

Phase II Lung Health Program Dissemination Report

Project: *Tuberculosis Education for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Youth*

Lead Organization: Tuberculosis Program Evaluation and Research Unit, Department of Medicine,
University of Alberta

Partner(s):

- The Determinants of Tuberculosis Transmission (DTT) Project (through in-kind support)
- Chief, Council, and Métis leadership in the involved communities were the initial contacts for commencing consultation. The leaders who hold the portfolios for Health and Education of the communities in which the assessment was undertaken guided the project through the appropriate protocols and council resolutions.
- Education Authorities and Health Directors in Saskatchewan, due to their political positions, helped guide the process to ensure that dialogue and negotiation among the various groups was open and transparent.
- Elders in each of the two participating provinces provided guidance to the project to ensure that the values, interests and knowledge be considered in a meaningful way throughout the project.
- Youth participants from each of the three pilot schools were asked to comment upon its design, particularly as it relates to interactive and motivational components.
- Regional FNIH staff contributed their technical expertise.
- AFN, FNIH/FNIHB, Métis National Council and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami headquarters will help to determine national implications

Project Objective(s): *[In bullet format, itemize the objectives of your project.]*

- To educate successive generations about tuberculosis risk factors, identification and successful management.
- To prevent the spread of tuberculosis
- To teach of the historical experience of tuberculosis in Canada

Project Methodology:

This project was overseen by two committees – i) the steering committee comprised of project staff and scientific advisors, and ii) the advisory committee comprised of educational and cultural leaders, teachers and educational staff as well as all members of the steering committee.

A resource guide for teachers – deliverable in three thematic modules – was developed by members of the steering committee with input from the advisory committee, who met three times during the course of the project. This resource guide was then piloted in three classrooms in three different communities where TB is prevalent. This resource guide was developed in response to the TB PE & RU's Phase I, Lung Health Framework Project, "A Baseline Needs Assessment for TB Education in Aboriginal Youth in the Prairies".



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The findings of this Phase I project indicated that a lack of knowledge about TB (e.g. symptoms, what to do when faced with illness and more general misconceptions) was prevalent even in communities where there was a high incidence of TB. General knowledge increased post-intervention, and kids seemed genuinely engaged in the activities and with the topic. One student even designed the cover of our resource guide.

Key Finding(s):

- Knowledge about TB increased from the time of the baseline needs survey data collection to the time of the post-intervention survey data collection in the pilot classrooms.
- More than 80% of respondents to the survey indicated a desire to learn more about TB.
- Teachers felt empowered by being able to teach lessons relevant to their community's unique needs. As one teacher said, *"Today, our community school coordinator (the person who hires elders for our school) pulled me aside and said, 'I really appreciate how much you do for this community and our school. These activities where you involve the elders and the community really help our students understand and appreciate [our community]'. It was one of the nicest things that anyone has said to me [here]. Of course, I told her it was the TB Project that had designed the lesson and she was very interested to hear about the work you are doing"*.

Project Outcome:

Tuberculosis is an airborne disease, and everyone shares the air. That means anyone is at risk, and should therefore be able to identify the signs and symptoms of disease. Some individuals, because of circumstance, are at an increased risk of either contracting latent TB infection (LTBI) or of having their LTBI become active tuberculosis disease. Educating youth about any aspect of health empowers them to exert some control over their lives. As such, the phrase "Knowledge is Power" is one of the key messages our team has used to impart to teachers why they should consider teaching about TB. Moreover, because TB is so strongly rooted in social justice it represents an excellent teaching opportunity for the school to meet the needs of high-incidence communities, both with respect to health and advocacy. In addition, tuberculosis has played an important role in Canadian history and is still impacting the lives of Canadians today. Understanding the history of TB helps arm people with the tools necessary to overcome this terrible illness in the future. The guide also presents a picture of the rich history of Aboriginal peoples in this country that can be shared in any grades 8-12 classroom.

Area(s) for Further Development/Next Steps:

The sustainability of this project depends, primarily, upon having the guide picked up and used by teachers. This can be achieved by promoting the guide at teachers' conferences, and disseminating the guide through the Ministry of Education in each Province. A special trip is planned to promote the guide for use in high-incidence communities North of the 53rd parallel (Yellowknife, Behchoko and Iqaluit). The guide is highly adaptable, and will be available for download (with active links) from the Tuberculosis Program Evaluation and Research Unit (TB PE & RU) website.



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Copies of the resource guide will also be provided to regional First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB, Health Canada) offices across the prairies for dissemination to their high incidence communities.

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