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Cultural capability for mental health eLearning

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Why culturally capable mental health services are important

Voiceover transcript:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experience more ill-health and disability than non-Indigenous Queenslanders. Mental illness is the highest contributor to this, making up 20% of the burden of disease. Despite making up 4.3% of the Queensland population, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people comprise 7.7% of people hospitalised with a mental disorder. This over-representation suggests significant differences in how mental illness is identified and treated for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Even though there are higher rates of access to services, the evidence suggests that we are not meeting the actual level of need.

Let's have a yarn about some of the facts.

- Aboriginal people are hospitalised for non-fatal self-harm at 2.5 times the rate of others.
- Suicide death rates for Aboriginal people are twice that of non-Indigenous people. In youth, the rates are even more disproportionate, with rates of suicide for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people 5 times higher than for non-Indigenous youth.
- Hospitalisation rates for psychoactive substances are 2.9 times higher than of non-Indigenous people. For Schizophrenia and psychotic disorders, this is 2.2 times higher.
- Hospitalisation rates for anxiety and depression are actually lower for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders, despite evidence that they are exposed to more psychological distress. This indicates a gap in identification and treatment of depression and anxiety.
- Restrictive practices such as involuntary assessment and seclusion are much higher. Indigenous people are secluded at double the rate of non-Indigenous people during inpatient admissions.

As mental health workers, we can do more to deliver services that are culturally responsive by understanding as much as we can around the factors that affect mental health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including the social and cultural determinants of health.