

First World Congress on Migration, Ethnicity, Race and Health

Diversity and Health Conference, May 17 – 19, 2018

Edinburgh, Scotland

Theme: Training and Education

Abstract Type / Format: Workshop Presentation

Title: Impacting Clinical and Cultural Competencies through Cross-Cultural Connections: The Development of an International Indigenous Academic Health Network

Background: The health disparities between Indigenous Canadians and the general Canadian population are strikingly similar to those experienced by Indigenous people around the world (1). It is this shared experience that underlies the development of this international network and the collective need to address health inequities and disparities. The University of Manitoba's Max Rady College of Medicine in the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences is leading a project that seeks to further develop an International Academic Network in Indigenous Health

Universities and health care institutions are largely based on colonial European culture and, as such, tend to place patients who are culturally or ethnically different from the mainstream at greater risk for experiencing adverse health events (2). The Network was established to stimulate knowledge creation and mobilization in the area of Indigenous Health across the domains of medical education, health research and health service delivery. The Network also facilitates academic exchanges that will influence positive changes in approaches to Indigenous Health teaching, research and health service delivery through our Network Faculty Partnerships.

The workshop discussion will focus on Indigenous health within the constructs of academic institutions that prepare health care professionals for practice in a diverse community. The workshop format will work well as the presenters will share some background on Indigenous Health, the limitations of current approaches and the benefits of an international academic network in supporting best practice in Indigenous Health.

Objectives:

1. To explore and discuss the role of national legislation, policies and services and the implications for action on the health and wellbeing of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. This will be presented within the context of how racial or ethnic health differences may result in inequalities and disparities, including discrimination, social exclusion and marginalization of racial groups.
2. To explore and to share the approaches to academic and health system responsiveness to diversity, the development of good clinical practice, and the development of professional training and education.

Workshop Plan: The two presenters will share current information on the Canadian context and the development of the academic health network. Following the presentations, we will open a dialogue on approaches for cultural safety in the learning and work environment and for advocacy of equity in academic and health systems (3). The goal is to identify best practices that will mitigate the impact of bias in addressing racial or ethnic inequalities and health disparities. We will share the benefits of international collaboration on best practices in Indigenous Health

Main messages: The workshop dialogue will highlight the need for health care professionals and academics to

- advocate for equity and to
- advocate for a culturally safe approach to education, training and health service delivery.

Presenters:

Dr. Catherine Cook, MD, MSc., CCFP, FCFP. Vice Dean and Head, Indigenous Institute of Health and Healing, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Manitoba.

Ms. Melanie MacKinnon, BN. Executive Director , Indigenous Health Services, Indigenous Institute of Health and Healing, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Manitoba.

References:

1. Reading, J. A global model and national network for Aboriginal health research excellence. *Can J Public Health*. 2003;94:185-9.
2. Svendson AC, Laberge M. Convening stakeholder networks: a new way of thinking, being and engaging. *J Corp Citizen*. 2005;19:91-104.
3. Walker R, Cromarty H, Kelly L, St Pierre-Hansen N. Achieving Cultural Safety in Aboriginal Health Services: implementation of a cross-cultural safety model in a hospital setting. *Divers Health Care*. 2009;6:11-22.