

AB008. Public health by stealth

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Abstract: What does it take to light a fire to create cultural change about the way we do death, dying and bereavement in Australia? The GroundSwell Project set out to embark on a bold journey to create cultural change in the death and dying space in Australia. For 7 years we have delivered over 55 arts/health projects and have punched well above our weight. What have we learned about change and innovation? We've learned that we had to set up a fiercely independent organisation, drawing on short term funding so that we were never locked into delivering results that perpetuated 'systemic malaise'. We grew a network of activators across Health and Palliative care, community as well as other non-health related workplaces. We sought to find the right people, likening them to 'positive outliers' and engaged their head, heart and hands so they may influence others for a ripple effect. We work well with power or rank,

a critical skill when leaning into complex social change. We've learned that we must engage leaders not just in health but ALL sectors, institutions, all walks of life...why not make it possible for any change to be truly 'social'? In this presentation, you will glean highlights from a range of our innovations and our approach to leadership, social research and collaboration. You'll have pause to reflect on how in your current role in the health system, you too can create change, by drawing on non-health specific discourse, using a stronger social lens. Wanting to engage all walks of life to improve public health is one thing, doing it and maintaining momentum is another! Join Jessie from the GroundSwell Project, Australia to learn about what they have gleaned from 7 years of being just a little too ahead of their time.

Keywords: Cultural change; palliative care; public health

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