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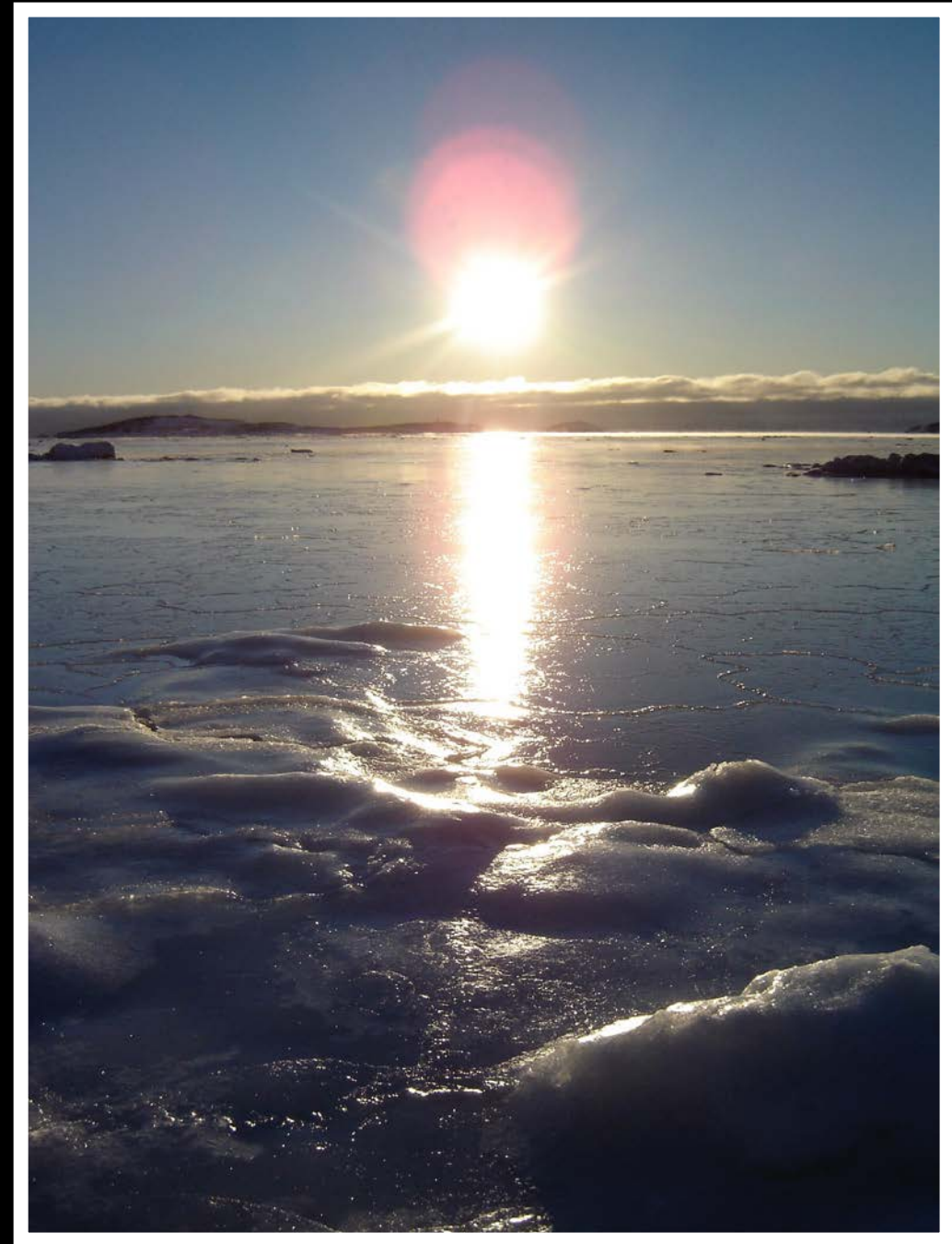
Piliriqatigiinni Community Health Research Model: Working Together for the Common Good

Dr. Gwen Healey, Executive and Scientific Director, PhD
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Assistant Professor, Northern Ontario School of Medicine



Overview

- Introduction
- Goal of this presentation
- What and where is the Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre?
- Our story
- Piliriqatigiinni Community Health Research Model



Freeze-up, Frobisher Bay, 2005

Introduction

- Born and raised in Iqaluit, Nunavut
- Epidemiology and Public Health
- Inuit and Indigenous Research models/methods
- Founded Qaujigiartiit in 2006



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- A large, sculptural ice formation, possibly a piece of glacial ice, sits on a dark, rocky beach. The ice is translucent blue and white, with jagged, crystalline edges. In the background, other smaller ice chunks are scattered across the shore under a clear sky.

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QAUIGIARTIIT

What is this all about?

- Health research in Arctic Indigenous communities is also increasing as part of a general increase in the Arctic.
- A growing segment of the research community is focused on explaining and understanding Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing.
- Researchers have become increasingly aware that Indigenous knowledge must be perceived, collected, and shared in ways that are unique to, and shaped by, the communities and individuals from which this knowledge is gathered.
- The goal of this presentation is to offer a model which is based on Inuit perspectives on health-related research epistemologies and methodologies with the intent that it may inform health researchers with an interest in Arctic health.

Our Story

- Qaujigiartiit was created in 2006 out of a need for community-driven research, which addressed health priorities in Nunavut
- We started with 1 part-time staff member and now have 4 full-time staff at our office in Iqaluit and between 6-10 casual staff across the territory working on different projects at any given time
- Our staff have a variety of expertise: public health, nursing, Indigenous studies, and epidemiology.



Inuksuk, Panniqtuuq, NU, 2007

Our Story

- Our centre works to build capacity for research in Nunavut by providing training workshops in research methods, interviewing, and ethics.
- Qaujigiartiit does not have core funding (but we need it!) and currently operates on a project-based funding model.
- Between 2006-08 we held public engagement sessions across Nunavut to identify community health priorities for health research



Playground, Arviat, NU, 2008



Our Story

- Participants identified 5 priorities for health and health research in Nunavut
 - Mental health and well-being
 - Physical health and well-being
 - Healthy Family Life
 - Traditional and Spiritual Values
 - Prevention, Education, Support and Livelihood



Stretching/drying seal skins, Cape Dorset, NU, 2007

Our Story

We believe in a community health model that builds on

- the strengths of our knowledge,
- the spirit that is inherent in our way of life,
- the capacity that exists in our communities

to foster a healthy environment
for future generations.



Toonik Tyme, Iqaluit, NU, 2010

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Piliriqatigiinni

Working together for the
common good



Photo credit: Apphia Kullualik, Iqaluit, 2010

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Piliriqatigiinniq

As a research centre created by and
for *Nunavummiut*, how are we going to
do research??



Piliriqatigiinniq

- A decolonizing research approach places Indigenous voices and epistemologies in the centre of the research process (Simonds & Christopher, 2013)
- Critically examines the underlying assumptions informing the research and challenge the widely accepted belief that Western methods and ways of knowing, which have historically marginalized Indigenous methods and ways of knowing, are the only objective, true science, (Kovach, 2009; Thaman, 2003; Wilson, 2008).
- Not a rejection of all Western methods and theories, but opportunity to embrace the different kinds of knowledge that can be shared and created in Indigenous communities when methods and theories, which reflect Indigenous worldviews, are used.



ΛC⁺b^cNR^aσ^{ab}

We developed a community health research model which is rooted in Inuit concepts and perspectives on health, wellness, and research

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- ᐃᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕ *Inuuqatigiittiarniq* Being respectful of all living things
- ᐃᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕ *Unikkaaqatigiinniq* Story-telling
- ᐃᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕ *Iqqaumaqatigiinniq* All knowing coming into 'one'
- ᐱᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕ *Pittiarniq* Being good, kind, well, and/or moral



Piliriqatigiinniq

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- A hand-drawn illustration on a piece of paper. It depicts a red car driving on a road that curves into the water. The car is shown in two positions: once on the road and once in the water, suggesting it has fallen off. The drawing is simple, with blue wavy lines for water and brown lines for the road and car.

*Drawing of one person helping another off an ice flow,
Qaujigiartiit Health Promotion Workshop, Iqaluit, NU, 2007*

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Pilirigatigiinniq

Inuuqatigiitiarniq

- Being respectful of one another
- Stating intentions and motivations
- Knowing the community context
- Formation of research questions in partnership
- Developing and fostering relationships
- Engagement of community members



*Print etching by Andrew Qappik
Uqqurmiut Centre, Panniqtuug, NU, 2007*

Piliriqatigiinniq

- Story-telling
- Value story-telling and the sharing of experiences
- Reflecting on how stories are presented
- Reflecting on the interviewing experience



Piliriqatigiinniq

- Concept of knowing coming into 'one'
- Data analysis
- Immersion and Crystallization (Borkan, 1999)
- Finding meaning and understanding



Piliriqatigiinniq

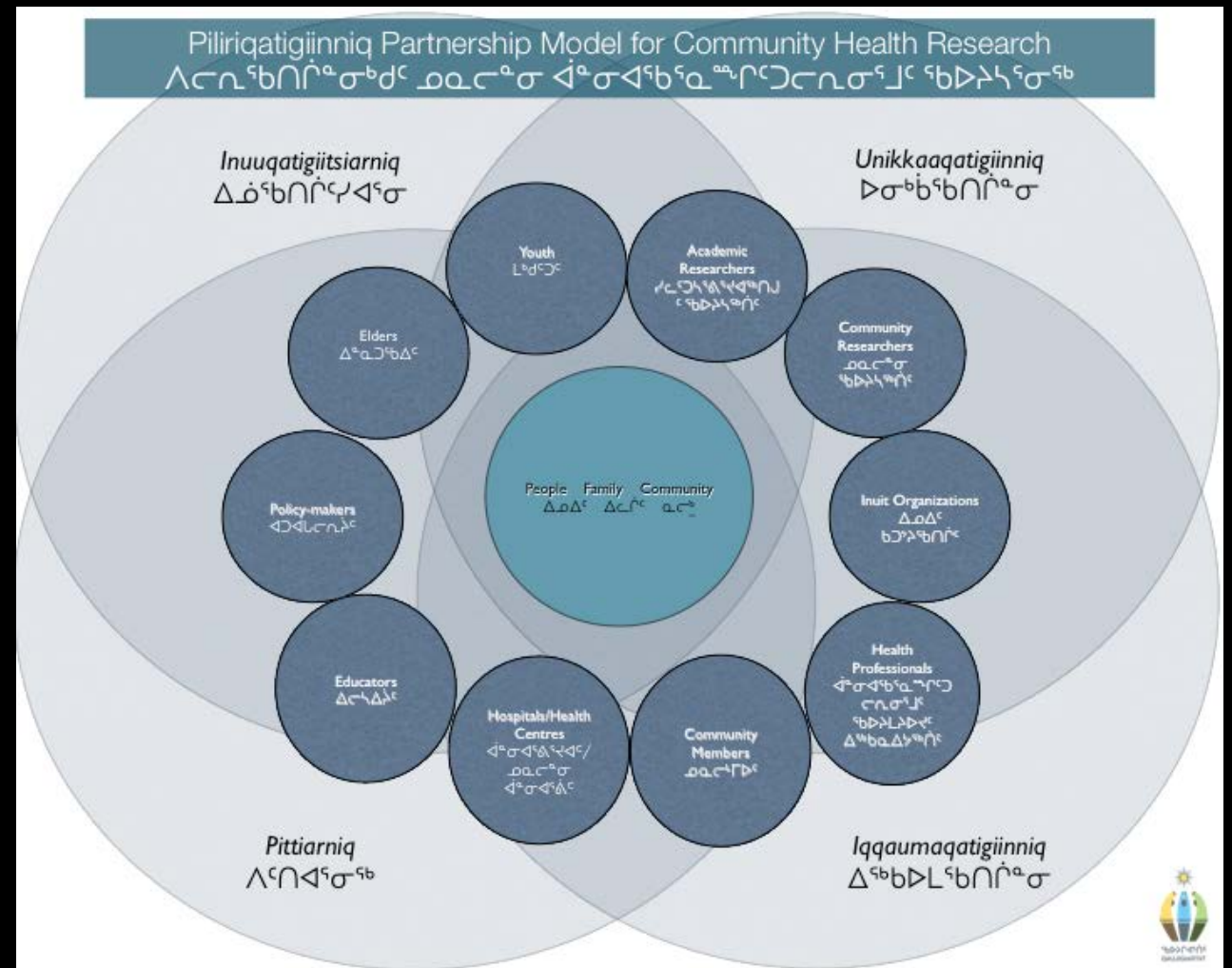
- Being good or kind
- Ethics
- Consent
- Protection of the Stories
- Rigour/Accountability of the researcher



'Friendships make us happy'
Photo credit: Apphia Kullualik, Iqaluit, NU, 2010

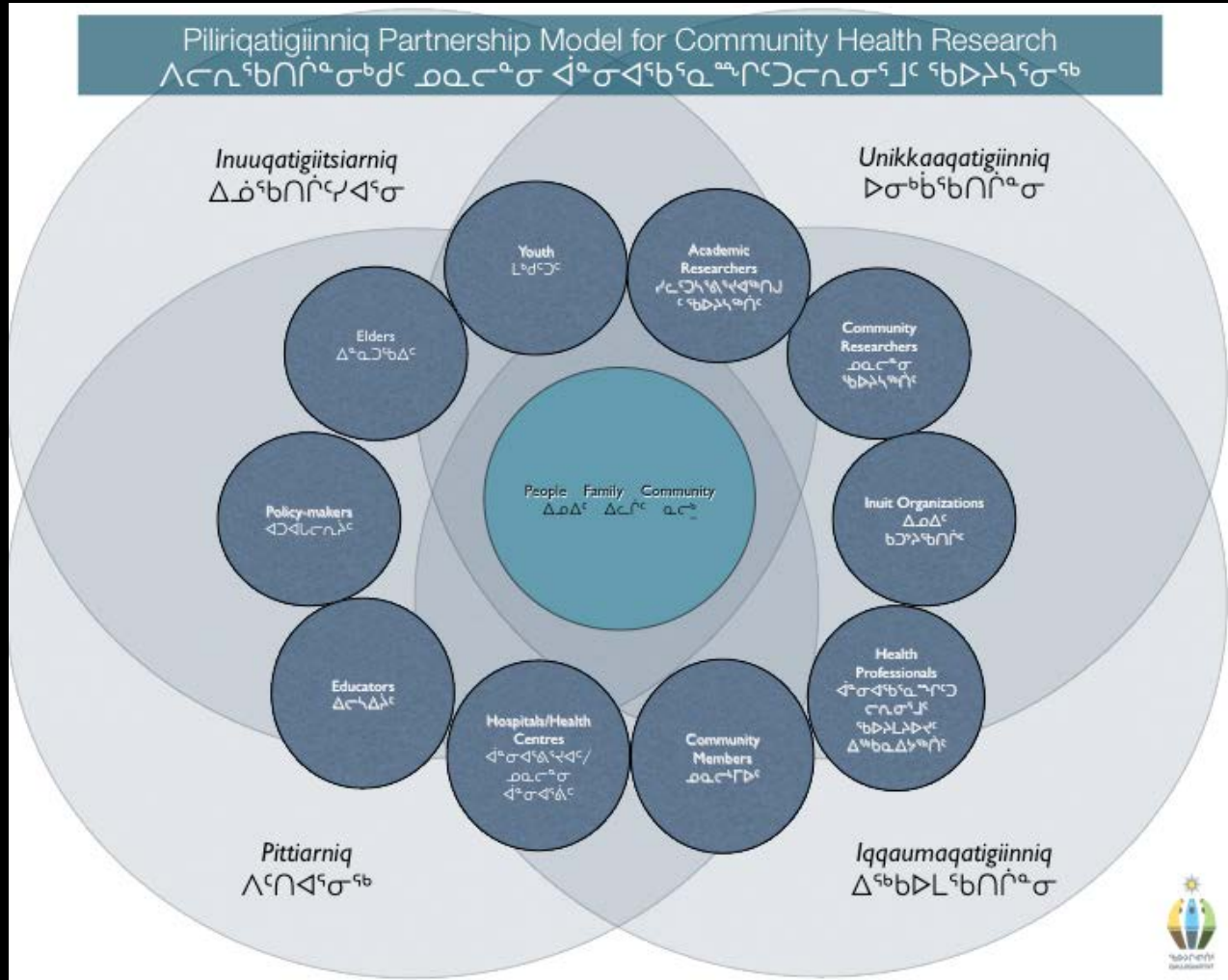
ΛC⁹⁶NR⁹⁶σ⁹⁶

- *Piliriqatigiinni* is the concept for working in a collaborative way for the common good.
- Developed the Model in the formative years of the centre.
- Governs how research should be conducted, both within the centre and by the researchers with whom the centre engages.



ΛC₂⁹⁶CN⁹⁶σ⁹⁶

- Developed in response to community-identified need for health research projects, which explored topics of concern to *Nunavummiut* and where data were collected, analysed and disseminated in a holistic and collaborative way.



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Pilirigatigiinniq

- Model is a representation of the web of relationships we have with each other, and the theoretical origins of our approach.
- Built upon the principle that anyone can be involved in health research in some capacity if we are all working for the common good.
- Multi-disciplinary collaboration
 - strengthens research projects
 - enriches data analysis with additional perspectives
 - fosters a greater sharing of knowledge and implementation of findings across sectors.

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Piliriqatigiinniq

- May not be a representative from every sector involved in every project
- The model serves as a reminder to look beyond the scope of what is commonly defined as 'health' and 'research' to include knowledge-holders and stakeholders from other disciplines and walks of life.
- This model was developed to provide practical organizational and methodological guidance, and the foundations run much deeper into theory and philosophy.

Piliriqatigiinniq

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Questions?

Reference

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Contact Us!

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