

Workshop Summary

Sharing our knowledge and moving forward collectively to improve access to healthcare in Atlantic Canada

Purpose of Workshop

To bring together research teams, key stakeholders, and community partners in order to share and disseminate evidence from research, and to discuss innovative approaches to addressing access to healthcare services in Atlantic Canada.



A Focus On:
 Indigenous communities
 Rural and remote communities
 Marginalized populations
 Youth

Workshop Objectives

- Share findings from recent and in progress research on barriers to accessing healthcare services.
- Present innovative programs that are currently in place or under development that are aimed at improving access to healthcare services for different populations.
- Discuss strategies to apply research findings and knowledge of innovative programs to different places and/or populations within Atlantic Canada.

Workshop Dates
 November 4 & 5 2015

Project Location
 Halifax, Nova Scotia



FUNDED BY:



The Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) through a planning and dissemination grant—Institute Community Support #142035

Workshop Presentations

Day 1

Introduction

Lois Jackson & Fred Wien, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS

Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health: a place of belonging, a circle of care

Allison Fisher, Executive Director, Wabano Centre, Ottawa, ON

Barriers to oral health in remote Indigenous communities: researching innovations to improve health

Debbie Martin & Mary McNally Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS

SPOR Network and the Nova Scotia primary and integrated healthcare innovations network: What is it? Why is it important?

Fred Burge, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS

Sharing our knowledge about innovative programs for marginalized populations

Cindy MacIsaac, Direction 180 & Patti Melanson Mobile Outreach Street Health, Halifax, NS

Day 2

“I honestly don’t think I learned anything about Indigenous peoples”: Understanding medical school faculty members’ and students’ knowledge and attitudes towards Indigenous peoples and Indigenous health

Debbie Martin, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS & Heather Castleden, Queens University, Kingston, ON

Improving pathways to health for LGBTQ communities and healthcare providers

Jacqueline Gahagan, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS

UNB Aboriginal nursing initiative (ANI) - Creating a climate change

Lisa Perley-Dutcher, Director of ANI, University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, NB

Research beyond Atlantic Canada. Presentation on barriers to healthcare for Indigenous communities

Amy Bombay, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS

Risky business: plotting the course

Allison Fisher, Executive Director, Wabano Centre, Ottawa, ON

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Fred Wien

Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS

Collaborator

Maureen Summers

Healthy Populations Institute (HPI), Halifax, NS

Areas of Discussion at Workshop

Workshop presenters and attendees identified a variety of barriers to accessing health care services including:

Macro level structural barriers

- Stigma
- Discrimination
- History of marginalization and exclusion (e.g., LGBTQ2S populations)
- History of colonization: past and current traumas (Indigenous populations)

Barriers within the healthcare system

- Many providers' lack of cultural competency
- Failure to understand community needs/conditions
- "Silos" within the healthcare system

To address many of the identified barriers there is a need to:

Recognize

- A history of racism and discrimination in Canada
- Diversity across and within communities
- Communities' specific needs and conditions

Reorganize the healthcare system around:

- Equitable and inclusive relationships
- Cultural and gender diversity



There is a need to "scale up" (disseminate) innovations which provide better access.

One strategy is to:

- Develop strong community relationships across sectors (e.g., the business sector, justice, research community, and education sectors) in order to help create the supports and/or resources for innovations in different places.

Innovations that address some of the key barriers

Current innovations discussed by workshop presenters include:

- The provision of integrated, culturally appropriate, and sensitive healthcare services such as traditional healing services (e.g., sweat lodges) and drumming provided at the Wabano Centre. See, <http://www.wabano.com/>
- Taking services to clients
 - ⇒ The provision of healthcare in shelters such as what is provided by Mobile Outreach Street Health (MOSH) (Halifax, NS)
 - ⇒ Mobile bus which goes into different communities to provide methadone treatment, such as what is provided by Direction 180 Methadone Treatment (Halifax, NS)
- Videos created by community members to help educate healthcare providers about community conditions. See, for example, <https://vimeo.com/122514165>
- Recruitment, and strategies for retention, of individuals from Indigenous communities into healthcare professions. For example, designated seats for Indigenous students and creating a culturally appropriate and safe space to learn. See, <http://www.unb.ca/fredericton/nursing/aboriginalinitiative/>

System changes and innovations for the future

- Fundamental changes at all levels of the education system are needed to ensure the history of the colonization of Indigenous peoples is taught e.g., changes to the curriculum to include social justice and Indigenous health Issues.
- A reprioritization so that the prevention of health issues is key.
- Mandatory, cultural competency and diversity curricula for health professionals and health administrators.
- Training other groups e.g., police, about the links between social determinants of health and health inequities.
- Safe space for health services for Indigenous and marginalized populations.
- Integration of healthcare services so there is a "patient-centred" focus rather than "silos" based on diseases or disorders.