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Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network | Réseau de connaissances des Autochtones en milieu urbain
Prairie Research Centre

RESEARCH PROJECT SUMMARY

Prairie Research Centre

Living in the City: an exploration of cultural, social, health and economic dimensions of Manitoba First Nations relocating to urban centres to access services

Research Start-up Summary and Abstract:

Every year, First Nations individuals and families living in rural and remote communities relocate to Winnipeg to access educational, health and social services not available in their communities. Research undertaken in Manitoba has shown that individuals and families face considerable challenges associated with racism and discrimination, jurisdictional barriers to accessing federally and provincially funded services, structural and economic challenges, and emotional challenges associated with family dynamics. While this is known, there is a need to take a closer look at selected communities, to develop evidence that will support program development focused on solutions. These communities want to undertake a research project that engages community members and focuses on documenting the impact of relocation on their membership in order to formulate evidence-based pragmatic solutions. This study builds on the proposed study *Being a First Nation youth in the city: an exploration First Nation youth's experience of relocating to Winnipeg* also being submitted for funding through the UAKN.

Methodology:

This study draws on critical theories and indigenous epistemologies to position and inform the approach to inquiry we propose. The critical theories will focus attention on the political and moral concerns arising from the legacy of colonialism, and how this shapes the everyday experiences of those who have been marginalized. While all work to date focused on medical relocation, it is clear from the work and policy review conducted that at least some of the challenges experienced as a result of relocation to access other services (social care, services for a child with special needs, end of life care, educational opportunities) may yield similar challenges. While the participants in this project are community members who are relocated for medical reasons, the focus of investigation is on the larger social, economic and cultural impacts of relocating to Winnipeg rather than their health experiences.

Community Partners and Organizations:

Andy Wood, Executive Director of Neewin Inc

Four Arrows Regional Health Authority, which represents the communities of Garden Hill, St. Theresa Point, Red Sucker Lake, and Wasagamack

Engagement objectives:

This study will carefully document the social experience and needs of First Nation individuals and families relocating to Winnipeg to access services through the following objectives:

- develop detailed profiles of families who are experiencing relocation, including who moved, and who is left in the home community; reasons for relocation; unmet needs; length of relocation; costs and challenges; and
- explore solution-oriented options with impacted families and Four Arrows Regional Health Authority communities' program managers.

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