About this story

This case study highlights the importance of providing services in a culturally appropriate way. It explores emotional wellbeing as a major motivator to improving health. It also illustrates how services working in partnership can achieve great things.

Using spirituality as a form of care is often overlooked in the care planning process. The term means different things to different people but for proud Aboriginal Elder Bill it means a connection to his past and his people.

A change for Bill

Bill had always been independent and more than capable of making personal decisions that might have a significant impact on his life. But, after a stroke, he needed extensive assistance with rehabilitation and activities of daily living.

Local Aboriginal health workers and a HACC coordinator worked in partnership with the health service, Bill and family members to develop a care plan that focused on activities that Bill was able to achieve.

With the implementation of the ASM, strategies were developed that helped him remain living independently with culturally appropriate home care services and rehabilitation.

Bill expressed that spiritual healing was a key factor in his recovery.

The right response from staff

Staff responded to Bill’s needs, connecting him to the local Indigenous men’s group. Through the men’s group, Bill was also able share his experiences, pass on stories and fulfill his role as a respected Elder. Moreover, visiting cultural sites on his traditional land has hugely benefited Bill’s healing by improving physical function, health and emotional wellbeing.

Reflection

Does your service have a good referral relationship with local Aboriginal providers?
Have your staff received appropriate cultural awareness training?

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