

The Maskwacîs
Maternal Child and
Family Wellbeing
Group:

Relationships through
Trust



Community-Based Research Canada

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Richard Oster
Mosom Rick Lightning

Overview

- Need for transformational Indigenous health research
- Maskwacîs Maternal, Child & Family Wellbeing Research Group
 - Underpinnings of relationships and trust
- Mosom Rick Lightning
- Discussion and Questions

Medical experimentation and the roots of COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy among Indigenous Peoples in Canada

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As the second wave of the pandemic sees case numbers rise to dangerous levels across the country, it has become clear that Indigenous people are particularly vulnerable to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The figures released by the Manitoba First Nations COVID-19 Pandemic Response Coordination Team reflect this vulnerability. Despite making up just over 10% of the total population of the province, First Nations people make up 71% of active cases with COVID-19 and 50% of patients in the intensive care unit; the median age of death from COVID-19 for First Nations people is 66 compared with the provincial median of 83 for Manitobans, overall.¹

This should come as no surprise to anyone who has read the dozens of studies, reports and royal commission findings published during the past two decades. Study after study has shown the vulnerability of First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities to health crises like the one we are currently facing. This vulnerability is very much the product of a Canadian colonial policy regime that has guaranteed that Indigenous Peoples have reduced access to adequate health



Known health, social, political disparities

Harmful history of mistrust, exploitation, and even unethical research

- Misrepresentation
- Authoritarian
- ‘Helicopter research’
- Deficit-based

Strengths-based,
responsive research built
on relationships

Situating control within
communities and
partners

Prioritizing engagement
and collaboration for
considerate, culturally
sensitive, relevant, and
equitable research
partnerships





Wâhkohtowin – Kinship / we are all related

No one individual is worth more than another one. This is why humility is such strong traditional Cree value. Our Research Group brings together Maskwacîs Elders and community members, healthcare providers working in Maskwacîs, and university-based researchers. We believe in a foundation of relationships based on trust and mutual understanding. Our research is community-based, strengths-based, and includes community members as experts. We seek to develop and evaluate culturally-based strategies to improve wellbeing and better support families in Maskwacîs. Together we are responding to the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action and seek to help rebuild and support the foundation of communities, including healthy families





Reframing
western
perspectives

Ceremony

Humility

Emotional
investment

Time, effort, and
flexibility

