

# The Remedy Project: Exploring First Nations music as a cultural determinant of health

**Presenters Naomi Sunderland (Griffith University), Kristy Apps (Griffith University), and Glen Barry (Griffith University) are sharing about The Remedy Project: Exploring First Nations music as a cultural determinant of health. It is an Australian Research Council funded research project (2021-2024).**

**The Remedy Project, First Nations Music as a Determinant of Health** honours the role of First Nations music as a natural “remedy” in cultural healing and ceremony that has happened over millennia in First Nations communities. It reflects the resolute strength of First Nations cultures, music, and musicians in the face of historical and ongoing colonisation.

First Nations music may be defined in part by the First Nations identity of the performer/s or as original music created by First Nations People across a wide range of genres (Bracknell, 2019; Clough, 2012). In this project, we recognised music as cultural action. For example, music is something that First Nations People have been practising for millennia to care for one another and Country, teaching, communicating, and lobbying for change to resist, advocate, express, and heal.

Our project examines music as a cultural determinant of health for First Nations communities. For some, music can be an enduring link with our ancestors, our Country, our languages. It can link our past with our present and future. It may hold the comfort of familiarity and belonging, and it can be healing. It can represent, express, and foster strength. Music can speak to our communities and about them to others.

## CULTURAL HEALTH DETERMINANTS

Social health determinants are things that shape health and wellbeing across all people in communities. Those health determinants include things like public policies and laws, public services and utilities, racism, inequality, housing, human rights, crime, neighbourhood and public amenities, peace, social connection, relationships, violence, and the health of the natural environment.

## WHAT WE KNOW FROM EXISTING LITERATURE

Music and social emotional well-being

- *Music can play an important part in supporting our health.*
- *Music can support our connection to culture, Country, community, and self-determination.*
- *Music can provide economic opportunity.*
- *Music is not always recognised as having an important part to play in health, but new research like this project is helping to change that.*

We are adding to existing literature through a series of community case studies that include yarning, audience surveys, and creative practise.

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GLENN BARRY

**BIO:** Glenn Barry a First Nation Gamilaraay and Irish man, who grew up on Yugambeh /Bundjalung Country (Gold Coast/Northern NSW, Australia). Glenn is passionate about the development and delivery of Cultural Mindfulness programs that integrate process, perspective and narratives that enquire into notions of self-description and self-determination. His focus has been the specialised educational arena of Aboriginal and Torres Strvait Islander culture and services. Glenn shares his music and healing through many formats including the Yidaki /didgeridoo player.

