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## CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

# Navigate Your Health: Pioneering the improvement of health for the most vulnerable children and young people in care

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**Introduction:** Navigate Your Health (NYH) is a two-year pilot program that commenced in March 2018, aiming to improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people in out of home care (C&YP) in Brisbane. It is a partnership between Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service (CHQ), Department of Child Safety Youth and Women (DCSYW) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service Brisbane (ATSICHS).

**Description:** The pilot has improved service delivery and organisational culture change to facilitate health care for >500 C&YP to date. Introducing four new Health Navigator positions alongside dedicated models of care has facilitated prioritised referrals, healthcare assessments and coordination for this vulnerable population.

**Aim and Change Theory:** Consumers' feedback pre-implementation highlighted that C&YP often lack routine health screening and assessment, leading to under-/mis-diagnosis of conditions/disabilities, and experience barriers to coordinated care. This collaborative interagency response will facilitate large-scale systemic change to meet the health needs of C&YP.

**Targeted population and stakeholders:**

- C&YP;
- Families and carers;
- Child Safety workforce;
- Health Navigators;
- General Practice, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Services;
- Child Protection, specialist paediatric services, Oral Health, Child and Youth Mental Health, Immunisation.

**Timeline:** The pilot concludes in January 2020.

**Highlights:**

- Evidence of new model of care addresses unmet health needs of over 500 C&YP;
- More C&YP entering care meeting National Clinical Assessment Framework's targets;

- 86 annual health assessments facilitated during the pilot;
- 964 referrals facilitated for ongoing healthcare needs;
- Immunisation rates increased from 65% to 85% of pilot cohort (general population is 90%);
- Improved culturally responsive and integrated support for Indigenous families accessing local Aboriginal Medical Services;
- Earlier intervention for C&YP aged 0-5 years;
- Increased health literacy for Child Safety staff and consumers;
- Improved access via inter-Hospital and Health Service pathways for oral health services, specialist paediatric services; and
- Sustained interagency cultural change.

**Sustainability and transferability:** CHQ and DCSYW have committed to expand the model across additional Queensland locations.

**Conclusions:** NYH demonstrates positive improvement in C&YP's health needs across:

- Immunisation rates;
- Systematic Prioritisation (seen as Cat 1 <30 days);
- Health literacy;
- Inter-organisational cultural change;
- Routinised health and developmental assessments; and
- Completion of health management plans for ongoing care delivery.

**Discussions:** NYH's economic benefits are yet to be calculated and will likely be realised over the long-term. Economic benefits to early intervention and prevention of diseases, chronic conditions, improved oral health are significant across the lifespan for this cohort. Emerging evidence demonstrates earlier intervention and sustained engagement. Prospective improvements in C&YP's long-term health benefits communities by reducing service demands for adult emergency care and acute services, ultimately supporting their health and wellbeing through transition to adulthood.

**Lessons learned:** This co-designed pilot shifted culture and practice through a partnership model between government agencies, primary care and consumers. Successes relied on collaborative cross-agency leadership, joint funding and developmental evaluation processes to capture pilot's achievements.