

We Count COVID-19: Integrated and Indigenous-Led Public Health Approach to FNIM COVID-19 in Toronto



Janet Smylie: Métis Family Doctor and Tier 1 Canada Research Chair in Advancing Generative Health Services for Indigenous Populations in Canada

Steve Teekens: Executive Director, Native Men's Residence

Cherylee Bourgeois: Indigenous midwife and partner, Seventh Generations Midwives Toronto



Objectives for Today

1. Share overview and get input on We Count COVID-19 project
2. Provide an overview of the data collection tool and process, and how this information can be used to mobilize a local public health response



COVID-19 - Core Public Health Response Functions

1. “Case” identification and management
2. Contact Tracing
3. Linkage to health and social service supports
4. Tracking, mapping, understanding, and then strategically acting to stop/reduce spread work

The best COVID-19 response systems are the systems where these functions are integrated and run by the same team



We Count COVID-19 Toronto

- Partnership between Na-Me-Res, SGMT and Well Living House
- Funded through a special call and funding stream of Indigenous Health Services (distinct from urban Indigenous community support funds)
- Designed to respond to gaps in identification of and streamlined provincial/territorial/federal responses to COVID-19 in urban and related homelands
- Action research demonstration project – focused on public health service provision with a streamlined project evaluation component



We Count COVID-19 Toronto – Activity Overview

Rapidly develop and implement an Indigenous led, parallel to/harmonized with TPH COVID-19 response over the summer

- Formalization of partnerships, collaboration, governance
- Develop and implement Indigenous specific public health training for own community members
- Set up Indigenous specific fixed testing site
- Outreach to FNIM community members who have had, do have and/or are at risk of COVID-19
- Respond to their needs in a good way
- Develop community-governed information regarding FNIM COVID-19 testing, infection, and spread in Toronto



Audzhe Mino Nesewinong

- Indigenous COVID-19 Assessment Centre
- Offer both saliva sample and nasopharyngeal swab
- Supported by Outreach Workers



Data Collection

- Developed a customized Indigenous COVID-19 case database
- Gather relevant socio-demographic, Indigenous identity, testing, outcome, travel, and access to care information



Database Example 1

Main Menu × Contact List × **User Details** ×

User Details

[Back](#) [Save](#) [View SocioDem Tests](#) [View NaMeRes Tests](#) [View Cases](#)

ID	<input type="text" value="1"/>
Study ID	<input type="text" value="test"/>
Enter the site ID	<input type="text" value="NaMesRes Outreach"/>
If other, please specify	<input type="text"/>
Gender	<input type="text"/>
Do you carry a smart phone?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If yes, do you have the COVID Alert App downloaded?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
How did you find out about the We Count COVID-19 project?	<input type="text"/>
If other, please specify	<input type="text"/>



Database Example 2

SocioDem Test

Back Save

ID created_at

user_id modified_at

Section C: Demographics Section D: Housing Section E: Testing Section F: Disposition Section G: Co-Morbidities Section H: Interviewer Comments

How do you self-identify?

FN: Are you status? (eg. Registered Indian according to the Indian Act)

FN: What is your nation or nation? (eg. Cree, Mohawk, etc.)

FN: What is your reserve or band affiliation, if any?

Métis: Do you identify with a particular nation or nations?

If yes, which one(s):

Métis: Are you registered with the provincial Metis organization or Metis Nation?

Métis: If yes, which one:

If other, please specify

Inuit: If yes, are you a beneficiary of an Inuit land claim?



Data Collection Process

- Main ways for an Indigenous person to be counted into the database
 - Auduzhe Testing Site
 - Outreach
 - Community Testing



Addressing gaps with data

- Informing policy, including address vaccination injustices
- Reducing funding and service barriers
- Tracking emerging patterns
- Sharing tools, methods and lessons learned to support other Indigenous agencies



Questions?

Cherylee Bourgeois

Indigenous Midwife

Seventh Generation Midwives Toronto

cbourgeois@sgmt.ca

Tasha Shields

Research Manager

Well Living House

Tasha.shields@unityhealth.to