

Submission Id: 3707

Title

Wellness in a Smile

Priority 1 (Research Category)

Community based participatory research

Presenters

Marcella Ogenchuk, PhD, BSc, RN, Vivian Ramsden, PhD, RN, MCFP (Hon.), Holly Graham, PhD, BA, MN, RN, Registered Doctoral Psychologist, Robert St Pierre

Abstract

Context: Dental caries is the most common chronic childhood infectious disease in Canada and creates a significant burden in both human and financial costs. Saskatchewan has the third highest rate of day surgeries to treat dental caries among children 1-5 years of age. Objective: To explore and address the strengths and barriers related to the provision of oral health services. Study Design: A community-driven project which utilized participatory health research and transformative action research. Setting: La Loche, an Indigenous community in northern Saskatchewan, Canada. Population: Elders, community leaders, health care providers, teachers, and parents/guardians of pre-school and or school-aged children were invited to participate.

Intervention: The research process included co-creating tools with the community that built upon strengths; creating opportunities for change, generated solutions, and transforming the health system the community accessed. Results/Findings: Thirty-eight community members participated in the project. Descriptive analysis was undertaken using SPSSv25 to describe the community participants. An inductive thematic analysis was undertaken by the researchers and research assistants in the community. The most commonly identified themes were: community resilience; the need to improve oral health literacy and skills; and, the mitigation of barriers to access care. Conclusions: This project developed sustainable relationships and built on the community's own strengths and capacities. The community developed a book written and illustrated by the community members, translated in Dene. The book will be used as a tool to provide targeted information about successes and knowledge gaps.