



Tackling wet cough in children



Summary



Chronic lung disease contributes substantially to the gap in survival between First Nations and other Australians. The gap can be reduced by improving the detection and management of lung disease in infants and children before permanent lung damage sets in. Children with chronic wet cough are most at risk.

Timely detection and management of children with chronic wet cough can be achieved through a program that simultaneously raises community awareness and the capacity of primary care services to recognise symptoms and treat children. In partnership with communities in WA, we have developed a suite of resources that can be used to achieve the above.

Background

Chronic wet cough in children is a wet-sounding cough that is present every day for 4 weeks or more. It is often the only symptom of a condition called protracted bacterial bronchitis (PBB). If left untreated, PBB can lead to permanent lung damage in the form of bronchiectasis. Bronchiectasis is a serious chronic lung disease that leads to impaired quality of life and early mortality, especially in First Nations Australians.

The progression of PBB to bronchiectasis can be prevented with appropriate treatment. Research suggests that two main issues can prevent timely detection and appropriate management:

1



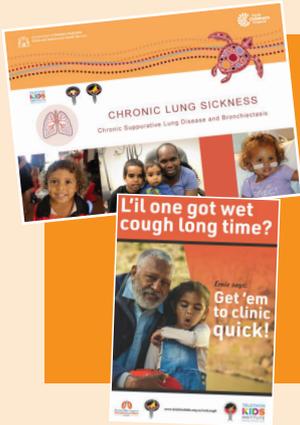
Families often consider a chronic wet cough in children as normal and may not know it could indicate serious disease.

2



Health practitioners often consider chronic wet cough in children as normal and are often not aware of national guidelines that outline optimal management.

How can we tackle the above issues?



1

If given the correct health information in a culturally secure way, **families** will seek health care and be empowered to advocate for their children.

2

Health practitioners are more likely to detect and correctly manage chronic wet cough in children if they receive sufficient training on the topic.



What resources do we have available?

1

Health information resources for families include:

A Information flip charts for use in clinics and by health information staff. These are available in English, Kriol and Kukatja. (**Flip Chart**)

B Animated 3-min video (also available in Kriol) telling the story that is in the flip charts, that can be used on television, social media campaigns, shown in clinic waiting rooms etc. (**Animated Film**)

C Promotional video clips by Ernie Dingo (**video**)

D Audio recordings of wet cough (**Wet cough audio**)

E Posters for placement in strategic areas in communities (**Poster example**)

F Talking posters

G Information flyers

H Banners

i

The above resources are available here: [Wet cough at Telethon Kids](#). There is also a curriculum that can be used to train health promotion staff.

2

Training and information for health practitioners:

A Two free online training modules accredited by Royal Australasian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) and Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACCRM) are available here: [Chronic Cough Training Modules Lung Foundation Australia](#).

i. Lung Health in First Nations Children: Improving Outcomes Through Culturally Secure Care (management of chronic wet cough, protracted bacterial bronchitis and bronchiectasis)

ii. Lung Health in First Nations Children: Asthma Diagnosis and Interpretation of Spirometry

B Podcasts available on Spotify – link here: [BREATH 's Podcast | Podcast on Spotify](#)

C Chronic wet cough management [flowchart](#)