

# **MOVING INDIGENOUS MENTAL WELLNESS KNOWLEDGE TO ACTION IN A MANITOBA FIRST NATION COMMUNITY.**

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Background: Research can have a complicated relationship with policymaking<sup>1</sup> needing mediating factors to support moving important evidence to inform policies and action. Appropriate measures for translating knowledge to action is often a missing link, determining whether or not research evidence will be used by Indigenous partners. We present ‘valid meaning making’<sup>2</sup> as essential to facilitating evidence implementation. Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation will share a community perspective on participating in a university led mental wellness study and of incorporating data and applying evidence to improve mental health and wellness therapy.

Objectives: At the end of this presentation, learners will be able to:

1. Describe a process of meaningfully engaging First Nation communities in research with an aim to support implementation of evidence.
2. Discuss the First Nation Mental Wellness Framework being used by the community in mental health and wellness therapy.

Method: Community-based Participatory Research in which an effective partnership was developed with First Nation communities including Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation. Empowerment models were applied post study, to support data use and evidence implementation.

Results: A First Nation Mental Wellness Framework was co-developed with participating First Nation communities. One participating community further established a community-based Intersectoral health working group to consider available data and evidence from the study and begin implementation planning and action processes. The First Nation Mental Wellness Framework is currently being used in mental health therapy sessions in the community with individuals and families.

Implications: The emergence of the Mental Wellness Framework as an evidence-based tool, exemplifies the value of a collaborative and empowerment oriented research process. Participatory processes that encourage the use of research data and evidence are highlighted.

Authors

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## References

1. Newman J, Cherney A, Head BW. Do Policy Makers Use Academic Research? Reexamining the “Two Communities” Theory of Research Utilization. *Public Administration Review* 2016;76(1):24-32.
2. Sam MA. An Indigenous Knowledge Perspective on Valid Meaning Making: A Commentary on Research with the EDI and Aboriginal Communities. *Social Indicators Research* 2011;103(2):315.