

Indigenous Institute of Health and Healing  
**ONGOMIIZWIN** — Clearing the Path for Generations to Come

## Reconciliation in Public Health

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December 15, 2017



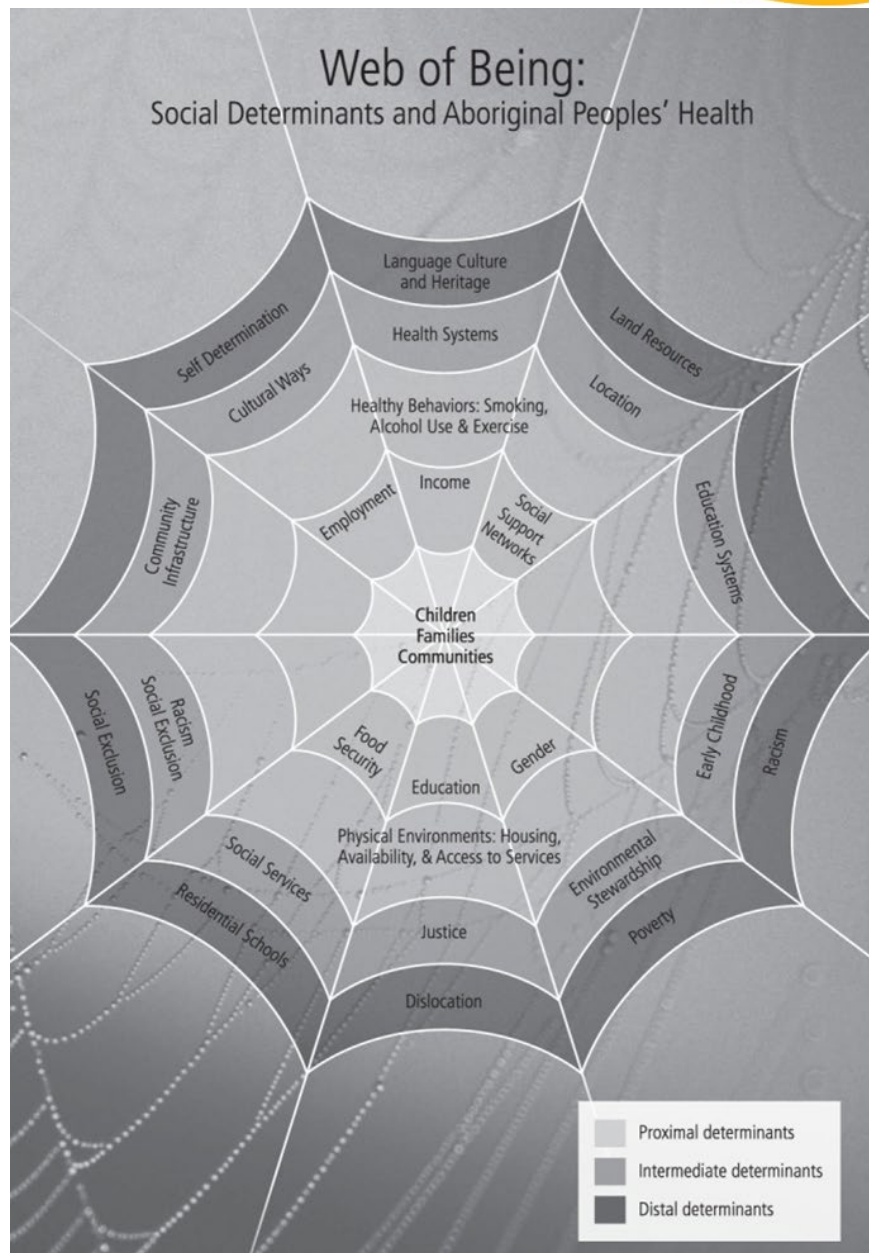
UNIVERSITY  
OF MANITOBA

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Health Sciences

# Public Health

- What we as a society do collectively to ensure the conditions in which people can be healthy
  - Institute of Medicine 1988
- Call to Action 24: understand the current health status of Indigenous peoples as being rooted in government policy

# Web of Being: Social Determinants and Aboriginal Peoples' Health



# Principles of Reconciliation

- The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is the framework for reconciliation at all levels and across all sectors of Canadian society.
- Nine others.

# UNDRIP

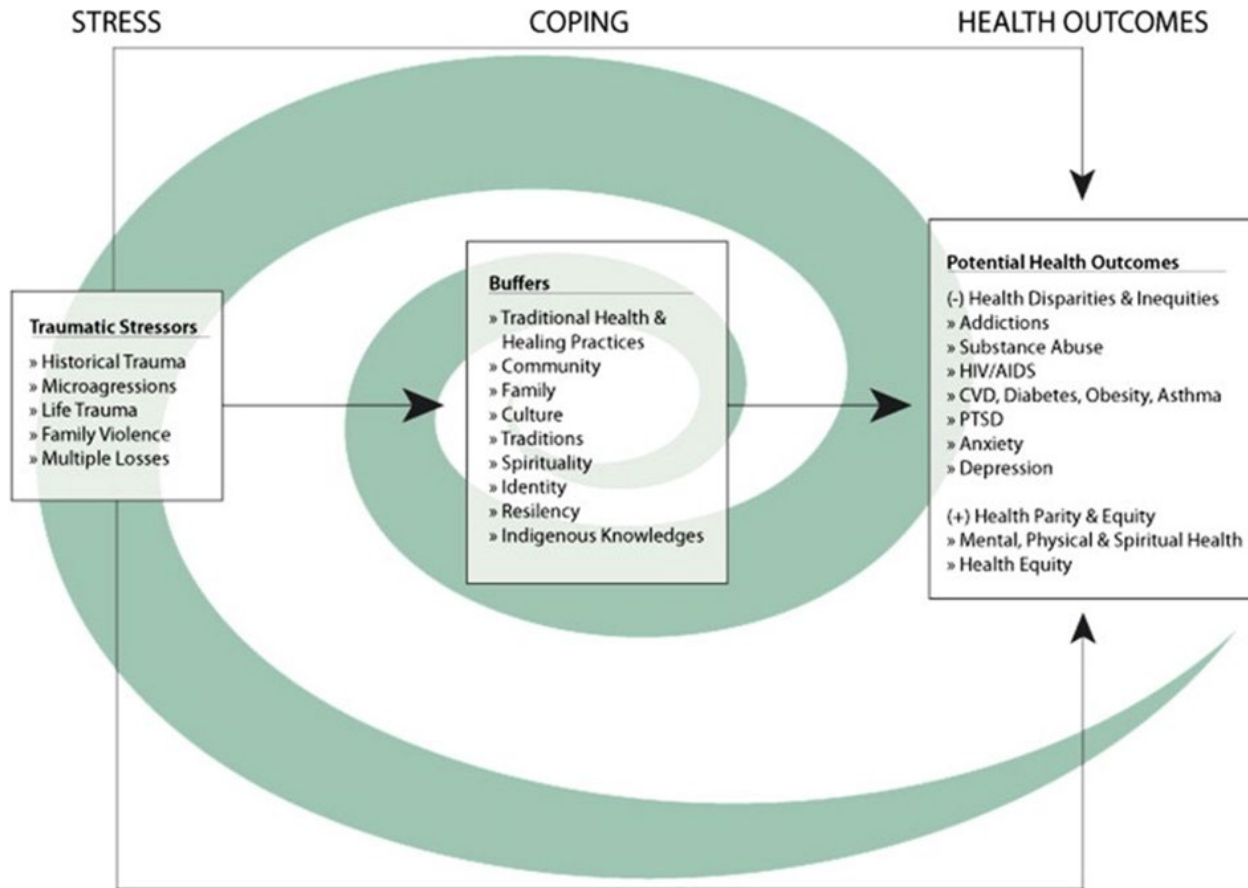
- Four key themes:
  - The right to self-determination
  - The right to cultural identity
  - The right to free, prior and informed consent
  - The right to be free from discrimination

# Right to Self-determination

- Indigenous peoples have the right to decide what is best for them and their communities
  - Active strategies to remove barriers and create opportunities for meaningful work for Indigenous peoples
  - Co-creation of governance structures
  - Humility and respect to learn from Knowledge Keepers

# Right to Cultural Identity

Indigenous peoples are equal and also have the right to be different and identify with their Indigenous community's culture.



Karina L. Walters, Ramona Beltran, Tessa Evans-Campbell, Jane M. Simoni. Keeping our Hearts from Touching the Ground. Women's Health Issues, Vol 21(6); S261-265.

# Right to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent

- To be consulted and make decisions on any matter that may affect their rights freely, without pressure, with all the necessary information, and before anything happens.
  - Public health evidence/ knowledge and local or relevant Indigenous evidence/ knowledge
  - Decision-making power redistributed to Indigenous peoples



# Protection from Discrimination

- The right to work, live and play in settings that are free of racism

Racial Microaggressions	Daily, commonplace verbal and nonverbal attacks (e.g. eye-rolling and invalidation)
Personally Mediated Racism	Discriminatory actions by member(s) of dominant group against Indigenous people or people of colour
Institutional Racism	Differential access to the goods, services and opportunities of society by race; evolutionary & embedded in structures
Epistemic Racism	The positioning of Western knowledge as superior, universal and the objective norm; the use of Western science to "prove" racial inferiority
Internalized Racism	When oppressed individuals or communities accept and believe discourses of their inferiority

# Maintaining Systemic Racism and Reconciliation Cannot Coexist

## The 8 White Identities

By Barnor Hesse

There is a regime of whiteness, and there are action-oriented white identities. People who identify with whiteness are one of these. It's about time we build an ethnography of whiteness, since white people have been the ones writing about and governing Others.

### 1. White Supremacist

Clearly marked white society that preserves, names, and values white superiority

### 2. White Voyeurism

Wouldn't challenge a white supremacist; desires non-whiteness because it's interesting, pleasurable; seeks to control the consumption and appropriation of non-whiteness; fascination with culture (ex: consuming Black culture without the burden of Blackness)

### 3. White Privilege

May critique supremacy, but a deep investment in questions of fairness/equality under the normalization of whiteness and the white rule; sworn goal of 'diversity'

### 4. White Benefit

Sympathetic to a set of issues but only privately; won't speak/act in solidarity publicly because benefitting through whiteness in public (some POC are in this category as well)

### 5. White Confessional

Some exposure of whiteness takes place, but as a way of being accountable to POC after; seek validation from POC

### 6. White Critical

Take on board critiques of whiteness and invest in exposing/marking the white regime; refuses to be complicit with the regime; whiteness speaking back to whiteness

### 7. White Traitor

Actively refuses complicity; names what's going on; intention is to subvert white authority and tell the truth at whatever cost; need them to dismantle institutions


### 8. White Abolitionist

Changing institutions, dismantling whiteness, and not allowing whiteness to reassert itself





# Questions

- As an MOH, how do you operationalize anti-racism, address Indigenous health equity issues and TRC in your organization?
  - What is the most urgent, impactful and transformative action NCCs can take related to reconciliation and public health?
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# Questions

- What are some of the challenges/ biases in documenting the health status of Indigenous communities?
- Is there a perceived change in attitudes among public health people in places that have instituted cultural safety training? Is it making a difference relative to other places that don't have an established program?

# Questions

- How does PH move away from a p/maternalistic approach to 'helping' Indigenous people and towards a position that allows a self-determining process to take shape?
- What concrete healthy public policy contributions do you think can be made to advance the TRC's Calls for Action?

# Questions

- Given the current themes covered by the NCCHPP (ethics, health inequalities, population mental health, analyzing public policies, policy processes, built environments) do you think some of the Calls to Action might be prioritized?
- How can the TRC Calls to Action be leveraged and be made more direct toward accelerating the federal commitment to safe drinking water and the urgency to do so?

# Moving forward

- Walk with humility
- Ask for and listen to feedback from existing relationships
- When you start to feel defensive and uncomfortable: lean in

