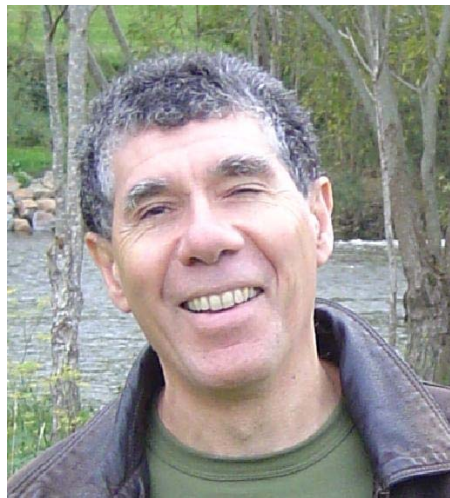




2009 State Population Health Conference Challenges and Successes in Population Health

**Keynote Speaker:
Associate Professor Dennis McDermott**



Associate Professor Dennis McDermott leads Indigenous health teaching, curriculum development and research across the Schools of Medicine and Nursing and Midwifery at Flinders University. He is also keen to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment into all aspects of study within the Faculty, a move that means finding innovative support measures to ensure those students are retained to graduation. Increasing the capability and cultural safety of the health workforce generally is a major concern.

He is also a poet. A Koori man, his mother's family are from Gadigal land (inner Sydney) with connections to Gamilaroi country (North-West NSW), which is where Dennis grew up, in Tamworth. His father's mob is originally from Donegal, Ireland.

Dennis is a registered psychologist, and is a founding member of the Australian Indigenous Psychologists' Association (AIPA). He has experience in community health and alcohol, tobacco and other drug work, and private therapeutic practice. He has trained Aboriginal foster carers, supervised counsellors to the "stolen generations" and worked with families dealing with a death in custody.

His teaching and research interests encompass maternal and infant health, violence and injury prevention/safety promotion, men's and boys' health, chronic and complex disease management and prevention, Indigenous social, spiritual and emotional well-being, Indigenous health pedagogy, and the nexus of culture and context in service delivery.

In 2005, he was made an Honorary Fellow – He Pukenga Taiea of Te Mata o te Tau – the Academy for Maori Research and Scholarship. Dennis was awarded the 2006 Dr. Ross Ingram Memorial Essay Prize by the Medical Journal of Australia. His poetry has appeared in *Southerly*, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Poetry International* and *Best Australian Poems of 2004*, and his literary criticism in *Blue Dog* and *Ngara: Living in this place now*. Until recently he chaired the judging panel for the David Unaipon Award for the best unpublished Indigenous manuscript, part of the Queensland Premier's Literary Awards. A first poetry collection, *Dorothy's Skin*, published by Five Islands Press in 2003, was short-listed for the 2004 Brencorp Prize for Poetry and the Prize for Indigenous Writing at the 2004 Victorian Premier's Literary Awards.

Topic for the keynote will be "Bringing down the Colorbond: 'Closing the gap' with a fence in the way."