

Summary Report

Atlantic Indigenous Mentorship Network Kausattumi Grants Program, 2020-2021

ERICA HURLEY, PHD IN NURSING

At the heart of health care: An exploration into Mi'kmaq women's understanding of heart

Description of Research

The purpose of the research is to explore what heart means to Mi'kmaq women in western Newfoundland and to: 1) inquire into the meaning of heart in relation to wellness of Indigenous women in the western region of Newfoundland; 2) co-create meaningful and sustainable interventions alongside Indigenous women that would enhance heart wellness; and 3) co-develop heart health interventions grounded in the knowledge and experience of Indigenous women and their communities that can be implemented by health care providers. The research is taking place within the western region of Newfoundland. I hold strong connections within the Mi'kmaq communities of the west coast; as my family is from Flat Bay. My family roots help me build on existing personal and professional relationships I hold with communities, which further enhances a strong community-based approach (CBA) that values long-term relationships.

My long-term goal is to contribute to the health of Mi'kmaq women in good ways. My work can be considered a community-based approach, utilizing an Indigenous research methodology. However, my work is Mi'kmaq research and the methodology holds a Mi'kmaq worldview. The research methods are being guided by the community, in alignment with an Indigenous research methodology. The women all decided the methods they wanted to use to participate were individual interviews and a group meeting. Knowledge mobilization and dissemination strategies will be co-developed with communities. The communities' involvement is critical in the development of toolkits, presentations, publications and any other possible innovative forms of knowledge dissemination. I successfully complete my proposal defense in October 2020 and am currently just completing my data collection.

Research Outcomes

I have completed all required course work pertaining to the requirements of the PhD of nursing. Additionally, I completed my comprehensive examination spring 2020 followed by successfully completing my proposal defense in October 2020. I just completed collecting knowledge/stories with the women. From this work there is possible creation of concrete interventions to be implemented regarding Indigenous women and cardiovascular health, but creating interventions are long term goals.

Knowledge Sharing

- Hurley, E. (2022). Research, Methodological Approaches, and Indigenous People. Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing, 2022 Lunch and Learn Series. (Online).
- Hurley, E. (2022). A journey with Mi'kmaw women: Research and heart. ARCASN, Western Regional School of Nursing, MUN. Oral presentation.

Completed Project Deliverables

- Successful completion of proposal defense (2020)
- Expanding knowledge of Indigenous research
- Completed information gathering (November 2022)
- Continued dissertation writing (September 2022, ongoing)

Forthcoming Project Deliverables

- Continued dissertation writing with anticipated completion of January 2024

Activities Outside of Your Research

- Strengths Based Nursing Presentation- Memorial University Faculty of Nursing
- Our Struggle is the Struggle of Memory Against Forgetfulness: Blacks and Canada's History Webinar
- Multiple classroom presentation on Indigenous people and health in Canada
- Journey of Collaboration Steering Committee Member
- Engagement Grant (MUN), Online session regarding Indigenous community members thoughts on what should and should not be included in the creation of an Indigenous health and wellness course

Future Plans

My future plans include continuing to expand my knowledge in Indigenous research, data collection, data analysis, and engaging the community. I hope to continue doing this through any avenues that become available such as conferences, events, etc. In the coming year, I will work on completing my PhD and disseminating findings.