



# Whole of Community Engagement Initiative

## Action Statement on Aboriginal Adult Language LLN in the NT

Version for consultation at the 12 September 2017 symposium

Literacy is a fundamental human right and essential to peoples' ability to fully develop their knowledge and realise their potential. English language, literacy and numeracy (LLN)<sup>1</sup> capability building onto first language literacy enables progression along educational and career pathways and is essential for full participation in community, business, the economy and broader society. More than half of NT Aboriginal adults speak English as a second language (54%), yet there is little real acknowledgement of this in terms of LLN policy or delivery response in the NT. Current policy focuses on employment yet improved adult LLN in the general population has proven flow on effects for children, parents, families, and society as a whole. Literacy is everyone's business. Everyone – including Aboriginal leaders and communities, government, non-government, service providers, business and the community, have a responsibility to work together to ensure that appropriate assistance is available and that Aboriginal people are engaged with the process.

A long-term, multi-partisan, funded policy commitment is essential to improve and sustain LLN outcomes in urban, regional and remote areas of the NT. In November 2016, 81 individuals (36% Aboriginal) from 28 organisations and agencies attended a LLN workshop at Charles Darwin University (CDU). Those present formed an LLN Network<sup>2</sup> and agreed on the core elements of this Action Statement. The Statement has been revised at a one day symposium at CDU on 12 September 2017 with the hope that it will make a positive contribution to the consultation and be used to guide action and approach.

The LLN Network welcomes the opportunity to continue to work closely with all tiers of Government and other stakeholders on this critical issue.

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1 Although we use the term 'LLN' throughout this document we are also referring to the range of Foundation skills required in order to establish, apply and maintain LLN in life, on-line and in the workplace.

2 A formally agreed, active, but unstructured network which was composed at the forum in November 2016 and which has continued to grow since that time.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. Responsibility and a policy framework

- 1.1 That all tiers of government acknowledge the size, extent and impact of low levels of English LLN in NT and prioritise consultation on a collective, coordinated and sustained response.
- 1.2 Identify the Territory and Commonwealth Government departments which will have overall responsibility for policy and collective action on Aboriginal adult English LLN in the NT.
- 1.3 Develop and implement a broadly consulted, evidence-based, Indigenous informed Aboriginal adult English language, literacy and numeracy policy framework for the NT.

### 2. Long term funding commitment

- 2.1 Identify commitment and options for long-term, secure and flexible funding
- 2.2 Identify funding for accredited as well as non-accredited training to meet the formal and real-time learning needs of Aboriginal adults at all levels of the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF)<sup>3</sup>.
- 2.3 Commit to resourcing and maintaining a qualified, well-resourced adult literacy workforce in the Territory who have job-security. This workforce should include a high proportion of Aboriginal people and local language speakers.
- 2.4 Reflect requirements of the Foundation Skills Professional Standards Framework (Foundation Skills Strategy 2012) in the training and development of LLN practitioners.
- 2.5 Commit to building and maintaining local level, non-formal LLN delivery capacity within urban, regional and remote settings through provision of education, training, resourcing and mentoring of local level workers/volunteers/champions.

### 3. Innovative and culturally appropriate delivery

- 3.1 3.1 Expand and draw on the evidence-base of effective program and service delivery models. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - a) Community-wide and community-campaign models
  - b) Community/adult learning centre models
  - c) Organisational development models: workplace LLN capacity building and workforce development
  - d) State-wide and national delivery models e.g. Tasmania and New Zealand
- 3.2 Clarify responsibility for the NT-wide English LLN stakeholder network with a Governance structure and communication strategy to: inform policy-making and standards of delivery and provide quality advice and assistance if required (e.g. documentation of case studies, evaluation, information sharing) and amplify the Aboriginal voice.
- 3.3 Provide support to enable maximum Aboriginal input into the design of programs and education and training resources to ensure inclusion of Aboriginal pedagogies and content.

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3 Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) – the Australian Government’s tool for measuring competency in reading, writing, numeracy, oral communication and learning skills.

- 3.4 Assess ACSF<sup>4</sup> levels and provide developmental support for Aboriginal staff and supervisors who wish to improve their English LLN.
- 3.5 Assess and build the capacity of community-based LLN “champions” through targeted training and support recommendation on first language/s.
- 3.6 Include statement about support for establishment of first language literacy?

## 4. Building a stronger evidence base

- 4.1 4.1 Investigate feasibility of conducting an NT-wide survey on ACSF levels of Aboriginal adults, including urban, regional and remote settings.
- 4.2 4.2 Encourage and support organisations regularly undertaking adult ACSF assessments to collect and compile the results<sup>5</sup> and share (de-identified) data centrally so the issue of low English LLN can be monitored over time.
- 4.3 Commit to a communication and education process to support NT Aboriginal leaders, urban and remote and communities, and organisations to understand the data contained in the Statistical overview Report (Shalley and Stewart 2017) and to consult together on the meaning for their people, lives and organisations.
- 4.4 Undertake a study of the economic costs of low levels of English LLN, and the economic benefits of improved levels in the Aboriginal adult population of the NT.
- 4.5 Establish an LLN clearinghouse which includes a comprehensive database of research evidence and for collection and distribution of appropriate LLN teaching and learning resources (past and present).
- 4.6 Resource and embed evaluation into LLN programs and projects to enable:
  - a) Ongoing policy and service refinement
  - b) Comparison of different implementation models, tools and methods
  - c) Sharing of findings, resources and approaches
  - d) Identification of factors contributing to success; and
  - e) Ongoing analysis of impact and outcomes (individual, family, social, economic etc.)

**Essential background reading is contained in Appendix one:** *A statistical overview: Aboriginal adult LLN in the Northern Territory*, Shalley F. and Stewart A., Whole of Community Engagement initiative, Office of the PVC of Indigenous Leadership, Charles Darwin University September 2017.

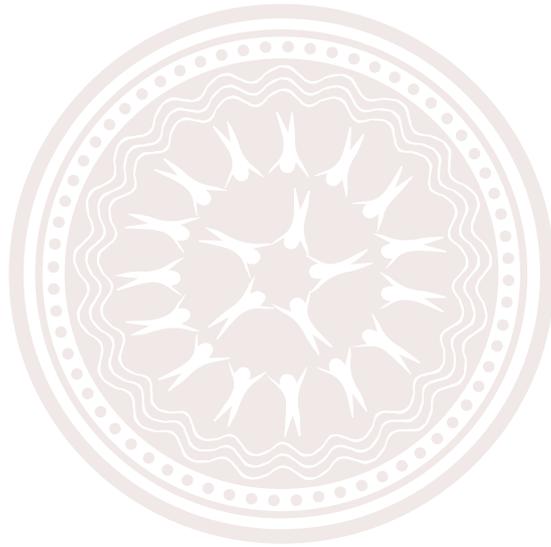
### The LLN Action Network

Whole of Community Engagement initiative - Strategic Priority Project on Indigenous adult LLN  
Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor, Charles Darwin University  
12 September 2017

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4 Action Statement on Aboriginal adult LLN in the NT: V1.0

5 In accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles of the, Privacy Act 1988



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