

# Housing conditions in remote australian indigenous communities



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Living conditions, especially housing or shelters are basic health requirements. The health effects of housing are related to the safety of the design of the home, the condition of the surrounding environment and the design of the residential area. Although many of the health risks of poverty are common among other populations, colonial history and the relationship between Australian Aborigines and their lands have increased the impact of housing conditions on the health of indigenous Australians. This essay will analyze the impact of housing on their health through the two main housing problems: living in poor conditions and living remotely faced by indigenous people at the current stage.

On the one hand, Although Australia is vast, a large proportion of indigenous people live outside the main towns. Many communities are small and isolated, which makes housing problems in rural and remote communities particularly acute. According to statistics, about three-quarters of Aboriginal Australians live in urban or regional towns, while the remaining quarter lives in remote areas (Green & Minchin, 2014). And there are many social determinants related to indigenous people who live in remote areas like transportation, education, stress. First, it is inconvenient for people to go to hospital when they are ill due to bad public transport facilities. Second, because there is no good education in remote areas, indigenous people living in remote communities are lack of education and they are likely to be treated differently from those who were educated. For example, People with low levels of education are likely to earn less money or even unemployment. Third, living outside major towns may make people stressful, and a stressful

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environment makes people feel worried, anxious and uncooperative, damaging their health and possibly leading to premature death (Braveman & Gottlieb, 2014). On the other hand, poor housing conditions are widely recognized as a significant element in the poor health of these Australian Aboriginal people and has a major impact on health through two aspects: poor room facilities and overcrowding due to housing shortages. Firstly, Poor room facilities like unsanitary conditions, poor water, sanitation techniques, poor ventilation, extreme temperatures, and humidity make infectious diseases spread among people (Baillie, Stevens, McDonald, Brewster & Guthridge, 2010). Poor housing infrastructure provides a breeding ground for diseases caused by pests such as cockroaches and mice. Houses that do not allow people to prepare and store food safely and hygienically can increase the risk of diarrhea in children. Secondly, Crowded housing conditions caused widespread of many common infectious and parasitic diseases. Chronic infections and repeated infections often lead to abnormal growth and development and exacerbate chronic diseases. Ear bacterial infections and septic skin infections are two important examples of these infections and parasitic diseases. The scabies is an ancient disease that is no longer widely known in Australian society. However, in remote areas, nearly 70% of Aboriginal children are infected after birth. Third, drinking water pollution is particularly serious in some remote areas. According to one of the reports of the Western Australian government, water in some remote communities was contaminated with contaminated uranium, nitrates and fecal bacteria. Several factors will cause overcrowding. First, Indigenous families are usually large and their affordable housing is not enough to accommodate them.

Second, the community's efforts to adapt to homeless family members often <https://assignbuster.com/housing-conditions-in-remote-australian-indigenous-communities/>

lead to multiple households. Third, the Aboriginal people are often asked to receive visiting relatives and friends (Andersen, Williamson, Fernando, Redman & Vincent, 2016). In summary, in many remote Aboriginal communities, poor family infrastructure and overcrowding pose a significant risk to health, with children and the elderly most vulnerable to these risks.

Addressing the poor living conditions of the Aboriginal people, there have been many actions to improve living conditions in remote indigenous areas. For example, The Ecosystem Services Payment (PES) model is supporting a new round of self-developed Aboriginal housing. PES is very effective in improving the conditions of Aboriginal houses and improving the environment of remote residential areas. It fundamentally attaches importance to cultural knowledge, at the same time, vast land can bring economies of scale. Indigenous PES companies can also use knowledge of traditional indigenous to conduct land management to improve environmental quality. Examples include activities to reduce carbon emissions and improve water pollution. However, many actions to improve housing conditions in remote indigenous areas still need improvement. For instance, although governments have developed National Cooperation Agreements on Remote Indigenous Housing and have committed billions of dollars to improve living facilities of remote Aboriginal people, there is no unparalleled level of urban Aboriginal housing protocol. (Andersen, Williamson, Fernando, Redman & Vincent, 2016). Therefore, federal and state governments should support initiatives led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to address the priorities identified by these communities and pay more attention not only to the housing problem of

Aboriginal residence from remote communities but also to the urban area. Besides, the public health sector should also participate in many other activities to improve housing conditions, including awareness and advocacy raising, working with the housing department, providing direct services and assessing the effectiveness and timeliness of housing improvement programs. (Andersen, Williamson, Fernando, Redman & Vincent, 2016).

Above all, the living conditions of indigenous Australians are closely related to their physical health. Improving the living conditions of Indigenous Peoples is of great significance in reducing the gap and achieving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health equality.

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