University of Manitoba Faculty of Medicine
First Nations, Metis and Inuit Health

Towards the Development of a Framework for Research Engagement with First Nations, Metis and Inuit Communities

Planning Session – March 8 2013

Summary Report

Submitted to Dr. Catherine L. Cook, Associate Dean, Faculty of Medicine, University of Manitoba
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On March 8, 2013, representatives of First Nations, Metis and Inuit governments and organizations, provincial and federal government departments, and regional health authorities gathered with university and community-based researchers for a planning session on research engagement with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities organized by the Office of the Associate Dean, First Nations, Metis and Inuit Health, University of Manitoba, Faculty of Medicine. The objectives of the planning session were to:

- Provide stakeholders with an overview of current research activities with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities in Manitoba;
- Define key actions that the University of Manitoba, Faculty of Medicine might take to identify a framework for research engagement with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities; and
- Provide an opportunity for networking, team building, and interaction amongst key stakeholders in First Nations, Metis and Inuit health research in Manitoba.

The planning session included two panels in which presenters shared information and ideas that participants could draw on in subsequent discussions of a framework for research engagement with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities. The presentations included:

- Collaborating with First Nation Communities and Stakeholders: The Medical Relocation Study (Sharon Mah, PhD, Research Associate, Faculty of Medicine, University of Manitoba)
- Research and Relational Accountability (Linda Larcombe, PhD, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Medicine, University of Manitoba, and Pam Orr, MD, Professor, Faculty of Medicine, University of Manitoba)
- Building Partnerships that Benefit Communities and Advance Evidence-Base in Suicide Prevention (Jitender Sareen, MD, Faculty of Medicine, University of Manitoba)
- Working as Partners: Research Risk Messaging with the Metis (Michelle Driedger, PhD, Associate Professor, Faculty of Medicine, University of Manitoba)
- Diffusion of Personal Health Information Services: Self-Determining and Empowering Practices for Manitoba Inuit (Wayne Voisey Clark, MA, Board Member, Manitoba Urban Inuit Association)
- Building Respectful Relationships: Advising the Research Ethics Board on a Plan for Community Engagement (Shirley Rempel-Rossum RN., B.N., Bannatyne Campus Research Ethics Board)
- Anikobidijiganan & Naabaagoondiwin (Kathi Avery Kinew, MSW, PhD, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs)
- Research Engagement with Metis in Manitoba (Julianne Sanguins, RN, PhD, Manitoba Metis Federation Health & Wellness Department)
- Faculty of Medicine Framework for Research Engagement with First Nations, Metis and Inuit Communities (Kevin Coombs, PhD, Faculty of Medicine, University of Manitoba)

Following each planning, participants rotated through “knowledge café” stations, where, in facilitated discussions, they explored specific questions relating to the development of a framework for research engagement with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities

- Principles of collaboration:
  - What are the key principles and activities for inclusion in a framework for research engagement between the University and First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities? What can the University do to support and promote these principles or activities?
What can the university do to enhance and promote research linkages between the University of Manitoba and First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities?

What role can the University take to support key components for successful engagement between the University and First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities? What is the role of the University in supporting research projects for First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities?

What can the University do to support the process of “knowledge translation” of best practice and key research findings relevant to First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities?

Participants’ discussions are summarized in this report. The report also presents components of a potential framework for research engagement between the University and First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities, drawn from information and ideas shared by both participants and presenters. These are presented on the following page.

Participants’ feedback, responses, and recommendations (as recorded in this report) will be a resource for the Faculty of Medicine as it develops a strategic map for research.
Components of a Potential Framework for Research Engagement between the University and First Nations, Metis and Inuit Communities

**Purpose:**
To partner with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities to develop shared excellence in collaborative, community-driven research.

**Goals:**
- To generate outcomes that are of value to both First Nations, Metis and Inuit research communities and the University
- To develop research capacity within both First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities, and the University

**Areas for Action:**

**Authentic Engagement:**
- Provide appropriate resources, policies and procedures to support authentic engagement between University and First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities
- Invest in relationship development, from conceptual stage of research project and throughout and beyond project term
- Collaborate with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities on the development of formal mechanisms and bodies to guide and oversee research activities
- Integrate two-way knowledge transfer (in which the university and community partners share knowledge with each other and with other stakeholders) throughout project

**Capacity Building:**
- Develop research capacity of First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities by providing opportunities for education, training, mentorship, and practical research experience to community members, with a focus on developing next generation of researchers.
- Develop research capacity of University by actively recruiting First Nations, Metis and Inuit students, researchers, and faculty members; developing relationships with and learning from First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples; and, in partnership with First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples, reviewing and revising the Research Ethics process to make it more congruent with the needs and realities of First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities
- Share resources, so that partners can draw on each other’s expertise, skills, infrastructure, networks and other resources

**Principles:**
1. Commitment to authentic engagement with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities, and recognition that relationship is central to research.
2. Shared respect, trust, and commitment to mutually empowered long-term relationships.
3. Acknowledgement of the diversity within and between First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples and the distinct identities and treaty-based and inherent rights of First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples.
4. Shared authority, responsibility, and accountability
5. Commitment to address the research-related priorities and needs of both First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples, and the University
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INTRODUCTION

On March 8, 2013, the Office of the Associate Dean, First Nations, Metis and Inuit Health, University of Manitoba, Faculty of Medicine, hosted a planning session on research engagement with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities. Invitees to the session included representatives of First Nations, Metis and Inuit governments and organizations, provincial and federal government departments, and regional health authorities, and university and community-based researchers. The main objectives of the planning session were to:

- Provide stakeholders with an overview of current research activities with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities in Manitoba;
- Define key actions that the University of Manitoba, Faculty of Medicine might take to identify a framework for research engagement with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities; and
- Provide an opportunity for networking, team building, and interaction amongst key stakeholders in First Nations, Metis and Inuit health research in Manitoba.

The agenda designed for the planning session supported these objectives:

- Panel presentations provided an overview of current activities and models for engagement in research with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities;
- Working in small groups, using a “knowledge café” process, participants identified key principles and activities for inclusion in a framework for research engagement between the University and First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities; and
- Throughout the day, activities supported participant interaction, providing them with ongoing opportunities to share their experiences, interests, accomplishments and insights, and to work together to develop input for the framework.

As noted in opening comments by Dr. Brian Postl, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, the Faculty is currently developing a strategic plan for research activities, and recommendations from this planning session may be incorporated into that larger plan.

OVERVIEW OF CURRENT RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AND MODELS

The Research Engagement Planning Session included two panel presentations that offered information and ideas that participants could draw on in their discussions of a framework for research engagement with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities. The panels focused on current research activities and models for engagement in research with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities, and benefits that research activities can provide to First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities. The presentations are summarized below.

Collaborating with First Nation Communities and Stakeholders: The Medical Relocation Study (Sharon Mah, PhD, Research Associate, Faculty of Medicine, University of Manitoba). This project brought together academic institutions and researchers, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC), individual First Nations, non-governmental organizations, and government bodies (FNIHB and regional health authorities) to explore issues relating to medical relocation (in particular, the high number of patients and families that relocated for medical reasons). The researchers began collaborating with the AMC in initial phases of the project. With assistance from the AMC’s patient navigators, the research team was able to interview patients who had been permanently relocated to Winnipeg. The team also visited First Nations (selected according to criteria that satisfied the need for research
rigor and addressed AMC’s interest in understanding relocation numbers), spending a week in each community interviewing participants. Collaboration continued through the reporting phase, with the research team sharing community-specific findings in the First Nations, providing an opportunity for the team to check back with participants and ensure that they had ‘got the story right.’ The collaborative process deepened the research team’s understanding of the medical relocation process, and enabled the team to develop practical recommendations based on information shared by participants and focused on addressing immediate stresses experienced by relocated patients and their families, streamlining services, and enhancing cultural safety in health care services.

Research and Relational Accountability (Linda Larcombe, PhD, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Medicine, University of Manitoba, and Pam Orr, MD, Professor, Faculty of Medicine, University of Manitoba). In a project that began as an examination of infectious tuberculosis (TB) in the northern Dene community of Lac Brochet and grew to encompass housing, nutrition, food security, water, environment, public health education, culture, and human and indigenous rights, Larcombe and Orr learned about the centrality of relationship to the process of research in First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities. Research requires the creation of relationships that are founded on mutual respect and accountability, and include sustained engagement and trust. Drawing on the teachings of Willie Ermine and Shawn Wilson, they came to understand research as a ceremony in which participants can bridge the distance between them, resolve tensions between Indigenous and scientific ways of knowing and doing, and gain insights (Wilson, 2008). This approach created an ethical space in which the needs of both researchers (including outputs such as academic papers, videos, talks, and presentations) and the community (outcomes such as improvements in access to housing, stabilized hydro rates, mentoring, skills and capacity building, and advocacy) could be met.

Building Partnerships that Benefit Communities and Advance Evidence-Base in Suicide Prevention (Jitender Sareen, MD, Faculty of Medicine, University of Manitoba). The Swampy Cree Suicide Prevention Team is a university-First Nations community partnership led by researchers from the University of Manitoba’s Faculty of Medicine, and the Cree Nations Tribal Health Centre in Opaskwayak Cree Nation. The team (which also includes representation from Swampy Cree communities, international collaborators, research associates and students, and partnerships with Manitoba government, the Canadian Psychiatric Association, and the Canadian Association of Suicide Prevention) is focused on understanding the risk factors for suicide in Aboriginal populations, and identifying culturally grounded interventions for suicide prevention in remote First Nations communities. The research program emphasizes:

- Equal partnership between First Nations and researchers, based on mutual respect, accountability and trust;
- Community-driven research that produces outcomes that benefit the communities;
- Understanding of the distinct and shared characteristics of the First Nations communities and people involved in the project;
- Consideration of the impacts of jurisdictional issues
- Implementation of evidence-based interventions that are culturally grounded and effective;
- Building capacity in communities; and
- Development of a training environment.

Activities undertaken through the partnership have included qualitative studies that gather indigenous knowledge about suicide and suicide prevention; an annual suicide prevention meeting; community advisory councils; and community newsletters.
Working as Partners: Research Risk Messaging with the Metis (Michelle Driedger, PhD, Associate Professor, Faculty of Medicine, University of Manitoba). The Risk and Trust in Decision-Maker Action project, undertaken in partnership with the Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF), explored the communication of risk on key public health issues. Collaboration between the MMF and researchers began in the study design phase, ensuring that the research would be beneficial to the Metis Nation. MMF staff members are also part of the project Advisory Group, and facilitate two-way knowledge exchange, consult at key junctures in the research process, provide feedback, and liaise with others in their networks who can assist with the project. The MMF’s collaboration also enhanced participation rates, generating strong data to inform policy. As community-based participatory research (with community involved at all phases and layers), the project was capable of meeting community needs and priorities as they emerge. Outcomes from the project are expected to benefit all involved: Metis citizens will be better protected from future risks, the MMF and MB Health will have more effective collaborations, and targeted messaging will be more effective. Research results were reported in formats that were meaningful and accessible to community members, shared with the participating communities, and presented at events such as the MMF’s Annual General Assembly. Metis community members co-authored academic publications.

Diffusion of Personal Health Information Services: Self-Determining and Empowering Practices for Manitoba Inuit (Wayne Voisey Clark, MA, Board Member, Manitoba Urban Inuit Association). This project sought to empower Inuit to attain self-determination in the management of their personal health information (PHI), and develop culturally safe and empowering practices that can be used by the Manitoba Urban Inuit Association (MUIA). The project, which was undertaken in collaboration with MUIA, applied decolonizing principles to information gathering and focused on cultural co-learning. The project’s research methodology (focus group discussions and key informant interviews) was consistent with an Indigenous research framework. The researcher consulted with an Inuk elder in the interpretation of findings, and Inuit protocols (along with research ethics) were strictly adhered to throughout the project. Based on findings related to three themes (reclaiming ownership and vision; sustainability; and authority and capacity), study recommendations called for the development of customized communication tools and processes for PHI services that meet the needs of Inuit, that plain language and narrative forms be used in eHealth education activities, and that the Inuit community MUIA participates in the evaluation of eHealth programming.

Building Respectful Relationships: Advising the Research Ethics Board on a Plan for Community Engagement (Shirley Rempel-Rossum RN., B.N., Bannatyne Campus Research Ethics Board). How can Core Ethical Principles be applied for research involving First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples? When does research involving Aboriginal peoples require community engagement? The 2010 Tri-Council Policy Statement 2 (TCPS2) on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans offers an initial framework for ethical conduct in research involving Aboriginal peoples. The framework is not intended to override or replace the ethical guidance of Aboriginal peoples and is premised on respectful relationships. It encourages collaboration and engagement between researchers and participants, recognizes the unique status of Aboriginal peoples, and calls for community consultation. Core ethical principles in the TCSPS2 call for respect for persons (in the Aboriginal chapter, interpreted as free, informed and ongoing consent of participants, and research ethics that extend beyond protection of individual participants to their interconnections with the natural world and to future generations), concern for welfare (a focus on both individual and collective well-being, consideration of physical, social, economic and cultural contexts), and justice (attention to power imbalances between researchers and participants, and avoidance of other harms, including the misappropriation, devaluation, or violation of cultural knowledge, practices, norms, artifacts or data). TCPS2 emphasizes the importance of researchers engaging with Aboriginal community/ies when research is likely to affect their welfare. Community engagement may take many different forms, but it should be consistent with the distinct and diverse characteristics and needs of involved communities, and the nature and extent of engagement.
should be determined jointly by the researchers and involved communities. TCPS2 acknowledges First Nations, Metis and Inuit governing authorities (which typically have their own formal and informal research guidelines and protocols), and requires that researchers seek the engagement of formal leaders when conducting projects on lands under their jurisdiction.

**Anikobidijiganan & Naabaagoondiwin (Kathi Avery Kinew, MSW, PhD, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs).** The term *anikobidijiganan* can be translated as ‘knots in a string’ and refers to a fundamental value for many First Nations peoples in Manitoba: recognition of and care for relationships, including those with people who have gone before (ancestors), those who are present now, and those who will come (future generations). Ethical and effective research requires respectful relationships, and a willingness to invest time to build trust and partnerships. Canada was founded on treaties, which are Nation to Nation agreements between the Crown and original peoples of this land and a formal recognition of their relationship. In research and policy making, the AMC will work with partners who recognize and respect the distinct identities of First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples.

*Naabaagoondiwin* refers to making relations and ceremonies, including both treaty making and research agreements. Research with First Nations should be undertaken as a partnership, working collaboratively from concept through data collection, analysis, and interpretation through dissemination of findings. AMC has protocols and formal processes in place to guide its work with researchers, and has established the Manitoba First Nations Health Information Research Governance Committee to review potential projects.

**Research Engagement with Metis in Manitoba (Julianne Sanguins, RN, PhD, Manitoba Metis Federation Health & Wellness Department).** The Manitoba Metis Federation (MMF) offers researchers an important way to access many Metis in the province. The MMF and its regional offices, in partnership with appropriate regional health authorities, have established Regional Knowledge Networks. The Knowledge Networks provide a framework for engagement with the Metis that can be drawn on to build relationships between researchers and participants. The framework provides a transparent process for understanding and negotiating influence and action. Influence includes information (keeping one another informed), consultation (acknowledging partner concerns), involvement (reflecting partner concerns), collaboration (incorporating partner advice to maximum extent), and empowerment (authority to decide), and action can be taken by community (MMF regions), program deliverer (RHAs), and policy developers (Manitoba Health). The framework incorporates a holistic and uniquely Metis approach to knowledge development, bringing together both Indigenous (narratives and experience, which draw on spiritual and emotional aspects of being) and Western (information and data, which draw on intellectual and physical aspects of being) epistemologies. The MMF Health and Wellness Department sees relationships as a crucial foundation of research, and has established a Strategic Research Agenda, along with processes and criteria (assessing the consistency of the project with the MMF’s mission and vision, internal capacity, and benefit to Metis) for engaging with researchers in projects to improve the health of Metis in the province.

**Faculty of Medicine Framework for Research Engagement with First Nations, Metis and Inuit Communities (Kevin Coombs, PhD, Faculty of Medicine, University of Manitoba).** The Faculty of Medicine has undergone extensive consultations to formulate a new strategic plan to enhance its research competitiveness. It has developed a strategy map for research that that lays out a process to build sustainable capacity and infrastructure to enable and support system processes that, in turn, will generate outcomes that are valuable to stakeholders and consistent with its mission (to develop graduates and scholars who create, advance, and translate knowledge to improve the health of society) and vision (to take leadership in a top integrated academic health sciences network that meets the health needs of Canadians). Current priorities and goals include: the recruitment and retention of high quality personnel; creation and support for sustainable state-of-the-art research platforms; enhanced
relationships with partners; and effective knowledge translation. The Faculty recognizes that further development of the plan must be undertaken in consultation with stakeholders.

**KNOWLEDGE CAFÉS:**

Knowledge Cafés are a process that provides small groups with a process for open and creative conversation on a selected topic, through which they can build collective knowledge, share ideas and insights, and foster a deeper understanding of the subjects or topics they are discussing. At the planning session, a knowledge café followed each of the panel presentations. Each knowledge café featured three work stations, each exploring a specific question related to the topic being explored in the café. Panel presenters with expertise in the topic were present at each station, along with a facilitator to support and guide the group discussion. Participants organized into three equally sized groups that each began the activity at a different work station. The groups were allowed fifteen minutes to discuss and respond to the question presented at that station, and then moved to the next station. Over a 45 minute period, each group was able to visit each station and contribute to and refine the collective knowledge gathered in response to the question posed at the station. At the end of the Knowledge Café, participants reassembled as a large group, and a representative from each station provided a brief report on what had been learned at each station.

A summary of the collective knowledge gathered at each station is presented below.

**PRINCIPLES OF COLLABORATION**

In the three stations set up for the first knowledge café, participants explored key principles for collaboration in First Nations, Metis and Inuit health research. The questions associated with each station are presented below, followed by a summary of the collective knowledge developed at the station.

**SUPPORTING AND PROMOTING KEY PRINCIPLES FOR FIRST NATIONS, METIS AND INUIT HEALTH RESEARCH**

Participants were asked to consider:

> What are the key principles and activities for inclusion in a framework for research engagement between the University and First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities? What can the University do to support and promote these principles or activities?

**Key Statements:**

1. The University should acknowledge and provide compensation (in the form of both monetary support and accreditation) to First Nations, Metis and Inuit community members (including Elders) involved in research activities.
2. The University should develop and work collaboratively with First Nations, Metis and Inuit advisory committees around specific research priorities.
3. Integrated knowledge translation could be more respected within the University. This would include placing more emphasis on reports and other research products that do not necessarily conform to conventional academic requirements or expectations, such as publications in journals.

**Additional observations:**

Respectful relationships with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities

- University researchers and other staff typically have very little involvement with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities. The University brings research expertise, processes and policies to its partnerships with First Nations, Metis and Inuit collaborators, but must be more respectful of the knowledge and expertise communities bring to the research relationship.

Traditional knowledge

- Applying research acquired knowledge can build on traditional Indigenous knowledge and can generate new knowledge that will be valuable to and remain in the community after research activities are completed.

Developing non-Indigenous peoples’ capacity for research collaboration with Indigenous peoples

- In partnership with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities, offer cultural sensitivity training and teach students about the historic and present day realities of life in First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities.
- Increase investment in activities such as student exchanges that bring together Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples and mentoring students to increase their understanding of the practical realities of working with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities.

Developing First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples’ research capacity

- The University’s hiring processes are bureaucratic, and should be modified to facilitate hiring more First Nations, Metis and Inuit community members.
- Invest in entire education system to support future researchers, and adopt shared focus on relationships with students and building next generation of students.

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**ENHANCING AND PROMOTING RESEARCH LINKAGES**

Participants were asked to consider:

What can the university do to enhance and promote research linkages between the University of Manitoba and First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities?

**Key Statements:**

1. Create and sustain collaborative research
   - Work to develop and sustain a critical mass or ‘clan’ of like-minded researchers
   - Invest in workshops, conferences, and training to support the development of both academic and community researchers
   - Raise the profile of Indigenous health within departments and faculty
• Promote self-awareness (including the individual examination of values and practices we bring to our work) and behavioural change

2. Create and sustain the ethical space needed for research in this area
   • Expand and build upon knowledge by including and respecting diverse world views
   • Create and share new knowledge
   • Create and take advantage of opportunities (such as colloquia, conferences and other gatherings) for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to share knowledge
   • Review and evaluate existing ethical frameworks for research

3. Create and sustain relationships between the University and First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities, including community authorities
   • Build and rebuild relationships in First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities; be flexible and avoid taking relationships for granted
   • Provide support for long-term sustainability of relationships

4. Offer capacity building opportunities
   • Provide mentorship to new researchers, connecting them with organizations such as MFN-CAHR and NEAHR
   • Help facilitate processes and policies for respectful and authentic engagement with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities from development of research questions through project completion

5. Change University and organizational culture
   • Review, revise, remove and add (as appropriate) policies and process for Senate, faculties, researchers and staff members with the goal of balancing power differences, facilitating inclusivity, and addressing colonial and oppressive attitudes.
   • Recognize that the University cannot set the research agenda for First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities
   • Be accountable to First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities, other partners, and funders.

Additional observations:

• Recognize and honour the long-term benefits of Indigenous research
• Acknowledge diversity between and within First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities
• Incorporate diversity and inclusiveness in education, research and service activities
• Support faculty members’ development of personal and professional relationships with First Nations, Metis and Inuit community members
• Provide services both inside and outside the university
• Incorporate networking within First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities in mentorship processes
• Focus on creating and developing the next generation of First Nations, Metis and Inuit researchers
• Embed mentoring of First Nations, Metis and Inuit researchers in University policy and process, and look to MFN-CAHR to take lead in mentoring
• Provide support for training with organizations such as NEAHR
• Enlist First Nations, Metis and Inuit champions of community research, who can draw on their networks to open opportunities for projects
SUPPORTING PROCESSES AND PROTOCOLS FOR AUTHENTIC ENGAGEMENT

Participants were asked to consider:

What can the university do to support and enhance processes and protocols for authentic engagement in research partnerships with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities?

Key Statements:

1. Community engagement and community relationships
   - Provide appropriate resources and support for community engagement and the development of relationships with individual community members and organizations
   - Gather research priorities from communities, and develop communities’ research capacity
   - Use knowledge of community
   - Support overall collaboration with pooled funds, resources, and knowledge.

2. Strengthen protocols for research
   - Protocols for research should be developed in consultation with First Nations, Metis and Inuit organizations
   - Protocols should be designed to generate responsibility and accountability at institutional and individual levels
   - Protocols should not undermine existing or potential First Nations, Metis and Inuit structures
   - Build awareness of protocols

3. Research Ethics Boards (REB)
   - Fundamental change is needed in the ways that REBs understand and address the ethics of research with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities
   - REBs should include individuals with relevant expertise and who represent and/or are connected with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities.
   - Include existing FNMI ethics approval process

4. Support for student mentorship needs
   - Facilitate mentorship between students and successful researchers
   - Mentorship provides opportunities for students to learn about individual and organizational responsibility and accountability in research, and how to work successfully in First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities

5. Establish a clearinghouse/repository for information on First Nations, Metis and Inuit research.

FUTURE SUCCESSFUL ENGAGEMENT

In the second knowledge café, participants explored what the university could do to support successful engagement with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities. The questions associated with each station are presented below, followed by a summary of the collective knowledge developed at the station.
DEFINING RESEARCH AGENDAS AND PRIORITIES

Participants were asked to consider:

**What can the University do in working with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities to define research priorities and agendas?**

**Key Statements:**

1. Establish processes to engage with and better understand the research priorities and agendas of First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities
   - Reach out to and meet with potential First Nations, Metis and Inuit partners to identify and explore common ground for research
   - Emphasize the applicability and relevance of proposed research activities and associated opportunities for informed action and change to increase likelihood of buy-in from potential First Nations, Metis and Inuit research partners.
   - Explore whether bodies or organizations such as MFN-CAHR can take a larger role in engaging and developing relationships with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities
2. Develop a mechanism to fund community-based initiatives
3. Highlight collaboration with First Nations, Metis and Inuit in Departmental research strategy
   - Establish mandate to respond to community research interests, and support opportunities for this
   - Identify or develop knowledge brokers or ‘navigators’ who have expertise relating to research collaboration with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities.

**Additional observations:**

Collaborative research with multiple partners or stakeholder groups can be a challenge, particularly if one group gets pitted against another. It is important, at this level, to keep research depoliticized.

SUPPORTING SUCCESSFUL ENGAGEMENT AND RESEARCH PROJECTS

Participants were asked to consider:

**What role can the University take to support key components for successful engagement between the University and First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities? What is the role of the University in supporting research projects for First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities?**

**Key Statements:**

1. Work with political bodies that are currently supporting research activities in their communities, and adopt a distinction-based approach to support engagement
   - The ways in which First Nations, Metis or Inuit peoples engage with community research are based on their own unique priorities.
2. Find ways to broaden the understanding and practice of engagement with community
At community level, practicing researchers may not have formal credentials. The University needs to be able to support collaboration with the researchers.

Explore creative ways (e.g., increasing research team’s capacity to work with people who prefer to use an Indigenous language; using telehealth to connect with community members) to solicit and increase participation and other contributions to research from community members.

Recognize the importance of oral tradition in data analysis, and knowledge translation.

Collaborate with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities in a review and revision of ethics guidelines for research involving their communities.

3. Allow communities and the institution to define their own measures of success, from their own perspectives. Even where differences in indicators exist, all should be included.

Additional observations:

Universities ‘create’ researchers. Currently, there is a shortage of First Nations, Metis and Inuit researchers and academics. The University should take action to address this.

SUPPORTING KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION

Participants were asked to consider:

What can the University do to support the process of “knowledge translation” of best practice and key research findings relevant to First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities?

Key Statements:

1. Community engagement and knowledge translation should be integrated into research activities from beginning to end:
   • University should provide seed funding to support the development of relationships between researchers and First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities

2. Knowledge translation is a two-way street
   • Knowledge translation with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities is typically understood as results being shared with communities, but communities also participate in knowledge translation, including telling researchers what their results mean at a community level. The University can learn from First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities and share the knowledge it gains from this process.
   • The University should create opportunities for communities to share their knowledge with the University and research communities. This involves extending invitations to community scholars (knowledge holders) to share their knowledge with the University; providing support for them to attend meetings; and other activities.
   • Build research capacity (e.g., scholarship opportunities) within First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities that are partnering in research.
   • Involve First Nations, Metis and Inuit partners in the analysis of findings. First Nations, Metis and Inuit partners should have access to the information gained from research activities throughout projects.
• Share resources with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities that are partnering in research, and ensure that communities know that they can (and how to) access these resources.

3. Knowledge translation activities should reflect the needs of the audiences they are targeting
   • Expand communication with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities and ensure that communication activities are effective
   • Ask First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities what kind of knowledge translation works for and is meaningful to them, and then value and use the forms that they prefer (e.g., community meetings, puzzles, etc.).
   • Researchers should be able to access grants or other funding to support the translation and communication of research results into formats that work for community and address community needs. This includes support for opportunities to communicate with other communities and researchers.
   • Knowledge translation should extend beyond community and reach the community’s partners. This may require multiple strategies and products.

Additional observations:

Within First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities, different perceptions or understandings exist about the role of the university within First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities. The university should explore how its role is seen by the different communities it serves.

Researchers should look for opportunities to live in community when working with First Nations, Metis and Inuit partners.
COMPONENTS OF A FRAMEWORK FOR RESEARCH ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN THE UNIVERSITY AND FIRST NATIONS, METIS AND INUIT COMMUNITIES

Below are presented components of a potential framework for research engagement between the University and First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities. The components reflect information and ideas shared by both participants and presenters.

Purpose:

To partner with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities to develop shared excellence in collaborative, community-driven research.

Goals:

To generate outcomes that are of value to both First Nations, Metis and Inuit research communities and the University  
To develop research capacity within both First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities, and the University

Areas for Action:

Authentic Engagement:
- Provide appropriate resources, policies and procedures to support authentic engagement between University and First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities
- Invest in relationship development, from conceptual stage of research project and throughout and beyond project term
- Collaborate with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities on the development of formal mechanisms and bodies to guide and oversee research activities
- Integrate two-way knowledge transfer (in which the university and community partners share knowledge with each other and with other stakeholders) throughout project

Capacity Building:
- Develop research capacity of First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities by providing opportunities for education, training, mentorship, and practical research experience to community members, with a focus on developing next generation of researchers.
- Develop research capacity of University by actively recruiting First Nations, Metis and Inuit students, researchers, and faculty members; developing relationships with and learning from First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples; and, in partnership with First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples, reviewing and revising the Research Ethics process to make it more congruent with the needs and realities of First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities
- Share resources, so that partners can draw on each other’s expertise, skills, infrastructure, networks and other resources

Principles:

1. Commitment to authentic engagement with First Nations, Metis and Inuit communities, and recognition that relationship is central to research.
2. Shared respect, trust, and commitment to mutually empowered long-term relationships.
3. Acknowledgement of the diversity within and between First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples and the distinct identities and treaty-based and inherent rights of First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples.
4. Shared authority, responsibility, and accountability
5. Commitment to address the research-related priorities and needs of both First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples, and the University
As noted by Dr. Catherine Cook (Associate Dean, First Nations, Metis and Inuit Health), the planning session provided an opportunity to share with participants and gather their feedback on the Faculty of Medicine’s developing strategic map for research. The anticipated outcome from the planning session was to produce a document recording their feedback, responses, and recommendations (this report) that the Faculty will be able to draw on as they continue to develop the research strategic map.