

2021 Canadian Doctoral Nursing Network Conference Abstract Submission

Title of Abstract: The Role of the Indigenous Patient Navigator internationally: A Scoping Review

Name: Aric Rankin NP-PHC, MN

Academic Institution Affiliation: PhD student, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario

Stage in doctoral program: doctoral student nearing completion of data collection. Scoping review pending publication.

Background: Canada's healthcare system is complex and as a result patients and families experience fragmentation of services. Indigenous populations experience increasingly, disproportionate health disparities compared to non-Indigenous populations. Patient navigation is known as a patient-centered approach which involves professional and lay providers to enable and empower individuals and families to overcome health and social service barriers. Although the Indigenous patient navigator (IPN) role has been implemented in many countries to address Indigenous health and social inequities, no international reviews have been completed to date, necessitating this scoping review.

Purpose: The following question is addressed; "What is known in the existing published literature about the role of the Indigenous Patient Navigator with an emphasis on how this role addresses barriers and enablers to health and social services experienced by Indigenous peoples?". This review is the initial phase of broader doctoral work which aims to explore and understand the role of the IPN in Canada.

Methods: A scoping review of the literature was conducted following established methodological frameworks by Arksey and O'Malley (2003) and Tricco et al. (2018) to map the current state the IPN role internationally within Canada, United States, Australia and New Zealand.

Results: A total of 820 articles were reviewed from four databases, yielding sixteen articles.

Conclusion: The absence of published literature surrounding the IPN role in Australia and New Zealand was surprising considering similar histories of colonization. The term navigator was used most often and was typically used when describing lay roles. Professional roles were described using specific role descriptions. Six IPN roles were identified including: (1) social service navigation, (2) wholistic support of Indigenous people, (3) advocacy/building capacity, (4) health assessment, (5) administrative navigation, and (6) outreach. Additionally, barriers and enablers IPNs address are identified. This scoping review will assist to promote and reinforce the IPN role.