

Scaling up the Evidence – Knowledge Transfer in
Aboriginal Health:
Honoring Cultural Context and Supporting
Community Aspirations
March 4th, 2011
Ottawa

Jeff Reading PhD



KT Challenge: HIV / AIDS

“The available evidence suggests that the HIV epidemic in the Aboriginal community shows no sign of abating. Injecting drug use is currently the most common mode of HIV transmission among Aboriginal people, Aboriginal women make up a large part of the HIV epidemic in their community, and Aboriginal people appear to be infected at a younger age than non-Aboriginals. This indicates the different characteristics of the HIV epidemic among Aboriginal people and emphasizes the complexity of Canada's HIV epidemic. Better data on HIV/AIDS epidemiology and HIV testing among Aboriginal people and culturally appropriate community-based programs are needed to guide prevention and control strategies. In addition, it is vital to conduct further research to increase our understanding of the specific impact HIV has on Aboriginal people.”

Source:

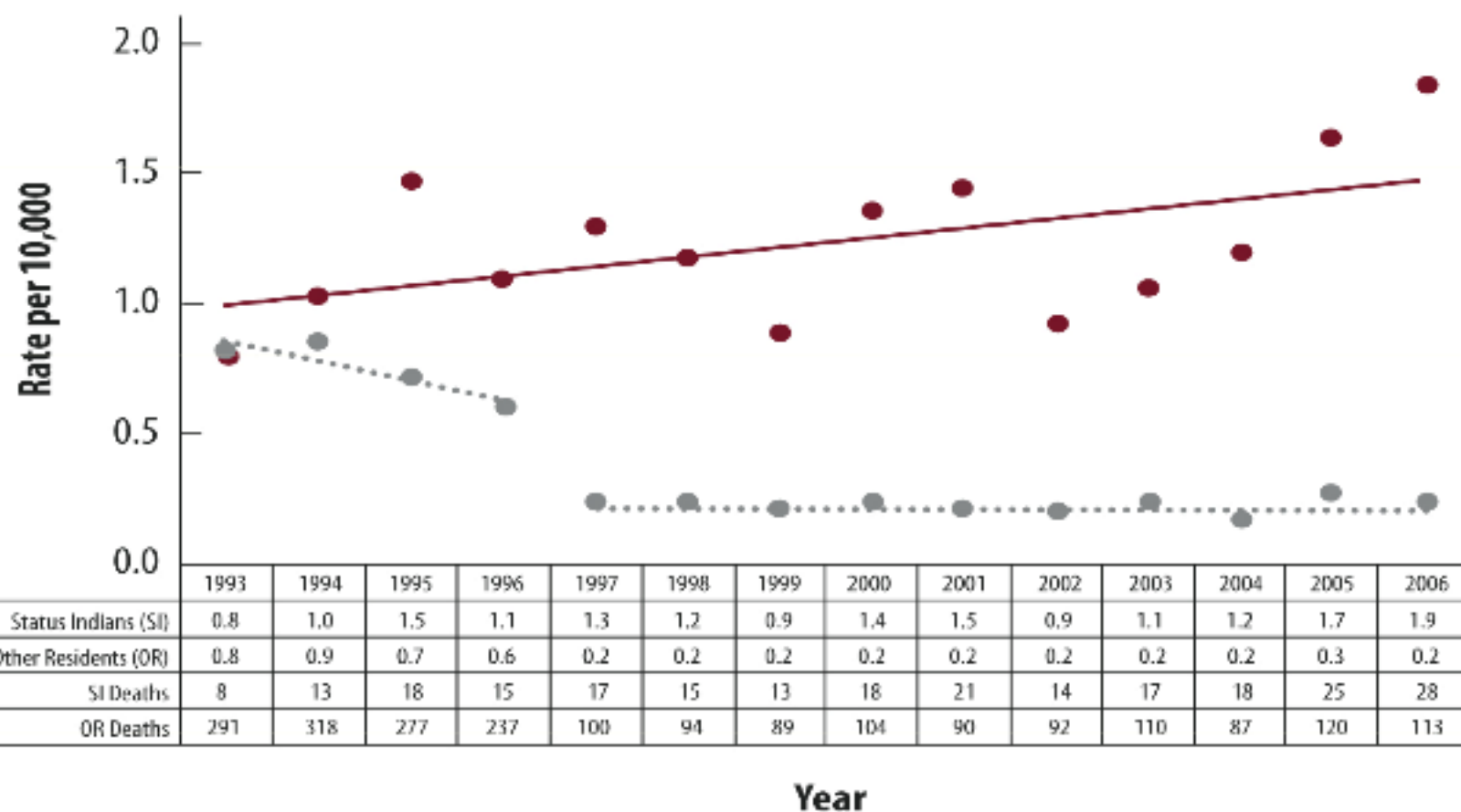
HIV/AIDS Epi Updates - July 2010

Chapter 8: HIV/AIDS Among Aboriginal People in Canada

Surveillance and Risk Assessment Division

Centre for Communicable Diseases and Infection Control

Public Health Agency of Canada, 2010.

Figure 4.54**HIV, Age-Standardized Mortality Rate,
Status Indians and Other Residents, BC, 1993 to 2006**

Note: Age-Standardized mortality rate per 10,000 standard population (1991 Canada Census).
ICD Codes: B20-B24.

Source: BC Vital Statistics Agency, 2008; prepared by Health Sector IM/IT Division, Ministry of Health Services,
and Population Health Surveillance and Epidemiology, Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport, 2009.

ABORIGINAL KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION:
Understanding and respecting the distinct needs of
Aboriginal communities in research

Canadian Institutes of Health Research
Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health

June 2009



ბეჭეტი დიდძალი რწმუნების
სხვადასხვა სახის ღირსებას
დიდძალი რწმუნების სხვადასხვა
დაცვის სახის დიდძალი რწმუნების



QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

2008 STUDENT AWARD WINNER

Thinking about Aboriginal KT: Learning from the Network Environments for Aboriginal Health Research British Columbia (NEARBC)

Elizabeth A. Estey, MA,^{1,2} Andrew M. Kmetz, PhD,³ Jeffery L. Reading, PhD³

ABSTRACT

Objective: Creating effective and actionable research has become increasingly important for the health disciplines. Despite greater attention to knowledge translation (KT) in the health research, policy, and professional literature and the mounting need for strategic action to reduce the burden of ill health experienced by Aboriginal people in Canada, little time has been dedicated to understanding KT in Aboriginal health research contexts (Aboriginal KT). The purpose of this study was to explore and discuss the unique qualities of Aboriginal KT.

Methods: An exploratory case study of the Network Environments for Aboriginal Research British Columbia (NEARBC) was undertaken, in which qualitative interviewing with experts associated with the network was conducted.

Results: Four themes were revealed from the analysis of 10 semi-structured qualitative interviews: 1) Definitional debate, 2) "Aboriginal" KT, 3) Doing KT, and 4) KT roles. These themes highlight the definitional complexity, practical confusion, multidisciplinary nature, and lack of accountability related to Aboriginal KT.

Discussion: The information gained from the study participants adds some important insights to the current literature. It also identifies areas where future discussion may help improve the understanding and meaning of KT in Aboriginal health research contexts, as well as its application in practice. The health disparities of Aboriginal people in Canada are a call for action with regards to KT and this study provides some basic information and advice on ways to move the research and policy agenda forward.

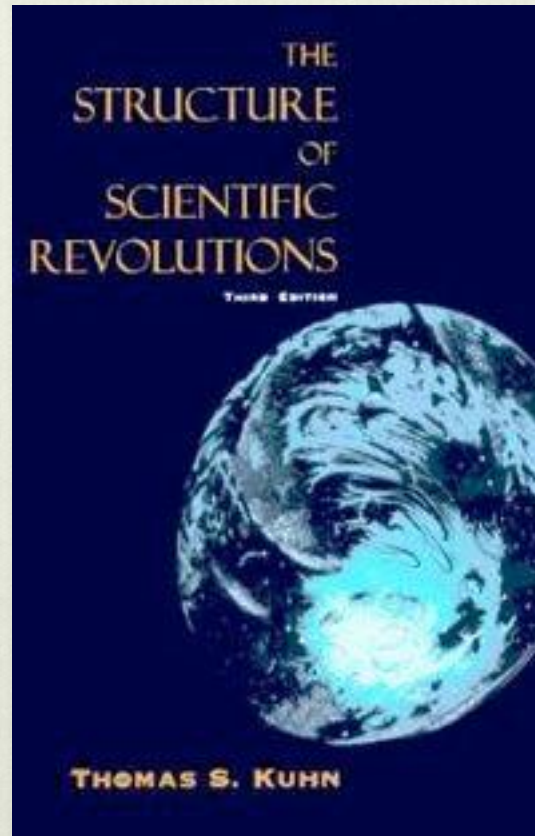
Key words: Knowledge translation; Aboriginal health; health research; research network

La traduction du résumé se trouve à la fin de l'article.

Can J Public Health 2010;101(1):83-86.

Frank and Ernest

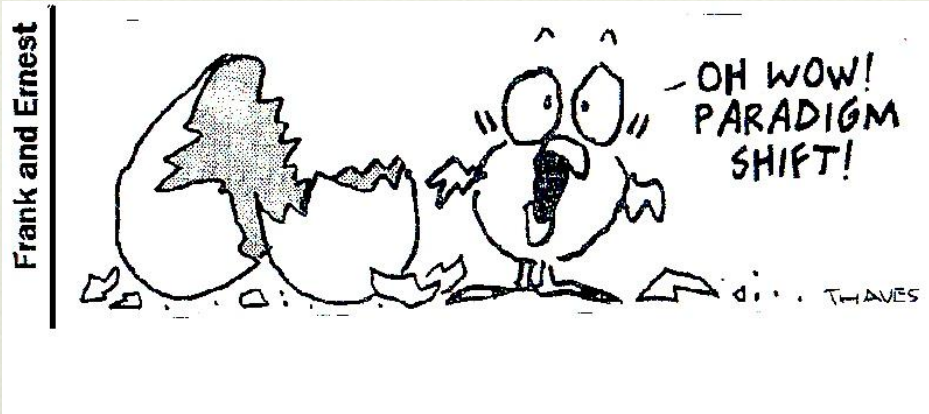




Evolution of scientific theory does not emerge from the straightforward accumulation of facts, but rather from a set of changing intellectual circumstances and possibilities

Knowledge Products are not value free interpretations: a discourse on Multiple and Contradictory Ways of Knowing

Drawing from Kuhn's "structure of scientific revolutions," Greenhalgh et al. (2005) developed a process in which "storylines" of various scientific traditions are sorted and interpreted from exploratory searches. These emerging storylines form a theoretical body of knowledge which influences the categorization and understanding of successive studies. As a result, knowledge is perceived as a product of its disciplinary paradigm, meaning that there are multiple and potentially contradictory ways of understanding a given topic.



Dr. Robert Hegele, Director of Cardiovascular Research,
UWO's Robarts Research Institute

How the diabetes-linked 'thrifty gene' triumphed with prejudice over proof
Saturday's Globe and Mail; February 28, 2011
By Carolyn Abraham

A post-mortem has already begun for the 'thrifty-gene' hypothesis, amid
suggestions that science flirted with racism



182 comments generated

- ❖ 'The article names no one person as racist - and maybe that's the wrong term to use - but it does make clear that science is value-based and trapped in its own historical and cultural context, like every other type of knowledge.'
- ❖ 'I believe the word "prejudice" is used correctly in this article headline -- but misunderstood by some readers. Prejudice doesn't only mean "being biased against a group of people." It also means a predisposition to believe something because you want it to be true, or because it's a convenient truth.'
- ❖ 'This article impresses with the extent that ostensibly objective scientists and their research can be constrained and limited by their own misguided orthodoxy; and how their perspectives are increasingly rooted in isolated specialization rather than integration. We would do well to be wary of such myopic outlooks.'

Kwayask itôtamowin: Indigenous Research Ethics

Report of the Indigenous Peoples' Health Research Centre to the
Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research

Willie Ermine, M.Ed, Raven Sinclair, PhD Candidate, Madisun Browne, LLB
Indigenous Peoples' Health Research Centre Saskatoon, SK
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“Dialogue must become a central feature of a new relationship between Indigenous Peoples and other traditions of knowledge. The ethical space between cultures offers itself as the theatre for cross-cultural dialogue for the objective of ethically engaging different knowledge systems.”

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“Dialogue is concerned with providing a space for exploring the field of thought and attention is given to understanding how thought functions in governing our cross-cultural behaviors. It is a way of observing, collectively, how hidden values and intentions can control our behavior, and how unnoticed cultural differences can clash without our realizing what is occurring. Dialogue is essentially a ‘conversation’ between equals. Cross cultural research has been problematic because of this neglect for the unseen, unstated influential undercurrent of hidden values and intentions.”

Brant Castellano and Reading: Policy Writing as Dialogue Drafting an
Aboriginal Chapter for Canada's Tri-Council Policy Statement:
Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans"

The International Indigenous Policy Journal, Vol. 1 [2010], Iss. 2, Art. 1.

The Berkeley Electronic Press, 2010

'RCAP research gave substance to the expectation that knowledge creation could be owned once again by Aboriginal people.'

'Communities are simply demanding greater control of factors affecting their lives including having a say on research priorities, a role in the creation and application of new knowledge, and building capacities in an advanced knowledge environment.'

'Knowledge translation (KT) to inform policy development is critical for evidence-based programs and services. Guidelines attempt to create a space for community level involvement in research, which seeks to improve population health through integration of 'real-time' knowledge translation. KT is imbedded in the process of doing research in partnership with Aboriginal communities and policy makers, thereby promoting rapid application of evidence.'

'Ethics policy for Aboriginal research in Canada, whether specific to health or applying more broadly to all research domains, should therefore be responsive to both individual wellbeing and collective welfare as conceived by the people involved. Research that engages the community and that addresses concerns relevant to the people, that builds on traditional knowledge, and that enhances local capacity holds the greatest promise of

The Ethics of Research Involving Indigenous Peoples

Report of the Indigenous Peoples' Health Research Centre to the
Interagency Advisory Panel on Research Ethics

Willie Ermine, MA; Raven Sinclair, PhD Candidate; Bonnie Jeffery, PhD
Indigenous Peoples' Health Research Centre. Saskatoon, SK
©Indigenous Peoples' Health Research Centre, July 2004

“Knowledge translation and transfer will also be challenging but will require immediate attention at the ethical space. Particularly difficult terrains of the new dialogue will include how to resolve the issue of contexts, or how to reconcile disparate contexts in which the respective knowledge systems are embedded. This means work to reconcile a scientific based knowledge that defines much of the Western world with an epistemology based on participatory consciousness and personal experiences with human, natural, and supernatural relationships found in Indigenous learning traditions. It is important for Indigenous knowledge to be recognized as valid in its own right and not to be dismissed if it contradicts or is not explicable in Western academic terms. Concerted effort and fortitude will be required to place a particular focus of inquiry to the systems and institutions that promote and conduct research. It may mean that Western scholarship, as it relates to research involving Indigenous Peoples, will find difficulty in re-examining their truth claims and the possibility of undermining their power and privilege positions in knowledge production by resolving issues of knowledge like ownership, control, benefits and all the other assorted contested issues endemic to the current research

Kwayask itôtamowin: Indigenous Research Ethics

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Willie Ermine, M.Ed, Raven Sinclair, PhD Candidate, Madisun Browne, LLB
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“The burgeoning Indigenous research discourse encompasses Indigenous epistemology as the theoretical foundation, Indigenous protocols and practices as methodologies, and the right of Indigenous communities to develop their own knowledge centers. The Elders remind us of the Indigenous community and the living and sacred knowledge that passionately orients the people as the future is negotiated. This knowledge is a sacred trust given in perpetuity to the people that embrace it and as a trust, must not be compromised. The Elders remind us of the standard of ethics and honor that are inherent in the Indigenous value system that should now inform the unfolding new age of respectful cross cultural interaction. History shows that the various structures of knowledge production and the rules of practice in dominant knowledge institutions are not adequate to be given the responsibility for the continuity of Indigenous knowledge. Governments and research institutions and their representatives now have a duty to consult with Indigenous Peoples”

Indigenous concepts, contexts and processes.

❖ **Indigenous Concepts**

- ❖ Two-eyed seeing (Marshall, 2008).
- ❖ Holism
- ❖ Reciprocity

❖ **Indigenous Contexts**

- ❖ Social determinants of health.

❖ **Indigenous Processes**

- ❖ Community Control
- ❖ Community Engagement
- ❖ Cultural Responsiveness
- ❖ Collaboration
- ❖ Capacity Building

Peer Review Rating scheme is Problematic*

Potential Impact (scored / 5)

Scientific Merit ($>$ or $= 3.5 / 5$)

Q:

Who is equipped to evaluate 'potential impact'?

What does 'scientific merit' mean in Aboriginal Peoples' KT?

* Knowledge Synthesis Grant: Tri-Agency Partnership on the Environment (Feb 2011)

Brant Castellano and Reading: Policy Writing as Dialogue
The International Indigenous Policy Journal, Vol. 1 [2010], Iss. 2, Art. 1.
The Berkeley Electronic Press, 2010

‘Aboriginal ethics governance body has yet to be tried...
Testing this will require that the Canadian Federal
Government invest in building Aboriginal capacity to
engage in the dynamic evolution of research
practice and research ethics.’

Recommendation: KT should lead this transformation.

Thank you

