**Abstract submitted for the 5th NSW Rural Health and Research Congress**

**Twin Towns, Tweed Heads 9 - 11 November 2016**

**Congress Stream:** Integrated care and partnerships: rethinking relationships

**Alternate Stream:** Aboriginal Health: improved outcomes – respectful partnerships

**Abstract Title:** Every women every time; Moree Integrated Care antenatal patient journey

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**Background**

It is well documented that Aboriginal woman have poorer antenatal outcomes and access to antenatal care. Often a lack of coordinated care leads to missed educational opportunities and therefore can result in lower birth weights, benefits of breastfeeding, higher smoking rates and chronic diseases.

Moree is a rural town that has a medium risk Maternity Unit accessed by smaller communities such as Mungindi and Collarenebri, both geographically located over 140 kilometres away from Moree.

Other issues identified include:

* Distance between towns and transportation
* Women presenting to birth without appropriate antenatal care
* Communication pathways between service providers
* No access for women to appropriate maternity services in these towns

**Approach**

Hunter New England Local Health District (HNELHD) - Moree Integrated Care team is working in collaboration with many services to provide a General Practitioner/Obstetrician led multidisciplinary team antenatal outreach service in two isolated rural communities of Collarenebri and Mungindi.

A whole of systems approach was adopted including developing models of care, improving information technology connectivity, working collaboratively and workforce issues. Other barriers included crossing state borders and local health district boundaries.

**Outcomes / Results**

A collaborative service model provided patient centred care and data over a twelve month period revealed an increase in Aboriginal women accessing the services, increase birth weights, decrease birthweights and breastfeeding on discharge.

**Take Home Message**

Transformation to an integrated care model requires governance, leadership, time and ongoing commitment to sustain partnerships between all services to ensure integrated patient -centre care into the future.

By Closing the Gap and building connections with Indigenous people and their communities contribute to overall health outcomes.