

The Cairns Institute

*Contributing to a brighter future for people in the tropics, worldwide*



**Case study:**  
**“Bigger than a program”:**  
**Embracing relatedness to transfer**  
**and implement an Aboriginal**  
**wellbeing program across Australia**

**Janya McCalman**

## Bacground: The Family Wellbeing Program



- Developed in 1993 by policy makers from The Aboriginal Employment Development Branch of the South Australian Department of Education, Training and Employment
- A community development approach “to support Aboriginal people to meet their higher level needs as determinants and precursors to wellbeing and build capacity for employment”.

## Program logic: Family Wellbeing and development levels of intervention

SUSTAINABLE STRONG DEVELOPMENT ACTION



BUILDING A SOLID FOUNDATION FOR STRONG ACTION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Contents taken from “Aboriginal Employment, Education Development Branch, Family Wellbeing DRAFT Mission Statement”



# Why program transfer and implementation?

Research question:

What process underlies the transfer of the Family Wellbeing Program (FWB) across sites and situations?

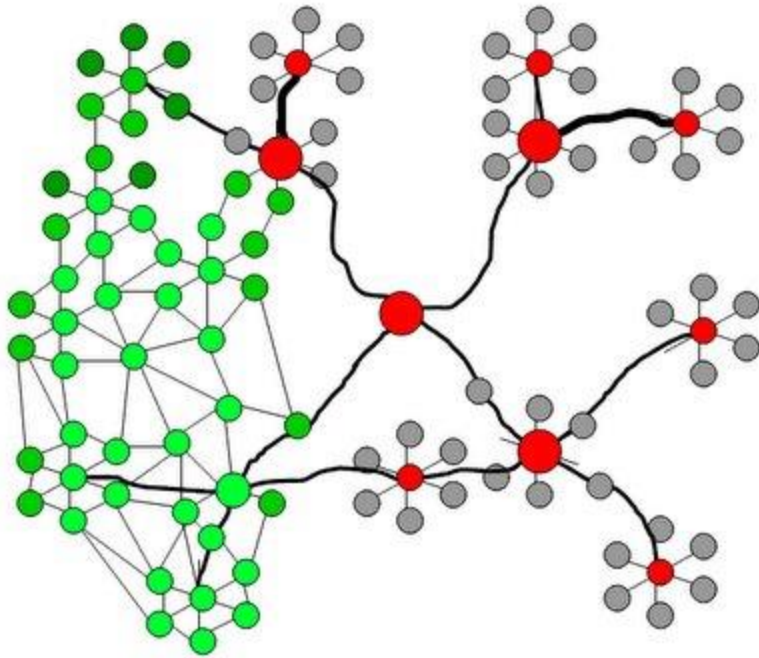
Benefit:

1. Policy makers: Could Aboriginal empowerment initiatives that work in one setting can be transferable to other settings?
2. Community partners: Could they be better supported to deliver FWB across communities?
3. Research evidence: Could the study contribute to the literature about the transfer of Indigenous Australian health programs and services?



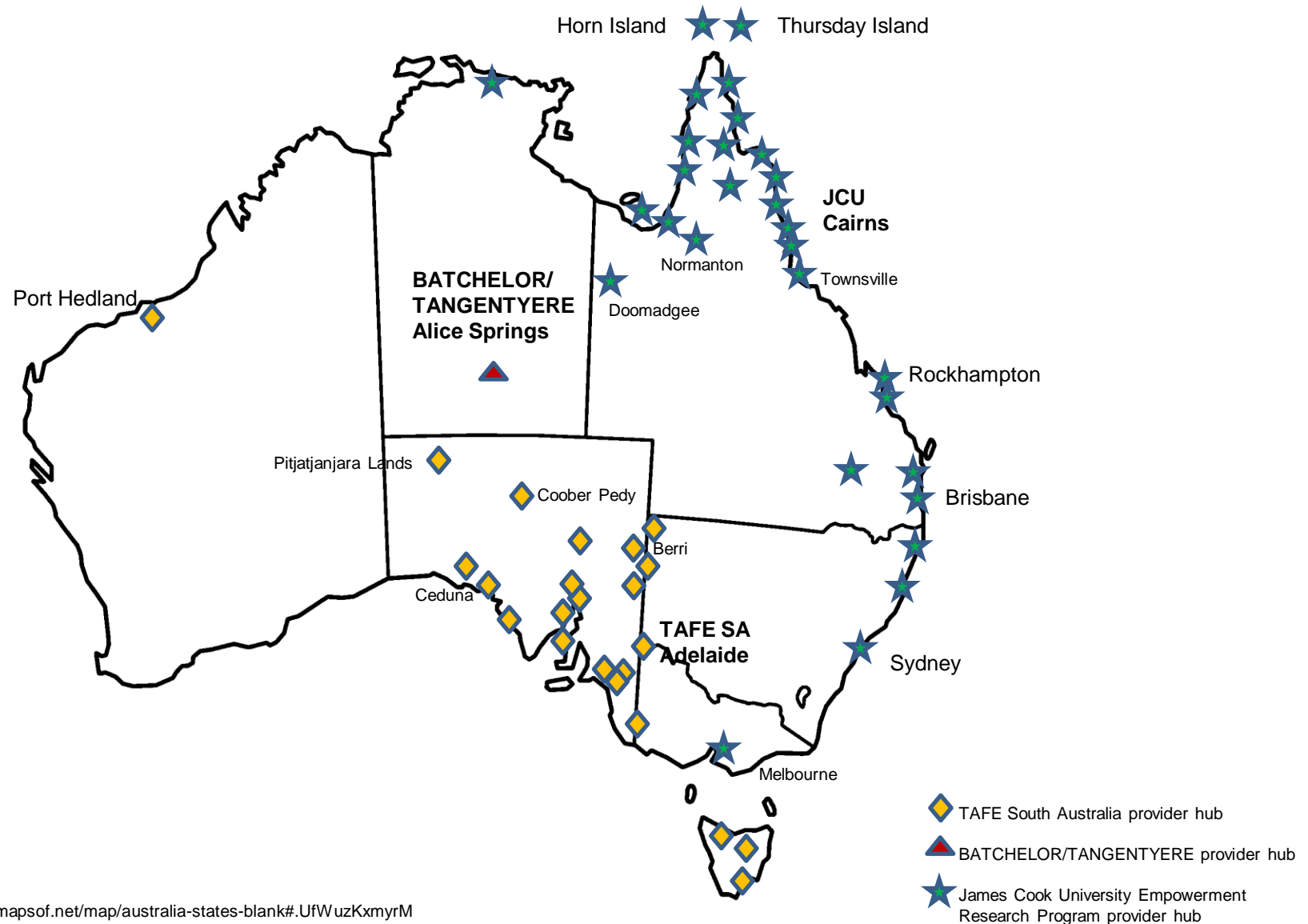
# Method

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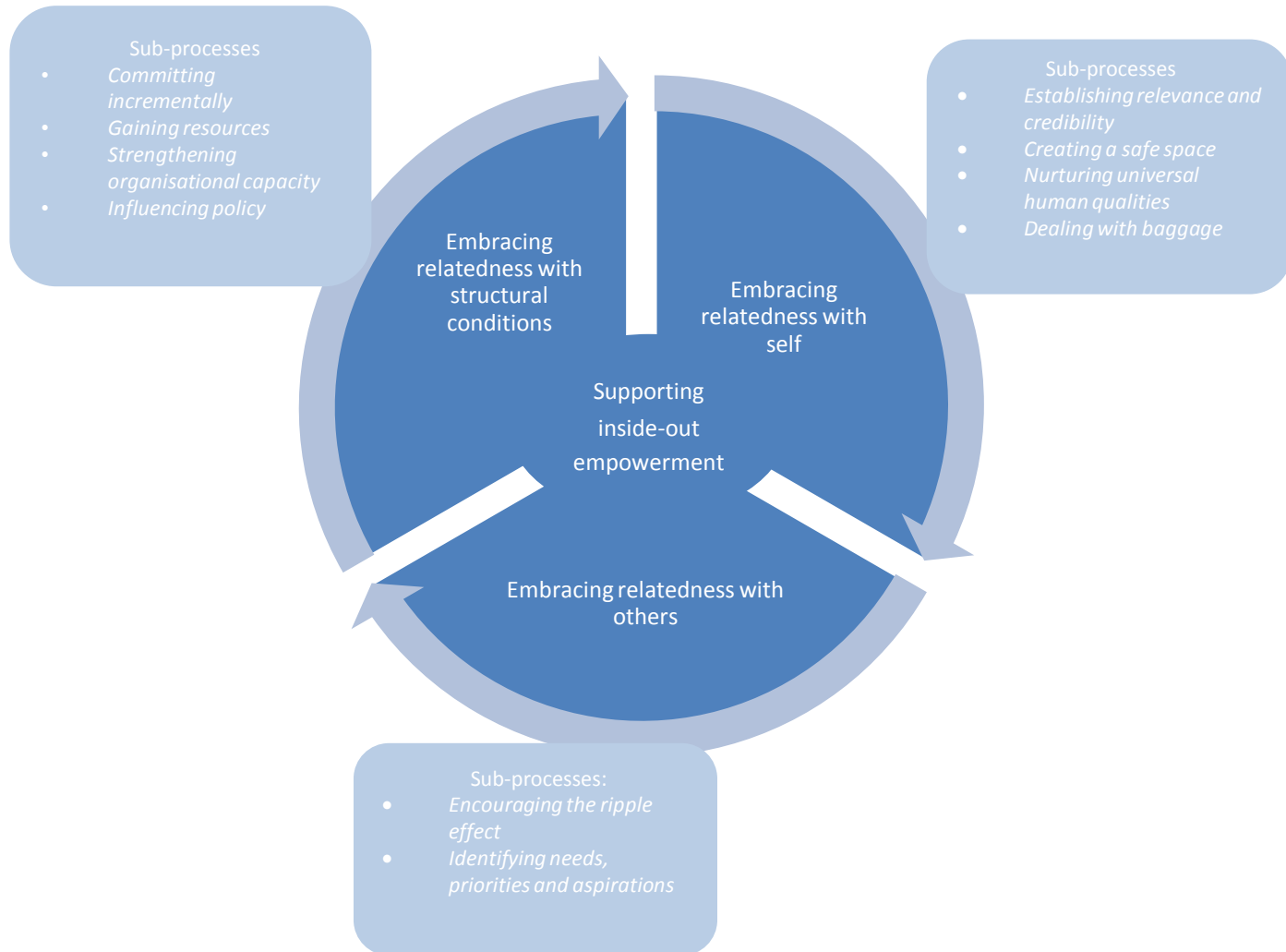


1. A historical account of FWB transfer from program documents, reports and papers;
  2. A theoretical model of program transfer from interviews with stakeholders;
  3. The significance of the theoretical model for practice and policy from comparisons with other models.
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# 1. FWB transfer across Australia



## 2. Supporting inside-out empowerment by embracing relatedness





### 3. Significance: what was important

- The empowering nature of the program,
- Experiential personal change processes,
- Aboriginal people taking control of the process,
- Informal networks and partnerships coordinated through three provider hubs,
- Organisations' responsiveness and incremental commitment,
- The role of research in adding value

BUT: The program was not sustained beyond 2 years in  $\frac{2}{3}$  sites.





# Summary

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Program transfer and implementation can be better supported by:

1. Attention to the empowering nature of programs;
2. Support for Aboriginal people to take control of the process;
3. Support for program hubs that can facilitate long-term collaborations, partnerships and networks;
4. Value-adding through associated research;
5. Review of funding frameworks to support long-term approaches; and further research to consider issues and strengthen the sustainability of program implementation.

# References

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**McCalman, J. (2013).** Bigger than a program: The transfer of the Aboriginal Family Wellbeing Program across Australia. PhD Thesis, School of Education, James Cook University.



# Contact details

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## **Links**

First Global Conference on Research Integration and Implementation

<http://www.i2sconference.org/>

<http://research.jcu.edu.au/portfolio/janya.mccalman>

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