George’s story 2

There was at least 20 to 30 people outside, standing around and just talking about the old days and catching up with family and friends from over in South Australia coming over. And we just laughed and joked and talked. I suppose we were probably laughing a bit too loud, to maybe upset the hospital staff, and they thought, 'They must be drinking.'

This one woman had the assumption that group of Aboriginal people sitting under a tree, esky there, and she presumed that we were all drinking alcohol. But it wasn’t alcohol. You know, it was soft drinks and water because it was over 45 degrees heat that day in [regional area] so that one assumption can lead to a big problem.

I mean, they need to understand it and say they just can’t treat them not like human beings. Because I suppose the local non-Aboriginal people in [regional area] see groups sitting around drinking in the parks or on the railway station or on the bush... You know, drinking and carrying on.

But they sort of paint everyone with the same brush but, I mean, everyone’s not the same. So, yeah. It’s just a minority of people who do it. I mean, I just... It’s not all the Wangai people in the region that do it, it’s just isolated people that do it. It’s probably from the Wangai people that come into and haven’t got nowhere to live or stay, so you know the next best thing for them to do is to sit under the tree and sleep out in the bush. And this is what they normally do around that area.

Some of the staff sort of, from different nationalities, said, ‘We can relate to how you feel.’ But you can’t. I mean, you might be from a different nationality, but being an Aboriginal Indigenous person living in Australia, it’s not the same. You can’t relate and say, ‘Oh look, we know how you feel because we’re from a different culture as well.’ But it’s not the same as being part of the Aboriginal culture and what we face growing up, since we’re this size [indicating a small height] until the very day we die. Our kids are gonna face racism from the first day they’re born to the last day they die. They will face some form of racism in some area, be it health, education, dealing with the police, Justice Department or whoever. They will face some form of racism right across the board.
Don’t treat us any different, because we’re all Australians. Just because the colour of our skin says we’re brown and non-Aboriginal person are white, but just treat us the same. I mean, you cut us we bleed red. Our blood’s red the same as yours.