

Indigenous identification



Koori Human Services Unit
Department of Human Services
2008

Overview

- Why do I need to ask about Indigenous status?
- Who uses the information & for what purposes?
- How should I ask the question and respond to difficult situations?
- Questions

Why do we need to ask about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin?

- Aboriginal people have poorer health status than other Victorians
- The life expectancy of Aboriginal people is significantly less than other Victorians, approx. 19yrs
- Aboriginal babies are more likely to have a low birth weight and die in the perinatal period
- Aboriginal people are admitted to hospital in their forties for diseases and conditions generally associated with the elderly.

Who uses this information?

- Health services
- State departments
- Commonwealth agencies: ABS, AIHW

Commonwealth and state commitment

- National apology
- Prime Minister Rudd signs the Statement of Intent
- COAG targets:
 - 'Close the gap' in life expectancy within a generation
 - Halve mortality rates for Aboriginal children under 5 years within a decade
- Victorian targets
- Premier Brumby signs the Statement of Intent

How do I ask about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin?

“Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?”

and

“Is your baby of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?”

How do I identify Indigenous status?

An Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander is a person of:

- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent
- who identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander,
- is accepted as such by the community in which he or she lives.

High Court of Australia

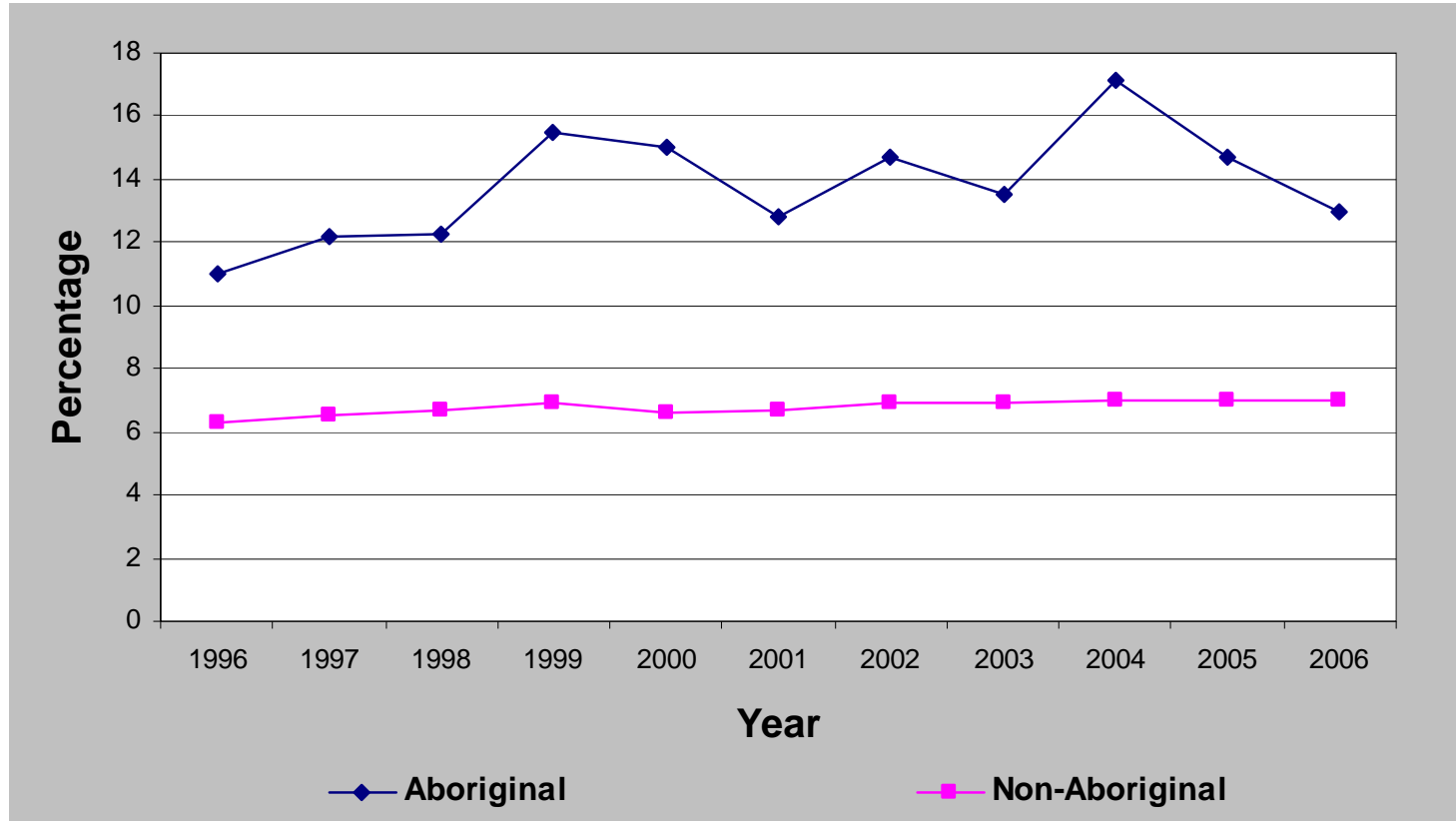


Source: ICAP identity poster, Ballarat health

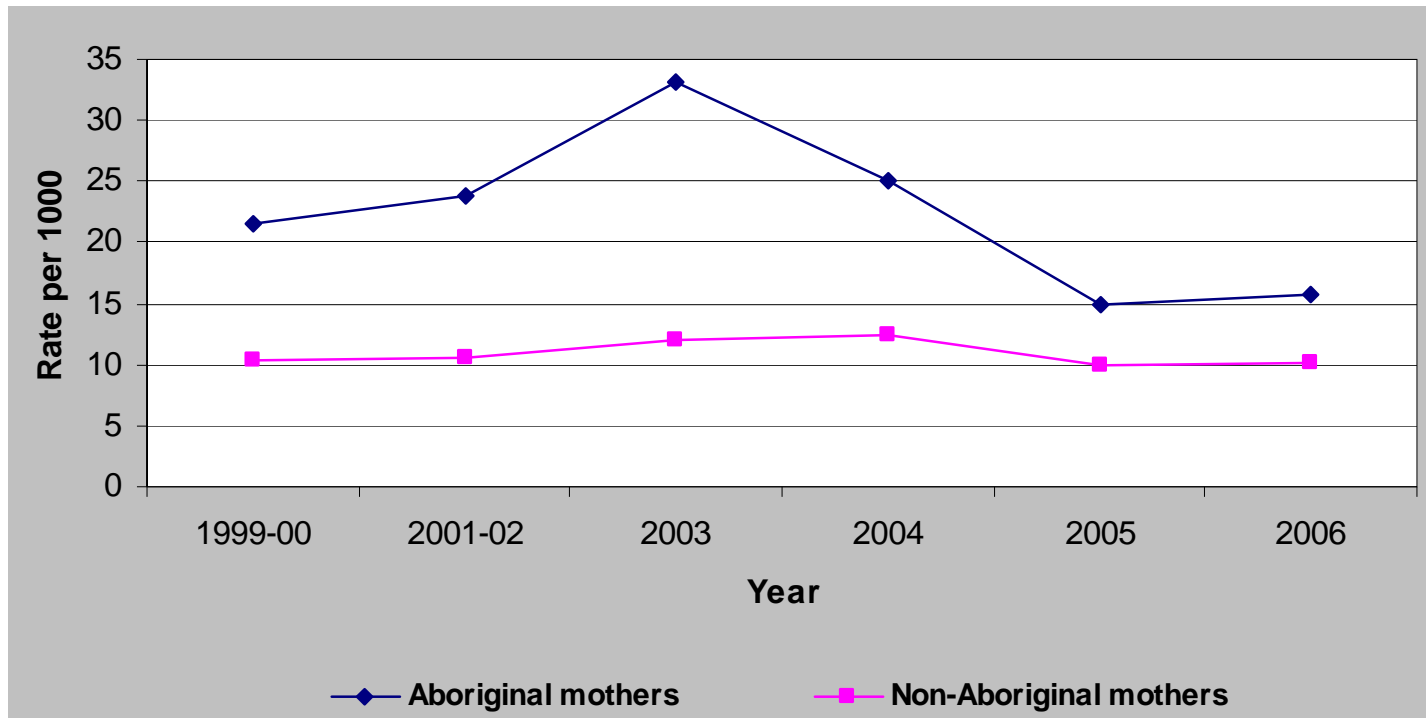
Difficult situations

- Have you experienced difficulties collecting Indigenous status information in the past?
- Do you have any reservations for the future?
- Why might it be difficult to collect sensitive patient information?
- How to deal with difficult situations

Low birth weight, 1996 - 2006



Perinatal mortality, 1999/00 - 2006



- Questions?