

WSU Native American Health Curriculum Project

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What

Health sciences curriculum development informed by insight from providers about working with Native American patient populations.

Why

Improve Native American health outcomes & support WSU memorandum of understanding with 12 American Indian Tribes.

Goals

Improve health outcomes & experience with health care system for Native American patients and prepare WSU Health Sciences students to work with Native American patients.

Progress

Semi-structured interviews with members of the health care team from 8 local tribes, with 50% identifying as Native American and over 100 years of combined experience.

Upcoming

Finish coding & analyzing data with tribal communities' participation. Develop learning objectives informed by data. Work with tribal communities to prioritize learning objective.

Methodologies

Decolonizing – a culturally empathetic approach that addresses issues that will make a difference for the community

Participatory Research – doing research with, not on communities to improve relevance and acceptability for community

Phenomenology – revealing meaning in occurrences to understand how meaning is created and the structure of learning

Qualitative Interviews – understand the lives experiences of others and learning the meaning of those experiences

Preliminary Findings

Value of experiences – experiences with Native American communities and patients was valuable preparation

Understanding Indian Health Systems – how IHS and Tribal Health Clinics operate and how to influence change

Treaties and Rights to Health – the history and treaty rights related to health for Native American persons

History, Trauma and Earning Trust – history of the community and associated trauma & the need to earn trust

Unteachable Qualities – some attributes are part of a person's character and are difficult to teach

Implications: Add insight from those working with Native American patients to literature surrounding health sciences education, provide benchmark for health sciences programs un understanding and addressing Native American health needs, increase cultural humility in health care teams and improve health care experiences for Native American patients.