



RESEARCH PROJECT SUMMARY

Central Research Circle

Name of Project: An examination of how the Anishinaabe smudging ceremony is integrated in Northeastern Ontario hospitals

Research Start-up Summary and Abstract:

The aim of this research is to gain an understanding of how the Anishinaabe smudging ceremony is accommodated within four urban hospitals in Northeastern Ontario. Specifically, it will examine the smudging ceremony and how it is integrated into policies through an analytical comparative framework. By utilizing a comparative analysis, the research will reveal how the smudging ceremony is accommodated within the hospitals and it will provide greater insight into understanding the shifting relationship between Indigenous peoples and health service providers in Canada today.

The journey will explore the current realities of First Nations peoples, smudging policies, and see which hospitals accommodate the smudging ceremony. Waldram, Herring, and Young discuss the re-emergence of Indigenous ceremony within urban institutions and state, "it has become fairly common in hospitals, clinics, and other institutions in many parts of Canada to see an Indigenous practitioner undertaking a ceremony for a patient" (2006, p. 238). The aim of this study is to examine the smudging policies and what the smudging ceremony challenges are that each hospital encounters. Although, comparative analysis is in opposition to storytelling, the policies in place affect the people differently, at different institutions, in different locations. The purpose is to compare the policies and stories to see how the policies are employed within each hospital.

Research Questions:

Which urban hospitals in Northeastern Ontario have smudging policies in place?
What are the policies of Northeastern Ontario hospitals with regard to smudging?
How were the policies enacted?
Are there any policy gaps within each hospital?

Methodology:

This study will examine the smudging policies by obtaining the documentation of current policies and one-on-one interviews. This method will rely on institutional ethnography. The study will to investigate how the smudging policies effect the people who utilize the smudging ceremony within hospitals. This method will explore the relationships between the institution and the reality of Indigenous Peoples.

Main contact:

Amy Shawanda, Trent University