

Guidelines for Ethical Aboriginal Research: The Development of Community-Based Aboriginal Research Guidelines

A Presentation By:
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Guidelines for Ethical Aboriginal Research, Manitoulin Area

- Manitoulin Island: large freshwater island in Northern Ontario
- 7 culturally distinct First Nations communities in the Manitoulin area



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Background

Research in local First Nations

- Communities are often contacted by Academic researchers to participate in health research projects
- Many First Nations conduct research to gain reliable data to support community-based initiatives
- Several health research projects have taken place in Aboriginal communities

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Background

Community Concerns about Research in local First Nations

- Research activities often causes community members to feel that they have been “researched to death”, without benefit to their community resulting in research fatigue
- Generally, research has not lead to improved community health
- The ethical conduct of researchers from a First Nation's perspective has also been questioned in the past.

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Background

Proactive Approach to Research

- A community-based health research conference was held on Manitoulin Island in March 2001 and approximately 45 people attended
- Brought together health care workers, community members, elders and local as well as university based researchers
- Participants created a vision for ethical health research on Manitoulin

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Background

Proactive Approach to Research

- Following the recommendations from this meeting, a working committee was formed
- Committee was a collaboration between the 4 Local Health Authorities (Noojmowin Teg, Mnaamodzawin, Wikwemikong and M'Chigeeng) as well as Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute.
- Presentations were made to respective boards and committees and it was unanimously supported.

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Purpose of the Research Review Committee

Working Committee

- Created research and ethics guidelines based on the perspective of local First Nations.

GEAR: Guidelines for Ethical Aboriginal Research on Manitoulin Island have now been released.

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GEAR

GEAR components:

- Our Vision for Culturally appropriate Aboriginal Research on Manitoulin
- Aboriginal Ethical Guidelines for research
- Ethical guidelines: Tri-Council Policy Statement
- Ethics and Research Review process
 - Background information on the research committee
 - Sample forms and contracts
 - References

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GEAR
Review process for research projects :

Flow chart



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Guidelines for Ethical Aboriginal Research: GEAR

Guiding Values GEAR:

- Research designed to directly benefit the community and produce documents which are useful for communities and agencies
- respect the Aboriginal ethics, diversity between communities, and traditional Aboriginal knowledge and culture
- respect that the collected data is owned by local communities and agencies
- respect and build local capacity for research

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Guidelines for Ethical Aboriginal Research, Manitoulin Area

- Respect the diversity among and within communities.
- Research methodologies must be culturally acceptable at the community level.
- Respect that the collected data is owned by local communities and/or agencies.
- Respect traditional Aboriginal knowledge and culture.
- Build local capacity for research and evaluation.
- Research must emphasize a direct benefit to local community health.
- Produce documents which are useful for communities and agencies.
- Respects and protects traditional knowledge.

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Guidelines for Ethical Aboriginal Research, Manitoulin Area

Aboriginal research ethics for Manitoulin developed through collaboration with an Elders Group

- Based on seven grandfather teachings:
 - Respect, Bravery, Truth, Humility, Honesty
 - Love and Wisdom

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Guidelines for Ethical Aboriginal Research, Manitoulin Area

How does a researcher incorporate Respect, Bravery, Truth, Humility, Honesty, Love and Wisdom into their research?

Some quotes of what people said....

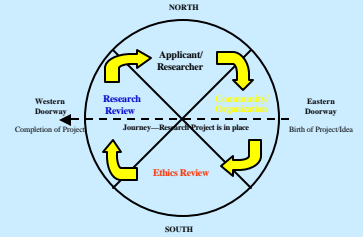
- "Respect the diversity in spirituality, beliefs and values of First Nation people within each of their communities."
- "Researchers have to become aware of wisdom of elders and children."
- "Be aware that meaning of off-beat remarks by research participants are easily misinterpreted. The same can also be true for humor in general. Make an effort to appreciate peoples humor!"

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GEAR Review process for research projects :

Medicine wheel



- Birth of Project
- Shared with Community / Organization
- Referred to Ethics Review (if it's approved by the Ethics Review, recommendation is made for the project to proceed to the Research Review)
- Applicant receives approval and the project begins it's journey from the Eastern to the Western Doorway (signifying the project from beginning to end)

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Purpose of the Research Review Committee

Tasks of the Committee...

- Reviewing and evaluating research proposals proposed for implementation in local communities
- Community-based ethics review for research
- Strategic plan for health research

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On behalf of Noojmowin
Teg Health Centre
Miigwetch for your time!

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