The Canadian Institutes of Health Research – Institute of Aboriginal Peoples’ Health: Collaborative Initiatives for Indigenous Health Research

Doris Cook
Canadian Institutes of Health Research–Institute of Aboriginal Peoples Health

Centre for Indigenous Peoples’ Nutrition and Environment
October 15, 2003, Montreal, Quebec
• To provide an overview of the CIHR Institute of Aboriginal Peoples’ Health strategic initiatives
“Our mission is to fund outstanding research that will have impact. To that end, CIHR believes in a problem-based approach to research, breaking down the silos of academic discipline, sectors of society or geographic distance to focus on important health research questions.”

Dr. Alan Bernstein, President, CIHR
CIHR-IAPPH Vision

• CIHR-IAPPH will improve the health of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people by supporting innovative research programs based on scientific excellence and aboriginal community collaboration.
CIHR-IAPH Mission

• CIHR-IAPH will play a lead role in building research capacity in the First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, and will support partnerships and alliances between aboriginal communities and non-aboriginal health research organizations/institutes at the local, regional, national and international levels.

• CIHR-IAPH will support health research that respects aboriginal cultures, while generating new knowledge to improve the health and well-being of aboriginal people.
Tackling Health Disparities

- Develop and nurture health research partnerships
- Build aboriginal health research capacity
- Linkages with other Institutes
CIHR-IAPH Partnerships (1)

• Strategic Priority # 1 - To forge partnerships and share knowledge

• Domestic partners – HC, NSERC, SSHRC, NAHO, sister Institutes

• International organizations interested in indigenous health
CIHR-IAPH Partnerships (2)

- International
  - January 2002 - Letter of Intent between CIHR and Mexican Institutos Nacionales de Salud
  - April 2002 - Collaborative Agreement between CIHR; National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia; and, Health Research Council of New Zealand
  - International Forum on Indigenous Health Research, Oct. 2003, Townsville, Australia
IAPH Partnerships (3)

- Hosted New Zealand delegation for information exchange and network establishment, September 2003
- Health Canada MOU with US
- Ongoing dialogue with NIH
• Mexico - Indigenous health researcher observer

• Health research and exchange program under development
Circumpolar Health

- Active role in International Congress for Circumpolar Health, Nuuk Greenland

- Vehicle for research into conditions and barriers of northern indigenous people

- Plans for long-term diet and health study – impact of contaminants on traditional diets
Circumpolar Health (2)

- Canada to host International Congress for Circumpolar Health in 2009

- IAPH Assistant Director elected President of Canadian Society of Circumpolar Health – September 2003

- IAPH Assistant Director elected Vice President of International Union of Circumpolar Health
Aboriginal Research Capacity Development

• IAPH Strategic Research Priority #3 – to build capacity

• Aboriginal Capacity and Development Research Environments (ACADRE) - vehicle for building capacity
ACADRE Centres

• Network of networks
• Began with 4 Centres
• Link health research facilities and support careers of academic and emerging aboriginal health researchers
• Additional 4 Centres approved October 2002
North of 60 Town Hall Meeting

- Aboriginal involvement
- Inclusion and respect - aboriginal knowledge
- Training and capacity building
- Environmental health
- Effectiveness of traditional practices
- Resiliency and wellness
- Access - health services and health outcomes
Inuit ACADRE Centre

- Cooperatively identify critical environmental health issues and conduct research
- Attract Inuit to pursue environmental health sciences
- Support Inuit training and capacity enhancement
- Train local environmental health researchers
- Communicate, disseminate and support understanding of information
- Enhance capacity to address issues locally, nationally and internationally
ACADRE Centre Themes

• Changing Environments and Inuit Health

• Environmental Public Health Surveillance and Monitoring in Inuit Regions

• Inuit Knowledge and Western Science in Environmental Health Research
IAPH Links with Others

• Initiative on Rural and Northern Health

• Reducing Health Disparities – 9 Institutes, HC, SSHRC, et al.

• National Forum on the Environment and Health, etc.