

Cultural safety within healing and treatment programs serving Inuit

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What is this project about?

Discrimination, linguistic and culture differences between clients and service providers are among the factors that may explain differential access to health systems and in turn health inequities between and among populations. [1-3]

A failure to take into account the role of culture in the delivery of health services is likely to contribute to the inequities inherent to health systems.

This project examines the role of cultural safety in healing and treatment programs for Inuit. In exploring how culture can contribute to these programs, they can be made more responsive and effective for people they serve.

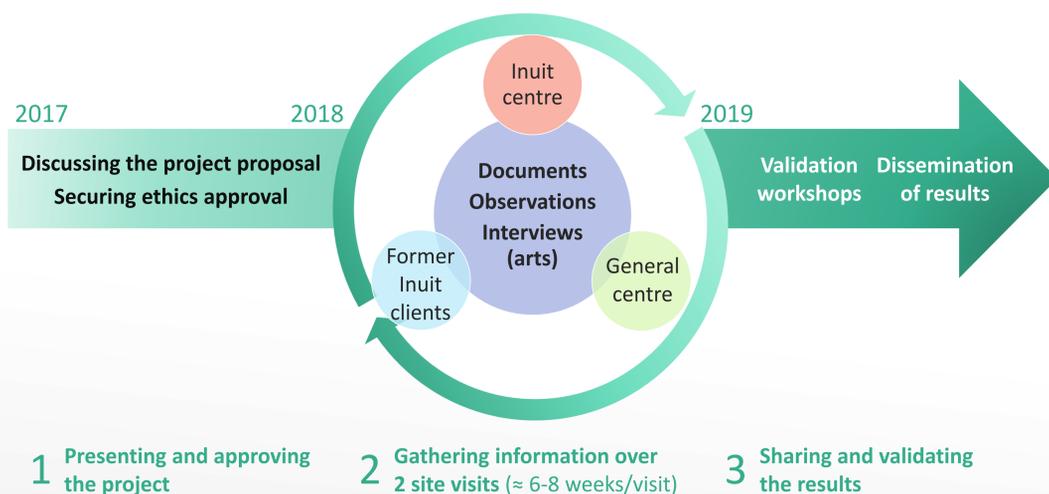
What are the project objectives?

In the context of healing and treatment programs offered to Inuit for substance abuse:

1. To understand from an Inuit point of view what makes a program culturally safe
2. To describe various practices that promote or impede cultural safety for Inuit
3. To identify enabling factors and barriers to providing culturally safe programs for Inuit in different contexts of care

➤ **Aim:** To find ways to improve programs to best meet the needs and expectations of Inuit

Overview of the project



The project will take place...

in 2 healing and treatment centres used by Inuit:

- 1 Inuit-specific centre
- 1 centre that serves the general population

Participants will be...

- Inuit clients
- Staff, managers, BOD members, and partners
- Other key people (e.g., family members, Elders, cultural consultants)

For more information

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Cultural safety [4-6]

- Refers to what people feel or experience when the care they receive is respectful of who they are and of their worldview
- Is based on respectful relationships, dialogue, sincere commitment, equitable partnership, critical reflection, and system transformation
- Goes beyond cultural awareness, cultural sensitivity, and cultural competence
- Promotes a more critical analysis and understanding of culture in relation to historical, political, and social and economic contexts
- Aims for greater social justice

What is proposed to be done?

Over a 15-month period, information will be gathered using a combination of the following methods:

- **Interviews and small group meetings** – To understand the different perspectives on cultural safety, as well as the enabling factors and barriers to providing culturally safe programs for Inuit
 - **Inuit clients:** small group activity (drawing, collage) + individual discussion
 - **Staff:** 2-3 group discussions with different staff members in each group
 - **Managers & others:** individual discussion
- **Observation of selected day-to-day activities** – To foster the development of a trusting relationship with people in each centre, to reach a deeper understanding of their unique characteristics and context
- **Review of selected documents** – To gather information on each centre and program, to understand what is done in different contexts

Towards the end of the project, there will be:

- **Sharing workshops** (one or two per centre) – To share the results, to discuss the interpretation

What is expected in the end?

- **Feedback** to the participating centres on their efforts to serve Inuit clients in a culturally safe manner
- **Information** for decision makers, health providers, and communities on the adaptations required for improving programs and services for Inuit
- **Advanced knowledge** on cultural safety and cultural adaptation of health programs from an Inuit experience

References

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- [6] Gerlach. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*. 2012; 79(3): 151-158.