



Sachigo Lake Wilderness Medicine Program

A First Response Collaboration in a Remote Aboriginal Community

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**A WORK
IN PROGRESS**



BACKGROUND

Remote First Nations communities experience elevated accidental trauma rates, with significant public health consequences. In these settings, prehospital care is complicated by factors including geographical isolation, lack of local paramedical services, and limited access to appropriate first aid and patient transport training.^{1,2}

PURPOSE

The goal of this program is to develop a collaborative process to deliver and evaluate a culturally and locally specific first aid education program in a remote First Nations community.

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY

Sachigo Lake First Nation is a remote community in northern Ontario, population 400. Like nearly thirty other communities, Sachigo Lake is accessible only by air, or by a temporary ice road during winter months. Medical services are provided through a local nursing station and a visiting physician. Secondary and tertiary care is provided through Sioux Lookout, Thunder Bay and Winnipeg. Evacuation times for critical patients are seldom less than two hours.

DESIGN & METHODS

PHASE I / site visit / may 2010

Researchers and collaborators participated in a three-day visit to Sachigo Lake First Nation. Researchers and organizers met with community stakeholders involved in governance, health care and first aid response. These community members discussed their needs in addressing the emergencies in and around Sachigo Lake that they encounter on a regular basis. Community members provided input on research processes, practices and analysis.

“What I think is that it will help the community deal with things that pose a problem for us. What I'm hearing in your proposal is working closely with our community. ... That's what I like.”

-Sachigo Lake Community Member

EXCELLENCE IN FIRST AID EDUCATION

PHASE II / course delivery/ november 2010

PARTICIPANTS

Program participants (15-20) will be sampled purposively and chosen by the community, based on their role in local first aid response.

COURSE

A five day, forty hour course, through which participants will develop patient assessment, treatment and decision-making competencies specific to situations where:

- resources and equipment may be limited or non-existent,
- patient management may last hours to days,
- responders may experience adverse terrain and weather conditions.

Topics will range from burns to CPR to diabetic emergencies.

Example of Course Curriculum | Topic: Hypothermia

Key Knowledge

Prevention
Distinguishing Mild and Severe Hypothermia
Complications of Severe Hypothermia
Rewarming Concepts and Considerations
Packaging, Transport, and Evacuation
Resuscitation Issues

Pedagogic Approaches

Knowledge Sharing
Lecture-based format with clear approach.
Demonstration
Hypothermia packaging and transport using locally appropriate equipment.
Discussion
Community-relevant case study to be reviewed in small groups.
Practice
Simulation integrating learned knowledge.

LOCAL GEOGRAPHY, ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY

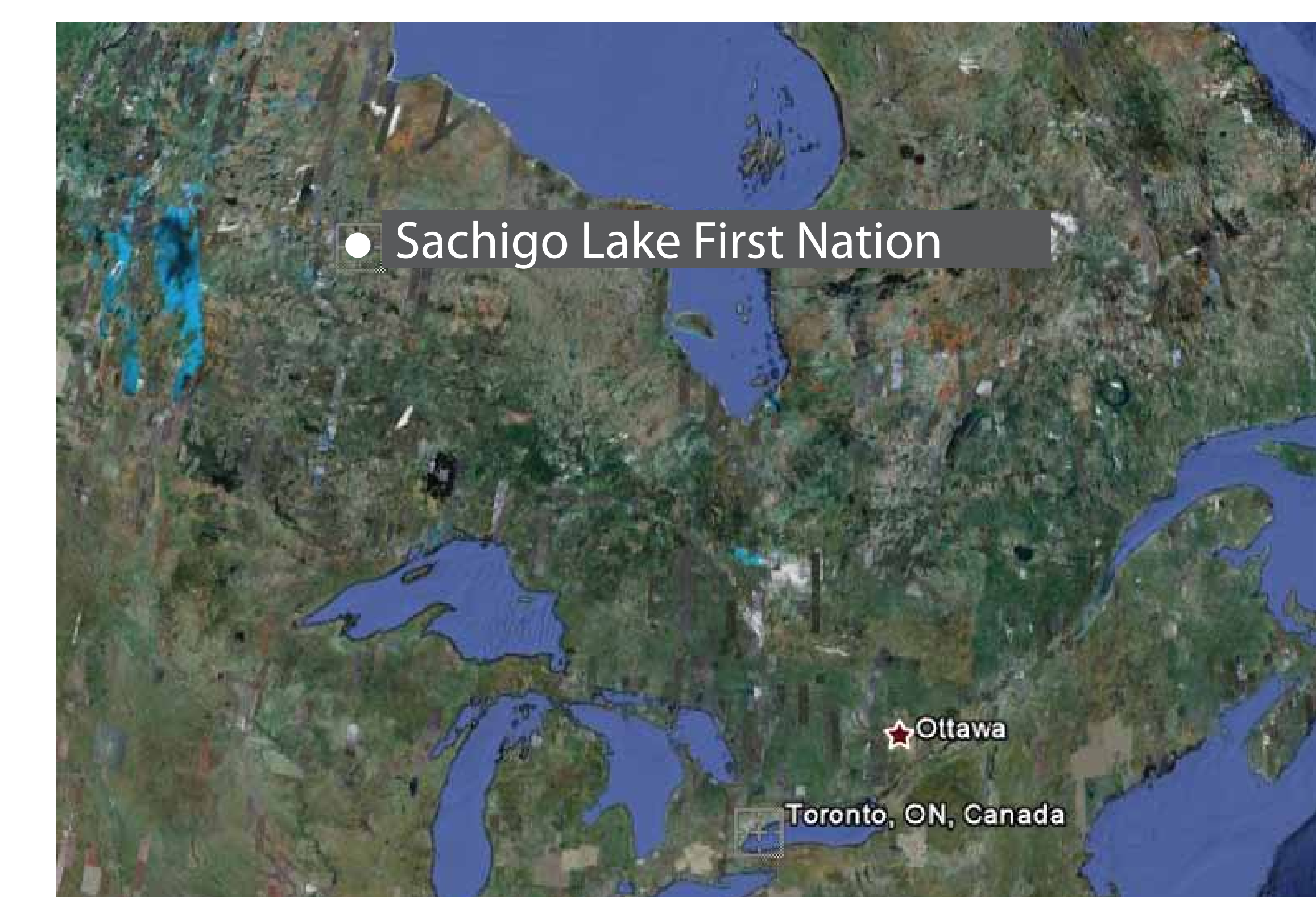
CULTURALLY & EDUCATIONALLY APPROPRIATE MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

PHASE III / evaluation

A health services researcher trained in evaluation has been involved in every aspect of the program design and development. Research methods follow principles of participatory action research, to ensure responsiveness to community needs. Community research partners have been identified and they will collaborate with the researcher on data collection and analysis. Participant observation and small group discussions will be used to gather rich qualitative data from program participants.^{3,4,5} Community members have validated the research approach and data collection methods. Evaluation of the program will reflect participants' perceptions of the course, and its effectiveness and applicability to the Sachigo Lake context. Considerations of how this approach can be replicated to suit other remote First Nations communities will be considered and research results will be shared with program partners.

MAIN FINDINGS

Through a collaborative approach, community specific first aid training programs can be developed and delivered in partnership with the people and settings they are designed to serve. This project and its community-specific approach provides an example of engagement with a remote community for first response skill development, knowledge translation and exchange.



<http://maps.google.com>

REFERENCES

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