KNOWLEDGE MOBILITY—RESEARCHER/COMMUNITY AGENCY COLLABORATION: PRAGMATIC EXAMPLES ABOUT RECIPROCAL INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS

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Presentation Objective

- To briefly explore three Indigenous Knowledge Mobilization projects as an example of how academic knowledge can be made accessible and relevant to community agencies and their clients.
What is Knowledge Mobilization?

- A synthesis of key concepts from academic literature and making them useful to a community and/or community agency ...

- Purpose: to mobilize knowledge to a community setting
What is Indigenous Knowledge?

- Indigenous Knowledge includes:
  - Intergenerational (Elders’ teachings)
  - Hands-on, experiential
  - Relationship with the environment (specifically, land and one another)
  - Physical, mental, emotional, spiritual aspects of life are interconnected
  - Dynamic and fluid
  - Holistic, balanced, and harmonious
What is Indigenous Knowledge Mobilization?

- Developing a summary of key concepts in the literature about *Indigenous Knowledge* and presenting it in ways useful to Indigenous /Aboriginal community organizations
1. Class Assignment: An Indigenous Knowledge Mobilization Project

Project Overview:

1. Summarize key concepts in the academic literature about Indigenous women’s health
2. Apply Indigenous health knowledge literature to a local Indigenous Women’s Wellness program
3. Make recommendations for the Indigenous Women’s Wellness program based on our findings in the literature
4. Written Report (cut, copy, paste for future proposals)

{Co-author: Alycia Fridkin, PhD Student}
Application to an Indigenous Women’s Wellness program

Women’s Wellness and Biomedicine
and Alternative / Complementary Knowledge Systems
and Indigenous Knowledges

- drumming
- access to Elders
- traditional healing
- yoga and meditation
- prayer
- meditation
- smudging
- song and dance
- connecting to the land
- sweat lodges
- traditional herbal medicines

- personal care for hair, nails
- self-esteem workshops
- visual-art activities
- facilitating family bonding
- social support from staff and peers
- support groups, such as sharing circles

primary care such as nurses and M.D.’s
alternative healing (e.g. reiki, reflexology, massage)
assists with finding shelter, food, clothing
clinics: flu, pap tests, youth clinic
dentist / oral health and hygiene
physiotherapy
naturuopathy, homopathy, accupuncture,
chinese medicine, herbs, vitamins
assistance with accessing pharmaceuticals
stress relief activities (e.g. music)
psychiatrists
psychologists
social workers
counsellors

PHYSICAL

MENTAL

EMOTIONAL

SPIRITUAL
2. Creating Collaborative Relationships Between Researcher and Community

{Doctoral Study: Honouring Relationships}

- Reciprocity: giving back more than you took away
- Assisting **Warriors Against Violence Society**
  (focusing on community needs and expertise, not researcher “expertise”)
- Surveying Literature
  (Domestic Violence, Correctional Services Canada, Fund-Raising, Women/Ministry Relations)
- Grant Writing, Funding Proposals,
- Policy Awareness and Possible Improvements
3. UBC Learning Exchange: Community-Student Relationships

- Reading-Week Project with Vancouver Native Health Society’s ADAPT Program (Aboriginal Diabetes Awareness Prevention and Teaching)

- My Role? – Student Project Leader

- Project Aim and Outcome: 7 food and nutrition students made an artistic and interactive display board and put on a luncheon for 30 staff members
“We finally get it—it’s not about the poster...”
“It’s about the people!”
Knowledge Mobilization: Benefits

- Building relationships
- Making research relevant and accessible
- Communities and researchers benefit from research
- Power Shift (Community as Expert)
- Emphasizes community-based academic literature
- Attempts to avoid misappropriation of knowledge
Knowledge Mobilization: Challenges

- Not always complete collaboration (re: Project #1 was a class assignment and not community-led)
- Ownership of literature remains within university libraries and secured online journals
- Inconsistent concepts/key terms used between scholars, their literature, and community agencies
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Thank You! Questions and Comments?