Unpacking educational inequality in the
Northern Territory

Professor Sven Silburn
Menzies School of Health Research, Northern Territory

J. McKenzie
Menzies School of Health Research, Northern Territory

S. Guthridge
NT Department of Health, Northern Territory

L. Li
NT Department of Health, Northern Territory

S. Q. Li
NT Department of Health, Northern Territory

Abstract
This paper discusses how publicly available community-level data and confidentialised unit-record information from existing longitudinal, administrative population data-sets can be used to investigate the early life antecedents and contemporary factors associated with educational inequality in the Northern Territory. The recent development of the SA–NT Datalink facility has enabled integration of selected information from separate NT health, education and community datasets. This is being used to investigate policy-relevant questions not previously possible. Two examples of data-linkage analysis are presented to illustrate how such research can advance understanding of the individual, family and community factors associated with patterns of school attendance and NAPLAN achievement.