

How the clinic is helping women get healthy before baby

In the last two years, we spent a lot of time yarning with women about women's business. We talked a lot about contraception ("medicine to stop you having babies"). We also wanted to see what happened when women **stop using contraception to have a baby**, and what care they got to help them have a **healthy pregnancy and baby**.

We wanted to find out:

If women got a **check-up before their pregnancy**, what their check-up included, and how they got it. To find out we looked back at all the pregnancies for women in the Kutjungka from **2011 to 2018** to see what care was given.

What we found out:

- Of 177 pregnancies, **121 got at least some care** to help them have a **healthy pregnancy and baby** before they got pregnant
- The most common care was checking for or treating **infections from sex** (such as syphilis, chlamydia and gonorrhoea). More than half of women also got **folate (a pregnancy vitamin)** before they got pregnant.
- Younger women were less likely to get a check-up before their pregnancy.
- Risks such as **diabetes, kidney disease overweight and smoking** were common before pregnancy.
- **Lots of women** (nearly three-quarters) came in **early for their first pregnancy visit** once they knew they were pregnant.

What we will do next:

- Talk with clinics about how they can do **more pre-pregnancy check-ups**
- Think about ways to **encourage young people** to come to the clinic for check-ups
- Develop resources to **help clinics explain** pre-pregnancy check-ups and **help women make decisions** about their health
- Check to see if this helps women stay healthy
- Support **women's health programs**, based on what women think is important

We would like to thank all the women in the participating communities for their contributions over several years, for which we are deeply grateful.