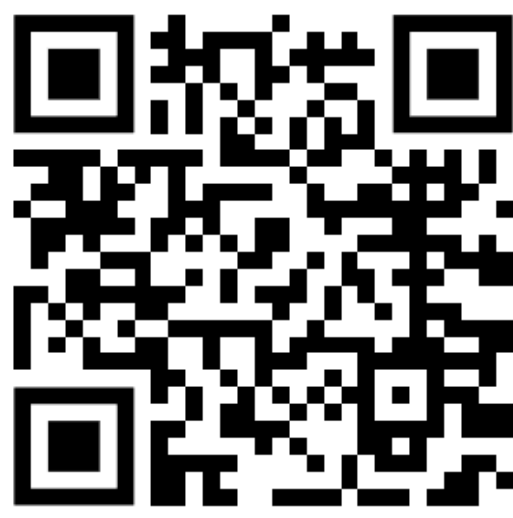


Indigenous harm reduction: A scoping review of current approaches & best practices in harm reduction in Indigenous communities across Turtle Island (North America)

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Link to Tribal Principles website



Indigenous communities have been practicing harm reduction since time immemorial; colonization changed this.



Tribal Principles



Culture first:
Support cultural and traditional healing in your community.



Invest in reciprocal learning and partnerships across tribes.



Healing support for families: Invest in parent, caregiver and elder resources.



Sustain and enhance substance use services for youth.



Create opportunities for holistic well-being.

Figure 1: The Tribal Principles offer culturally-relevant, Indigenous-centered guidance for tribes to consider when creating their spending plans for use of the tribal opioid settlements

Our goal is that the Tribal Principles and resources on the www.tribalprinciples.cih.jhu.edu website are useful to tribes and Indigenous-serving organizations across the US in the spending of tribal opioid litigation settlement funds.

Background

- Federally-recognized tribes in the United States are slated to receive nearly \$1.5 billion dollars in tribal opioid settlements over the next 15 years
- Overdose rates amongst Native Americans in the United States have been increasing since 2000, and opioid overdoses within Native American/Alaska Native communities are disproportionately high (1,2,3)
- High overdose rates have had devastating impacts on families and communities in tribes across the US. Tribes have spent already-stretched resources on addressing the opioid overdose crisis, including investments in health care, social services, child welfare, law enforcement, and other government services (4)
- The tribal opioid settlement dollars are intended to support opioid abatement activities in tribal communities, to remedy the dipropionate impacts of the opioid crisis on tribal communities
- Our team co-created guidance on spending the tribal settlements with direction from an expert Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC). This guidance is called the **Tribal Principles** (see Figure 1)
- We facilitated nine listening sessions with tribal leaders, service providers, and tribal community members throughout the United States to gather feedback and share information on the Tribal Principles
- Though imperative to the work of opioid abatement activities, there is a lack of understanding of Indigenous harm reduction, and a scoping review is needed to provide a greater understanding of this breadth of work

Methods: Scoping Review

- For the academic portion of the search, three databases, PsycINFO and PubMed/Medline databases and Ethnic NewsWatch, were searched May to August 2024.
- Population keywords included words used to describe and identify Indigenous populations in the US and Canada and content terms represented harm reduction and adjacent key words. Combinations of population terms and individual content keywords administered via 6 strings in advanced search options with selections made for peer-reviewed articles, full-text, and written in English.
- For the grey literature search, Google, Harvard Think Tank and Native News databases were searched in September 2024.
- Grey literature search strings were tailored to each database, and as with the academic database search, keywords were used to describe and identity Indigenous Peoples in North America.
- Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) strategies were utilized throughout the Tribal Principles project, including the process of creating the scoping review.
- The IAC was updated throughout the process of the scoping review and were invited to contribute to the paper through reviewing and editing the introduction, writing a section of the discussion, reviewing the entire paper and/or contributing additional citations.

Results

- The academic database search yielded 76 peer-reviewed articles and of those 11 met the inclusion criteria
- With this academic search, four of the articles were respective to the United States, inclusive of American Indian and Alaska Native populations in varying regions throughout the country. Five were in Canada, engaging with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities. Intervention and program types ranged from surveillance to safer use education and resources (i.e., Narcan, Naloxone, testing kits) to medicated assisted treatment and opioid agonist therapy. Of those, five integrated direct cultural services.
- The Google search was limited to 99 results and from this search five articles met the inclusion criteria; none of the results from Harvard Think Tank (5) nor Native News (3) met the inclusion criteria. There was a broad range of interventions and programs represented, as with the academic search, from medication assisted treatment, to housing and case management and safer use and health education..

Discussion

- We are working to compile the available literature on Indigenous harm reduction and opioids within a scoping review to make it available and accessible for tribal community members and tribal leadership
- This scoping review aligns with the work of the Tribal Principles
- Once complete, the scoping review will be posted on the Tribal Principles website
- Much of the work of Indigenous harm reduction is not published in academic journals, and the grey literature search complements the academic literature search to explore information contained in tribal community-based reports, pamphlets and publications

Acknowledgements

- We gratefully acknowledge the expert Indigenous Advisory Committee for guiding the development of the Tribal Principles
- The Tribal Principles project was funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies as a part of the Bloomberg Overdose Prevention Initiative, a collaborative partnership aimed at combating the nation's opioid epidemic by identifying gaps in treatment and prevention programs, identifying novel approaches and tools, and providing evidence-based guidance and interventions

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