**Abstract submitted for the 4th Rural Health and Research Congress**

**Armidale 4-6 November 2015**

**Congress Stream:** No. 1 Aboriginal Health – Closing the Gap / opening the connections

**Alternate Stream:** N/A

**Abstract Title:** Yarning with Aboriginal pregnant women and mothers about quitting – increasing the smoking cessation skills of health professionals

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**Background**

Tobacco smoking is a significant contributing risk factor to the higher burden of disease among Aboriginal people. In NSW in 2012, 49.9% of Aboriginal women smoked in pregnancy, compared to 9% of the non-Aboriginal population.

Supporting Aboriginal women to quit smoking during pregnancy can be challenging: many have complex social and emotional issues, live with partners/family who smoke, and/or have had negative experiences with quitting. In this context, health professionals can feel inadequately equipped to provide smoking cessation support.

**Approach**

NSW Kids and Families worked with partner agencies to develop the *Yarning about Quitting* blended learning package that aims to build the capacity of staff to provide effective and culturally appropriate smoking cessation support to Aboriginal pregnant women and mothers.

**Outcomes / Results**

Delivery of the learning package commences August 2015. Initial results from regional and rural Local Health Districts will be presented, demonstrating the extent to which the training has increased the confidence and skill of health workers in providing Aboriginal women with smoking cessation support that will help them quit.

**Take home message**

Decreasing smoking in pregnancy will achieve short, medium and long-term health gains for Aboriginal women, their children and families. Targeted education can improve health professionals’ capacity to support Aboriginal women to quit smoking in pregnancy.