation of individual and institutional resistance into health professional course accreditation processes. When fully complete, the GPF will be disseminated by media, academic publication, and follow-up workshops - augmented by video and printed educational resources.

Please join us for coffee and tea after the talk.

Attendance is free, but places are limited so please register via the following link -  
<http://www.surveys.unsw.edu.au/f/161459/61fd/> by COB Thursday 12 November 2015.



<sup>1</sup> <http://www.limenetwork.net.au/files/lime/case%20studies%20text-WEB.pdf>

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**Professor Dennis McDermott** is the Director of the Poche Centre for Indigenous Health and Well-Being, Adelaide. He is also currently undertaking a National Senior Teaching Fellowship through the Australian Government's Office of Learning and Teaching (OLT). Dennis is a psychologist, academic and poet. A Koori man, his mother's family are from Gadigal land (inner Sydney) with connections to Gamilaroi country (north-west NSW).

Dennis's teaching and research interests encompass early childhood, social determinants of Indigenous health, policy and health equity, racism, incarceration, Indigenous social, spiritual and emotional well-being, workforce development, Indigenous health pedagogy, and the nexus of culture and context in service delivery.



**Dave Sjöberg** BA (Aboriginal Studies) is an Anglo-Celtic Australian with a commitment to social justice and educating non-Aboriginal people about a 'shared history'. He teaches Indigenous Health in the Medical, Nursing and Midwifery, and Health Sciences programmes in the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences at Flinders University. . At Camp Coorong Race Relations and Cultural Education Centre he was taught for eight years by Ngarrindjeri Elders while working as a tutor, Cultural Museum curator and educator. Community-based lived experience and training, along with his BA in Aboriginal Studies, has helped immensely in developing a strong human rights-based approach to curriculum development and teaching.

