

DR SAMANTHA ABBATO

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

A highly experienced evaluator, researcher and trainer. Sam has more than 25- years of working across a range of evaluation contracts for non-government, government, and university. A depth of knowledge of the health and community sectors, working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

Successfully manages teams of evaluators across a range of projects. Sam applies participatory and use-focused approaches to organisational monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) and evaluation capacity building (ECB). Effectively working with organisational leadership, service delivery staff, a range of collaborators and stakeholders she collaboratively embeds evaluation and builds the evaluation capacity of organisations. Applies a multi-disciplinary team and a 'pictures and stories' approach to solving the challenges of effectively communicating, engaging, and implementing MEL with organisational leadership and service delivery teams. Sam has a deep understanding of databases and ability to translate monitoring and evaluation (M&E) evidence needs into database reporting requirements.

A passionate and skilled evaluation trainer committed to rigorous methods, effective communication and making evaluation tools accessible to all. Provider of face-to- face and online presentations and training for the Australian Evaluation Society (AES).

EDUCATION

- PhD Epidemiology (Public Health) University of California – Berkeley, 1997
- MPH Epidemiology/Biostatistics, University of California - Berkeley, 1992
- BSc (Hons) Physiology, Pure Mathematics, Monash University, 1989

AWARDS

Excellence in Evaluation - The Caulley Tulloch (Evaluation Publication) Award AES, 2015

KEY SKILLS

- Utilisation-focused evaluation, co-design and participatory action approaches
- Qualitative and quantitative research methods
- Visual evaluation approaches including digital evaluation story and data visualisation
- Communication for engagement and impact using pictures and stories
- Professional training and coaching (online and face-to-face)
- Evaluation capacity building (ECB) and evaluation readiness assessment

MEMBERSHIPS

- Australian Evaluation Society (AES)
- American Evaluation Association (AEA)
- Brisbane Business Psychology Bookclub (Founder 2016)

EMPLOYMENT

- Director, Visual Insights People (2013 - current)
- Lead consultant, Samantha Abbato and Associates (2005 - current)
- Freelance writer and researcher, Magazine media (2001-2005)
- Statistical analysis and interpretation, Deakin University (2000-2001)
- Lecturer and Researcher, Epidemiology and Anthropology, Australian Longitudinal Study of Women's Health, University of Queensland (1998-2000)
- Tutor and teaching assistant, La Trobe University and University of California at Berkeley (1993-1994)
- Research assistant, Center for Disease Control, Western Consortium of Public Health, San Francisco and Oakland, California (1990-1993)
- Research officer, Food and Nutrition Program and AIDS/STD Unit, Deakin University and Health and Human Services, Victoria (1989-1990)

CONSULTANCIES

Dorset County Council, United Kingdom

Stepping into Nature (SiN) Evaluation (2017-2020)

Evaluation development, guiding evaluation and team capacity building for a 3- year project to improve the wellbeing of older people and people with dementia through increasing connection to green spaces, people and meaning. Development of evaluation framework, plan and tools incorporating visual components This incorporated skill building of Public Health Dorset and partners through face-to-face and online workshops over 3 consecutive years.

CatholicCare N.T., Northern Territory

Organisational outcomes evaluation and evaluation capacity building (2015-2021)

Participatory-action approach and co-design of organisational MEL incorporating digital evaluation story and visual, online engagement and communication methods. Pictures and stories approach to staff capacity building in evaluation skills, qualitative and quantitative methods. Development of a digital toolkit for staff evaluation engagement and training, including graphic communication, participatory training videos and virtual reality.

Community Service Industry Alliance (CSIA), Queensland

Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Project- Inclusion readiness (2018-9)

Development, delivery and facilitation of two-day workshop series 'Stories of Change to Theories of Change (TOC)', half-day follow-up advancing TOC workshop and one-to-one consultations with not-for-profit managers and leaders. Delivery of tailored, digital, participatory evaluation reports and training/mentoring tools.

Healing Foundation and ANROWS - ACT and Queensland

Workforce capacity and capability building evaluation framework (2019)

Facilitated the development of an evaluation framework for the Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) Workforce Capacity and Capability Service (2019-2024).

CONSULTANCIES *CONT*

Mater Health Services Brisbane, Queensland

Evaluation, research and strategic planning (2009-2019)

1. CALD consumer engagement/feedback.
2. Establish M&E system for Refugee Health Qld.
3. Facilitation of Pastoral Care and ATSI strategic plans.
4. Establish M&E system for Cultural Diversity Unit and coaching in implementing
5. Audit of interpreting provision (2013-4) and research publication.
6. Qualitative study to elicit reasons for low interpreting rates and key actions for change and research publication.
7. Pilot evaluation of a Music Therapy program for cancer patients.
8. Qualitative action-research study of cultural and interpreting needs and strategies and plan the transition of the Mater Mothers from antenatal and birth to postnatal care.

Maranoa Regional Council, Queensland

Evaluation and partnership capacity building- Healthy Communities (2010-2018)

1. Evaluation of pilot Healthy Community Initiative and evaluation training.
2. Evaluation of Healthy Community Initiative and site capacity building.
3. Facilitation of strategic and operational plan and support in implementation.
4. Development and implementation of M&E framework and plan with partners.
5. Annual leadership/partnership capacity-building and planning workshops.

Dementia Australia, NSW

Participatory evaluation and community resource development (2012-2017)

1. Evaluation of Mind Your Mind education.
2. Evaluation of Mobile Respite Team service.
3. Evaluation of Every Bloke Needs a Shed project.
4. Development of Dementia manual for Men's Sheds.
5. Evaluation of Community Cafes initiative.
6. Development of Toolkit for Community Cafes.
7. Outcomes framework and capacity building in M&E for Insights into Hospital Experience of Dementia project across 9 sites, NSW.

Aunties and Uncles Queensland

Evaluation of Child Mentoring program (2016-2017)

A pictures and stories evaluation of a child mentoring program including video and infographic report for evaluation.

Canterbury City Council, NSW

Evaluation of Healthy Communities Initiative (2012-2014)

Mixed method evaluation and capacity building of program staff and partners.

Hepatitis Queensland

Organisation and program evaluation and capacity building (2012-2015)

1. Evaluation of ABC of Hepatitis Training program and project team capacity building.
2. Organisation evaluation and staff capacity building.
3. Evaluation of Treatment in Injecting Drug Environment (TIDE).

CONSULTANCIES *CONT*

Queensland Health

Evaluation and resource development for Multicultural Services (2009-2011)

1. Evaluation of workplace diversity training.
2. Development of M&E for cross culture training.
3. Development of cultural diversity profiles for healthcare workers.

Queensland Department of Community Safety

Queensland Corrective Services Bridging the Gap evaluation (2011-2012)

Mixed method evaluation of the Bridging the Gap Pilot project for cognitively impaired prisoners.

This included 25 in-depth interviews with prisoners with cognitive impairment.

Anglicare , Queensland

Needs analysis of emerging CALD communities (2011)

Identification of emerging ageing CALD populations regionally and community consultation of Aged care needs.

Multicultural Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing

Evaluation and strategic planning (2008-2009)

1. Organisation evaluation.
2. Facilitation of strategic and operational plan.
3. Establish M&E system for organisation.
4. Evaluation of African youth peer-mentoring project.

Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT)

Evaluation (2007-2008)

1. Evaluation of NEXUS Suicide Prevention program for refugee youth.
2. Development and implementation of methodology for self-assessment of Organisation against National Standards.

Health and Community Services Workforce Council

Evaluation (2008)

Development of strategic framework for annual evaluation and capacity building of project staff in evaluation.

Gold Coast Division of General Practice

Regional Evaluation (2007-2008)

Evaluation of the role of NGOs in chronic disease for Gold Coast Division of General Practice

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS AND SEMINARS (SINCE 2009)

Abbato, S. and MacGregor, M. Digital Evaluation Story: A case-study of its use for monitoring and evaluation by an NT community organisation. NT Regional Seminar, Online, 3 December 2020.

Abbato, S., MacGregor, M., Young, L., Pastor, S., Burns, K. Movies, art and virtual reality: Innovative evaluation story methods. Presentation for the Australian Evaluation Society 2019 International Conference, Sydney 16 September 2019.

Abbato, S., MacGregor, M., Pastor, S., Young, L., Burns, K. The evaluation toolbox needs pictures: A multidisciplinary approach to ECB. Presentation for the Australian Evaluation Society 2019 International Conference, Sydney 16 September 2019.

Abbato S. Effectively communicating evaluation: The Evaluation report and beyond. Presentation for Australasian Evaluation Society, Brisbane, June 5 2017.

Abbato, S. Presentation to the Mater Health Services Executive on "Why is there a low rate of interpreter engagement at the Mater Hospital ED and Inpatient Wards: The results of an explanatory Case Study of Interpreter Provision, March 1 2016.

Abbato S. What does the evaluator mean? Understanding evaluation reports and applying the findings to policy and practice. Presentation for Australasian Evaluation Society, Brisbane. April 22 2015.

Torrance, S, **Abbato, S** and O'Loughlin, S. How to use the "Your Shed and Dementia" manual. Workshop for the 6th National Conference of the Australian Men's Shed Association, Newcastle, 20 October 2015.

Abbato, S. Your Shed and dementia: From local stories to a National Intervention. Presented at the Australasian Evaluation Society International Evaluation Conference, Melbourne, 7 September 2015.

Abbato, S. Telling stories that stand up: The use of case studies in Evaluation. Australasian Evaluation Conference, Brisbane, September 4-6 2013.

Abbato, S. Getting the best results from evaluation statistics by asking the right questions. Brisbane AES Seminar 25 August 2011.

Abbato, S. Program Logic: The good, the bad and the completely illogical. Brisbane AES Seminar 19 November 2009.

ACADEMIC TEACHING

Lecturer, University of Queensland, Evaluating Social Programs Course. Guest Lecturer in Program Evaluation. Tools in evaluation: Program Logic. 18 March and 12 August 2010.

Lecturer, Postgraduate Masters' Program, University of Queensland, International and Tropical Health, Social Science/Qualitative methods, July 1999-June 2000.

Lecturer, Postgraduate Masters' Program, University of Queensland, School of Population Health, Epidemiology, July 1998-June 1999.

Faculty of Public Health, Khon Kaen University, Thailand. Five-part Workshop series: Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods in a workshop on Field Methods. 17-21 May 1999

PROVISION OF TRAINING - AES

Abbato, S. and Pretorius, R. Making it stick 2 - Impactful evaluation reporting and beyond! Full-day workshop equivalent - Online 8 & 15 October 2020.

Abbato, S. Making it stick 1 - Crafting an evaluation report for impact and use. Full-day workshop equivalent - Online 3 & 10 September 2020.

Abbato, S. Outcome evaluation basics - Questions, models and pathways. Full-day workshop equivalent - Online 17 & 25 June 2020, Repeated 12 & 19 August 2020.

Abbato, S., Smith, L., Duckworth, S. Shift your practice to advance evaluation in our changing world. Half-day workshop equivalent - Online 23 & 27 July 2020.

Abbato, S. Making it stick 2 - Impactful reporting and beyond. Full-day workshop at the Australian Evaluation Society International Evaluation Conference, Sydney, 19 September 2019.

Abbato, S. Essentials of qualitative and quantitative methods for evaluation. Provided for Evaluation Toolkit Autumn Intensive, AES Melbourne 22 May 2019.

Abbato, S. Making it stick - Creating an evaluation report for impact and use. Full day workshop at the Australian Evaluation Society International Evaluation Conference, Launceston, 17 September 2018.

Abbato, S. Making it stick - Creating an evaluation report for impact and use. Full day workshop Darwin, 1 November 2017.

Abbato, S., Muller, W, and Caniglia D. Effectively communicating evaluation- The evaluation report and beyond. Two day workshop. Brisbane, August 2017.

Skelly C and **Abbato S.** Systems Thinking for Complex Evaluation. Full day workshop offered at the Australasian Evaluation Society International Evaluation Conference, Melbourne, Co-facilitated with Dr Chris Skelly. 5 September 2015.

Abbato S. Full day workshop "Learn conversational statistics: Making evaluation more influential by learning how to reason, think and speak the language of statistics" Australasian Evaluation Society Conference, Sydney, 29 August 2011.

PROVISION OF TRAINING - OTHER

Abbato, S. Five- day Evaluation workshop series for Public Health Dorset and Partners, England. 2017, 2018, 2020.

Abbato S., Caniglia, D., Pretorius, R. A series of 50 plus workshops over four years for managers and staff of CatholicCare NT. Including digital evaluation story- telling, strategic planning and evaluation methods. 2016-2019.

Abbato S, A series of 10 Stories of Change to Theories of Change (TOC) two-day workshops and 6 half-day TOC follow-on workshops for CSIA Inclusion Readiness, 2018-2019.

PUBLICATIONS ABBATO NEE THOMPSON

Abbato, S., Greer, R., Ryan, J., Vayne-Bossert, P., Good, P. The impact of professional language interpretation on length of stay and readmission rates in an acute care hospital setting, *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health* 21(5): 965- 970, 2019.

Abbato, S. Ryan, J., Skelly, C, and Good, P. The other side of “getting by”: A case study of interpreting provision decision-making and consequences for patients. *Cogent Medicine* 5 (1), 1-17, 2018.

Ryan, J., **Abbato, S.**, Greer, R., Vayne-Bossert, P, Good, P. Rates and Predictors of Professional Interpreting Provision for Patients With Limited English Proficiency in the Emergency Department and Inpatient Ward. *Inquiry* 2017.

Abbato S. The case for evaluating process and worth: Evaluation of a programme for carers and people with dementia. In *Case Study Evaluation: Past, present and future*, Eds. Greenhalgh T, Russell J and Kushner S. 2015.

Abbato S. Book Review: *Foundations of Mixed Methods Research: Integrating Qualitative Approaches in the Social and Behavioural Sciences*. Authors: Charles Teddlie and Abbas Tashakkori. *Evaluation Journal of Australia* 9 (2), 2009.

Thompson S, Hartel G, Manderson L, Woelz-Stirling N and Kelaher M. The mental health status of Filipinas in Queensland. *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry* 36:674-680, 2002.

Thompson S, Manderson L, Woelz-Stirling N, Cahill A and Kelaher M, The social and cultural context of the mental health of Filipinas in Queensland. *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry* 36:681-687, 2002.

Thompson S, Gifford S and Thorpe L, The social and cultural context of risk and prevention: Diabetes in an urban Aboriginal community. *Health Education and Behavior* 27(6) 725-743, 2000.

Thompson S and Gifford S. Trying to keep a balance: The meaning of health and diabetes in an urban Aboriginal community. *Social Science and Medicine* 51(10) 1457-1472, 2000.

Thompson S. Community-based epidemiology: The methods of the Living with Diabetes Project. *International Quarterly of Community Health Education*, 19(1) 3- 18, 2000.

Thompson, S., Ringuet, C., Williams, G., Kelaher, M., Baigrie, N., Jenkins, D and Chapman, B. Getting fit for the community: The Cherbourg Healthy Lifestyles Program. *Aboriginal and Islander Health Worker Journal* 24(2) March/April 2000.

Thompson S and Thorpe L, The Living With Diabetes Project: A community-based approach to questionnaire development. *Aboriginal and Islander Health Worker Journal*, Jan/Feb 1998