CNA Webinar Series: Progress in Practice

Aboriginal health nursing in Canada: Policy and best practice

Tania Dick
Nurse Practitioner, Cormorant Island Community Health Centre

Bernice Downey
Principal, Minoayawin – Good Health Consulting

February 24, 2015
Megan Manning, RN, MSc
Nurse Advisor, Professional Practice
Canadian Nurses Association
Tania Dick, RN, MN-GNP(F)
Nurse Practitioner
Cormorant Island Community Health Centre

Bernice Downey, RN, BScN, MA, PhD
Principal
Minoayawin – Good Health Consulting
CNA Aboriginal Advisory Group

Lisa Bourque-Bearskin, RN, MN, PhD
Tania Dick, MN-NP(F)
Bernice Downey, RN, BScN, MA, PhD
Lisa Perley-Dutcher, RN, MN
Julie Lys, NP
Earl Nowgesic, RN
Fjola Hart Wasekeesikaw, RN, MN
Sherri Di Lallo, RN, MN
Aboriginal Health Nursing and Aboriginal Health: Charting Policy Direction for Nursing in Canada

The paper was informed by:

- personal interviews with key informants
- an online survey
- a review of literature
Objective

To inform the development of policy directions and to identify strategies and interventions that will support leadership development and capacity building for nurses working in aboriginal health.
Aboriginal Identity

Aboriginal Identity of Survey and Interview Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Online Survey</th>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non Aboriginal</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Nation</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Métis</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inuit</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>28</td>
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Roles in Aboriginal Health Nursing

Professional Role of Participants:

- Registered Nurse, 33%
- Education, 19%
- Administration, 18%
- Policy, 12%
- Other, 11%
- Research, 5%
- Practical Nurse, 2%
Respondents’ Ranked Priorities

- Identifying institutional policies, practices and administrative barriers that make it difficult for nurses to provide the care needed for aboriginal people (Rank 1)

- Addressing racism in policy and practice (Rank 2)

- Recruiting aboriginal people to the nursing profession (Rank 2)

- Providing continuing education and professional development (Rank 2)
Respondents’ Ranked Priorities

- Developing **leadership capacity** (Rank 3)
- Recognizing **indigenous knowledge** (Rank 4)
- **Mentoring** programs (Rank 4)
- Developing recruitment and retention strategies for nurses to **work in northern and remote areas** (Rank 5)
Systemic and Institutional Barriers

Survey and Interview Data

• Ranked as the #1 priority
• Seen as highly influential for other areas
• Perception that needs are well documented, but there is little action in response

“Without adequately addressing racism in policy, we can’t set the landscape for further development.”

(Respondent)
Systemic and Institutional Barriers

Survey and Interview Data (cont’d)

- Specific strategies that could be implemented include:
  - Better coordination
  - Improved conditions for community nursing
  - Enhanced participation by aboriginal nurses in national leadership roles
  - Public policy supporting integration of indigenous ways and traditional medicine
Systemic and Institutional Barriers

Literature Review Findings

• Social determinants of health, including those specific to Aboriginal Peoples: colonization, racism, IRS traumas – “system transformation” is needed

• Racism specifically needs to be addressed: through the cultural competence of individuals and systems

• Aboriginal Peoples (health-care clients and nursing professionals) need to feel cultural safety
Systemic and Institutional Barriers

Literature Review Findings (cont’d)

- Generally, there is “policy inaction” on these issues
- A.N.A.C. initiatives
- Still need: more $$; institutional “champions”; collaboration and partnerships
Validation and Integration of Indigenous Knowledge

Survey and Interview Data

• Ranked #4 by respondents

“Indigenous knowledge comes from each specific community/band/nation.... It is not generalized, which we always try to do. If we do not have access to the traditional knowledge keepers, then we cannot integrate it into our practice. However, we do have the skills/knowledge to be culturally competent, always.” (Respondent)
Validation and Integration of Indigenous Knowledge

Survey and Interview Data (cont’d)

- Seen as an important component of cultural safety and building leadership capacity
- Not recognized formally by most institutions
- Challenges of implementation are to be expected
Validation and Integration of Indigenous Knowledge

Adequate Access to Training and Supports

- Yes: 21
- No: 50
- Not Sure: 27
Validation and Integration of Indigenous Knowledge

Literature Review Findings

• Term often used: “Indigenous ways of knowing and being”
• Literature not yet well established; still emerging
Validation and Integration of Indigenous Knowledge

What is being done includes:

• A.N.A.C. recommendations on curricula
• Thompson Rivers University: faculty development for purposes of curriculum reform
• Inuit design of education, including language: the Nunatsiavut Project
Validation and Integration of Indigenous Knowledge

What is still needed includes:

- More experiential learning for students
- More institutional policies (including NIHB) to support practices desired by health clients (e.g., smudging)
- Practice guidelines for incorporating indigenous knowing
Moving Forward:
A.N.A.C., CNA, Aboriginal Nurses

• Collaboration
• Partnership
• Defining terms of reference
• Guiding principles
• Engaging aboriginal nurses
For more information:
Tania Dick
tania09@yahoo.com
Bernice Downey
downeybe@sympatico.ca
Megan Manning
mmanning@cna-aiic.ca

http://anac.on.ca/
Upcoming Webinar

Uncover your inner leader

April 21, 2015 – 12-12:45 pm ET
Thank you!