



NEWCOMER RESEARCH NETWORK

Mobilizing Knowledge on Newcomers Symposium 2023

Friday, October 6, 2023

The Best Western Premier Calgary Plaza Hotel and Conference Center
1316 33 Street NE | Calgary, Alberta

Website: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/network/newcomer-research/activities/symposium2023>

Welcome

Welcome to the third Mobilizing Knowledge on Newcomers Symposium! We're excited about the wealth of insights and diverse experiences that will be shared throughout this event. Just like our previous two gatherings in 2019 and 2021, we aim to inspire individuals from various sectors to come together to learn and engage in discussions about the challenges our newcomer communities face. Our overarching objective is to shape a research agenda that will guide future collaborative knowledge exchange initiatives and research partnerships. The presentations today will spotlight community-engaged activities on newcomers and feature the contributions of community partners, service providers, and researchers. During the question-and-answer sessions, we hope you'll find opportunities to connect and delve deeper into ongoing projects and potential future collaborations.

The Symposium receives sponsorship from the Newcomer Research Network at the University of Calgary, the Partnership Development Grant by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), the Planning and Dissemination Grant by the Canadian Institute of Health Research (CIHR), the Transdisciplinary Connector Grant by the University of Calgary, and the Cancer Research for Screening and Prevention (CRSP) Study. These sponsorships are instrumental in advancing our research and engagement efforts towards the realization of a Community-Based Knowledge Mobilization Hub (CBKMH) initiative. We couldn't have undertaken this without the enthusiastic encouragement and generous cooperation of our community partners. We also acknowledge the exceptional dedication of our coordinators, Ms. Didem Erman and Dr. Nashit Ahmed Chowdhury, without whom this event would not have been possible. At last, but not least, our heartfelt gratitude to all the volunteers for contributing to the success of this symposium. Your dedication and support were instrumental in bringing this symposium to life and advancing our collective mission to enhance knowledge and understanding within our community.

Special thanks are also extended to each one of you participating in this event and working towards a deeper understanding and enhancement of the experiences of newcomers.

Tanvir Turin Chowdhury, Associate Professor, Cumming School of Medicine
Mary Grantham O'Brien, Professor, Faculty of Arts
Christine Walsh, Professor, Faculty of Social Work
Aniela Dela Cruz, Associate Professor, Faculty of Nursing
Xu Zhao, Associate Professor, Werklund School of Education



Social Sciences and Humanities
Research Council of Canada

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Canada



Transdisciplinary Connector Grants
Cancer Research for Screening and Prevention (CRSP) Study



CIHR IRSC
Canadian Institutes of Health Research
Instituts de recherche en santé du Canada

Schedule at a Glance

Friday, October 6

08:30 a.m. – 09:00 a.m.	Registration and Breakfast	Plaza 1 and Plaza 2
09:00 a.m. – 09:15 a.m.	Opening	Plaza 1 and Plaza 2
09:15 a.m. – 09:55 a.m.	Keynote	Plaza 1 and Plaza 2
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Parallel Session – Oral Presentation	Plaza 1 and Plaza 2
11:00 am – 11:15 am	Coffee Break	
11:15 a.m. – 12: 15 p.m.	Parallel sessions – Oral Presentations	Plaza 1 and Plaza 2
12:15p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Lunch and Poster Presentation	Plaza 3 and Plaza 4
2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Parallel sessions – Oral Presentations	Plaza 1 and Plaza 2
03:00 p.m. – 04:00 p.m.	Parallel Workshops	Plaza 1, Plaza 2 and Plaza 5
04:00 p.m. – 04:15 p.m.	Coffee Break	
04:15 p.m. – 04:45 p.m.	Round Table – Community & University Partnership for Policy and Advocacy	Plaza 1 and Plaza 2
04: 45 p.m.	Closing and Networking – Cheese & Pop	Plaza 1 and Plaza 2

Sessions

Friday, October 6

Time	Plenary Session Plaza 1 and Plaza 2	
09:00 a.m.	Opening	
09:15 a.m.	<i>Keynote/Speaker:</i> Co-creating Knowledge Through an Infinite Game Approach – Chowdhury	
Parallel sessions – Oral Presentations		
Time	Education & Grassroot Community Engagement: Plaza # 1	Social and Health Care & Resettlement and Integration: Plaza # 2
10:00 a.m.	Development of Professional Relationships in RISE for Health and Wellness – Ahadzadeh, Adeboye, Senjar, Erman, and Chowdhury	Models of COVID-19 Vaccine Delivery for Refugees – Aghajafari, Ness, Wall, Weightman, Anupindi, Lake, and Coakley
10:12 a.m.	Spreading The Words: Promote Multiculturalism Through Innovative Community Engagement Activities – Bajgain, Bajgain, Ranabhat, Bhandari, Thapa, Aryal, and Bhatta	Patient Engagement: How It Can Help Immigrant Women Navigate Their Healthcare in Canada – Ali and Leis
10:24 a.m.	Developing a Toolkit for Hybrid Instruction for Adult Newcomer Literacy Learners: A Participatory Research Approach– Barker, Henry, Kazemi, Matharu, and Palova	Place-Based Trauma and Recovery: Navigating Emotional Landscapes Amidst Sudden Environmental Shifts– Altin
10:36 a.m.	Community Connectors as Channel to Equitable Integration – Bui, Parmar, and Boakye	Empowering Seniors for Quality Life (ESQ) – Ara, Khan, Sharmin, and Sheikh
10:48 a.m.	The Journeys of Immigrant Seniors – Celis, Basnet, and Dhaubhadel	Mindfulness for Social Recovery and Wellbeing of Immigrant Women – Calina
11:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Coffee Break	

11:15 a.m.	Digital literacy for South Asian Seniors: Experience of Working with Bangladeshi Community – Rashid, Rahman, Singh, and Chowdhury	Professional Immigrants: Confronting Multiple Barriers to Canadian Employment Opportunities – Calix and Sarkar
11:27 a.m.	(Re)Imagining Inclusion: Community-Based Art Project to Create an Environment for Immigrant Artists – Rodriguez	Grassroots Community Engagement: ActionDignity's Platform Strategy – Falak, Naraval, and Boakye
11:39 am	Community Centered Approaches to Inclusive Public Safety Design – Somani, Naraval, and Boakye	Ethics of Disabled Refugees – Farah
11:51 am	Exploring a Mixed Format Approach to RISE for Health and Wellness for Immigrant and Refugee High School Students – Truscott, Alnazar, Adel, Erman, and Chowdhury	Building Capacity for Community Engagement in the Research Ethics Process – Godley, Koyama, and Weightman
12: 03 pm	Creating Better Physical Activity Opportunities for Newcomer Children and Youth: Overview of Activities to Strengthen Community-Academic Partnerships – Kwan, Kandasamy, Konopaki, Giffen, and Koyama	Introducing "The Seeker": Bridging Service and Information Gaps for Professional Immigrants – Henry, Barker, Kazemi, Matharu, and Palova
12: 15 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	Lunch and Poster Presentations Plaza # 3 & Plaza # 4	

Parallel sessions – Oral Presentations

Time	Social and Health Care & Resettlement and Integration: Plaza #1	Social and Health Care & Resettlement and Integration: Plaza #2
2:00 p.m.	Healthcare Navigation in Alberta: How Can We Employ International Medical Graduates to Improve Healthcare Access and Utilization – Lake, Chowdhury, Bhattacharyya, and Bowman	Community Belonging: Challenges and Opportunities for Newcomers – Sarkar and Chapola
2:12 p.m.	Voices and Images of Migration – Montes de Oca	Racialized Communities, Equity and Precision Medicine in Canada – Valiani, Anderson, Gonzales, Gray, Hardcastle, and Chowdhury

2:24 p.m.	Supporting Newcomers Beyond Settlement: A BIPOC-led Strategy – Olusola	Mapping Experiences of (Un)Safety Amongst LGBTQ+ Newcomers – Tri
2:36 p.m.	Using Data for Strategic Partner Outreach in the Newcomer Serving Sector – Radojcic, Dave, and He	Establishing a Standardized Process for Obtaining Research Consent at a Sectoral Level – Udobata, Halvorsen, Warriia, and Kaushik
2:48 p.m.	Belongingness of Newcomers Through Community Engagements: A Racialized Woman’s Experiences – Chapola	The Construction of Refugees in the Canadian News Media: A Critical Discourse Analysis – Naidu, Paolucci, Hiebert, Boakye, and Chowdhury
Parallel sessions – Workshops		
Time:	<u>Plaza # 1</u>	<u>Plaza # 2</u>
3:00 p.m.– 4:00 p.m.	Decolonizing the Research Process – Datta	Public Engagement in Research: Employment Practices – Marshall
	<u>Plaza # 5</u> Test Your Concept: Research Support Consultation – Chowdhury	
4:00 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.	Coffee Break	
4:15 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.	Roundtable <u>Plaza # 1</u> and <u>Plaza # 2</u> <i>Community & University Partnership for Policy and Advocacy</i>	
4:45 p.m.	Closing & Networking - Cheese & Pop	

Keynote Speaker

Co-creating Knowledge Through an Infinite Game Approach

9:15-9:55 AM | [Plaza 1 and Plaza 2](#)

Presenter | Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Meaningful community engagement involves prioritizing methods to amplify community voices, address community needs, strengthen community capacity, and apply strategies tailored to the specific community. Typically, community-engaged research only involves the community when a particular research project on a specific topic commences and concludes with the project's completion. As a result, the outcomes of community engagement, such as trust, partnership, and community contributions to the research, are confined to that project and do not extend to other projects on different topics. Here, we discuss a philosophical approach to community engagement that makes a difference between community engagement for single short-term research projects and a broader, long-term research program, using the ideas of finite games and infinite games, respectively. Our community-engaged research program focuses on improving equitable access to primary care for immigrant/visible-minority communities in Canada. Community engaged research is closely linked to self-reflection and reflective practice. We have summarized our reflective learning from seven years of doing research in this article.

In a finite game, participants operate within well-defined boundaries, with known players and fixed rules. The game, e.g. a research project, concludes once the predefined goal is attained. Conversely, in infinite games, participants may include both familiar and unfamiliar individuals, and there are no externally imposed rules. The objective is to sustain the game indefinitely, extending beyond the confines of a particular research project. We argue that community engagement should be seen as an infinite game, especially at the research program level, where the goal is not to finish a research project but to engage the community successfully. While doing various research projects (finite games), researchers should keep an infinite game mindset. This means working with the community for a fair cause, building trust and community capacity to maximize their contributions to research, putting community needs first, and being ready to lead the community if needed. We stress the need for a community engagement plan for a research program, rather than limiting it to individual projects.

Parallel Workshops:

Decolonizing the Research Process

3:00 p.m.- 4:00 PM | [Plaza # 1](#)

Presenter | Ranjan Datta

Abstract | The legacy of colonialism continues to exert a profound influence on health research, perpetuating disparities and inequalities in healthcare outcomes and access. This presentation explores the imperative and responsibility for decolonizing (health) research, emphasizing the need to dismantle colonial structures and paradigms that underlie much of contemporary research. It highlights the ethical, social, and scientific reasons for undertaking this transformative journey. Decolonizing (health) research involves acknowledging historical injustices, respecting Indigenous knowledge systems, and prioritizing the voices and needs of marginalized communities. It necessitates a fundamental shift in research paradigms, methodologies, and power dynamics, challenging the dominant Western-centric perspective that often perpetuates harm. This presentation will discuss concrete steps researchers, institutions, and funders can take to engage in decolonization efforts actively. By centering ethics, equity, and inclusivity, decolonizing health research seeks to rectify past wrongs and holds the potential to generate more meaningful and relevant insights into health and well-being for all.

Public Engagement in Research: Employment Practices

3:00 p.m.- 4:00 PM | [Plaza # 2](#)

Authors | Zack Marshall

Abstract | As public engagement in research becomes more common, the roles that community members take on are also changing. Some people collaborate with academic researchers on community advisory committees, or are directly involved with data collection, data analysis, and knowledge mobilization. While this work is often meaningful, it is not always well paid and can be a form of precarious employment. In this workshop we will delve into the topic of public engagement in research including the strengths and weakness of current employment practices, and new possibilities for community research labour practices.

Oral Presentation Abstracts

Development of Professional Relationships in RISE for Health and Wellness.

10:00 AM | Plaza #1

Authors | Aria Ahadzadeh Ardebili, Ini Adeboye, Karam Senjar, Didem Erman, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Background: Community-capacity building is an important tenet required to improve the health of minority communities. One avenue of improving the health of minority communities is by developing champions of health who are capable of learning and disseminating information along their social circles. Through this program we have noticed the development of professional relationships between session coordinators, guest speakers and participant recruitment aides.

Methods: Following every session, participants provided feedback on what they have learned, session improvement ideas, and how participants can utilize their novel knowledge. In addition, focus groups pertaining to areas of interest for future programs were conducted to inform speakers about points of interest for students. New speakers were sourced through a combination of methods including insights gathered from focus groups and post-session reflections as well as conducting thorough and meticulous searches. These inputs helped us identify and assess the suitability of the speakers for future sessions. Our efforts encompass both in person and online meetings in which we communicated the needs and expectations of the participants and the program with the potential speakers. -The potential speakers also evaluated the program's alignment with their interests and communicated their specific requirements. Novel techniques such as in-class presentations, Instagram posts, and standardized flyers were also utilized to recruit both participants and speakers.

Results: Since 2017, we have continuously worked with physicians, researchers, high schools, and other youth engagement programs to develop a comprehensive health-based syllabus for high school students. Focus groups following every program and post-session surveys have resulted in continuous feedback and areas of improvement for speakers and us. One observable trend is an increase in positive feedback with returning speakers from previous years. However, we have noticed that the expectations of students continue to evolve annually due to the variability in backgrounds of participants. Due to consistent meetings and feedback aimed at improving the provided sessions, long-lasting relationships have been developed resulting in continued annual involvement of professionals with participants and volunteers.

Conclusion: We observed an increase in rapport with individuals and organizations across Calgary through our grass-root initiative. Every year, students provide beneficial feedback while also indicating that sessions are more beneficial than years before. We continue to develop novel relationships while continuing our current relationships so that the best information may be presented in the most manageable way for students. We aim to follow up with speakers directly in the nearby future to see how our program has changed their own practices.

Spreading the Words: Promote Multiculturalism Through Innovative Community Engagement Activities.

10:13 AM | Plaza #1

Authors | Kalpana Thapa Bajgain, Bishnu Bajgain, Sharmila Ranabhat, Anu Bhandari, Yoddha Thapa, Shreekanta Aryal, & Gopal Bhatta

Abstract | Background: Diversity and multiculturalism are the key tenets of Canadian culture. There is a continue need to fostering multiculturalism, thereby facilitating intercultural and intergenerational respect towards each other's cultures. The continued inequities and racism experienced groups pointed the need of implementing innovative educational programs aimed at enhancing the knowledge of the kids and youth to raise their voices against racism and discrimination.

Methods/Approach: The Centre for Research, Education, and Social Services in collaboration with the Nepalese Community Society of Calgary organized multicultural and anti-racism arts and crafts sessions (n=15) led by experts (n = 6) from diverse ethnic communities for the kids and youth (n=67). Experts were instructed to advance the knowledge of anti-racism and multiculturalism through arts and crafts along with a brief awareness component at the beginning of the session and parents were encouraged to partake. Anti-racism and multiculturalism quiz competition (n = 75) and a Canada-wide essay competition for kids and youth (n=68) were organized with the questions prepared by the experts from ethnic communities.

Results/Observation: These innovative activities got a high traction of the participants and parents showed equal interest. The participants and parents got motivated to get their work showcased in one of its kind historical events, the Nepali Mela and Multicultural Showcasing Event, visited by over 10,000 visitors across Canada. The sessions led by experts from diverse ethnic communities created positive attitudes about differences and boost kids' self-confidence in their own identities. Almost 90% of the parents highly agreed that the arts and crafts, quizzes, and essay activities helped their children engage in skill development activities that reduced screen time, enhanced social network and guardians sharing diverse cultures, and increased awareness about anti-racism and multiculturalism. The experts also affirmed that these unique activities not only increased knowledge horizons of the kids and youth engaged but the experts experienced the diverse perspective of the participants.

Conclusion: The initiative increased social and emotional outcomes including social skills, self-esteem, and attitudes toward others. The issue of poor participation could be addressed by implementing the innovative activities that increase participation of the stakeholders vis-à-vis achieve project outcomes.

Developing a Toolkit for Hybrid Instruction for Adult Newcomer Literacy Learners: A Participatory Research Approach.

10:24 AM | Plaza # 1

Authors | Marianne Barker, Geneca Henry, Fatemeh Kazemi, Gurleen Matharu, & Katerina Palova

Abstract | Background: The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) has recognized that anti-Black racism is a significant determinant of mental health and well-being. While issues of housing and racism has been extensively discussed, the interactive effects of anti-Black racism, housing and mental health have not called enough attention.

Methods: We used Group Concept Mapping methods to bring together a total of 174 stakeholders including community leaders, volunteers, and service providers to synthesize ideas of actions that need to be taken to promote the health and mental health of Black refugees in Edmonton and Calgary, Alberta. The generated idea statements were further sorted and rated in order of importance and ideas seen in action (or implementation) by a group of 51 participants.

Results: In this presentation, we will present the findings that emphasize the close connection between housing, anti-Black racism, and mental health. We found that when ranking which social determinants were most important in addressing the mental health of Black refugees in Canada, there were significant discrepancies between the perceptions of Black community members as compared to the perceptions of professional service providers. Specifically, community leaders and informal support persons with lived experience of anti-Black racism ranked housing as one of the most important and least addressed issues in terms of mental health equity for Black communities, while service providers ranked it as one of the least important and most addressed issue.

Conclusion: Our presentation will discuss the relevance and implications of these discrepancies among stakeholders. Housing is a significant mental health and racial equity issue. Associated recommendations for policy makers and practitioners grounded in the needs and perspectives of Black newcomers living in Canada will be discussed.

Community Connectors as Channel to Equitable Integration.

10:36 AM | Plaza #1

Authors | Linh Bui, Sukhwant Parmar, & Francis Boakye

Abstract | Background: Canada is a nation of immigrants, yet newcomers, immigrants, and refugees (NIR) face formidable challenges as they settle in Calgary to become socially integrated and economically productive. As a result, disparities persist across health, education, and socio-economic domains, with NIR falling through the cracks. This presentation will demonstrate ActionDignity's critical role in equitable social and economic integration through the work of its Community Connectors.

Approach ActionDignity operates on the premise that community members are best equipped to understand and solve their own challenges. By leveraging grassroots leaders, such as through the Community Connectors (CC) Strategy, culturally fitting initiatives are co-designed and implemented. As trusted advocates and trained connectors embedded in ethnocultural communities (ECC), Community Connectors build capacities of ECCs through community conversations, co-designing culturally appropriate services and developing and implementing community-led action plans. The Community Connectors are crucial in bridging community members with service providers and facilitate collaboration across ECCs on shared issues and initiatives through community organizing, capacity building, research and grassroots advocacy.

Results CCs play a pivotal role in driving successful initiatives that cater to the needs of ECCs. One of these impactful endeavors is our 'Community Conversation Circles.' These circles, led by CC provide open dialogues. As CC become aware of the challenges, priorities and aspirations of the community, CC co-develop community-led action plans (CAPs). About 30 CAPs are supported annually that bring about lasting change in raising awareness on critical issues, establishing connections, and collaboration, and meeting the needs of ethnocultural communities.

Conclusion Community Connectors are effective in supporting communities. It is a relevant and sustainable approach as they work directly with the people resulting to improved and meaningful community engagement. There is strong evidence of successful outcomes as demonstrated by ActionDignity being able to impact on 70,000 Calgarians in 2022.

The Journeys of Immigrant Seniors.

10:48 AM | Plaza #1

Authors | Sherrisa Celis, Sabita Basnet, & Rashmi Dhaubhadel

Abstract | Background: For over 2 decades of seniors programming at Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS), the team has witnessed the richness of the experience and journeys of immigrant seniors in Canada. Documenting their stories will highlight the significance of their contributions to the community.

Method: A qualitative method was used to collect the data for this project. Data was acquired through ten individual interviews with seniors in their first language and five focus group discussions guided by experts. We used both open ended and closed ended questionnaires. Trained volunteers transcribed the data into English. Individuals and their families gave their permission for photographs to be taken to supplement their stories. Themes were developed after gathering material to write the book.

Results: To find a “home” and a sense of belonging, people become more resilient. Their intriguing anecdotes offer intellectual, didactic, and informative glimpses of challenges and accomplishments as they traverse the Canadian socio-economic, cultural, and community landscapes. The recent work *In A Place I Now Call Home* offers personal and collective narratives of 52 immigrant seniors about their immigration and integration journeys in Canada.

Discussions: The narratives echoed significant and diverse experiences around the challenges of survival, multi-layered discrimination, conflicting identities, and adjustments to the new culture, the host family, and the weather. We hope that the lessons learned from their stories will be beneficial to readers including service providers serving seniors to better serve their clients and to provide answers to questions raised and make services more accessible.

Digital Literacy for South Asian Seniors: An Experience Working with the Bangladeshi Community.

11:15AM | Plaza #1

Authors | Ruksana Rashid, Shaminder Singh, Mohammad Shaikhur Rahman, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Background: In today's age of digitalization, possessing strong digital literacy skills significantly enhances one's overall quality of life. The organization known as VOICE (Foundation for the Voice of Immigrants in Canada for Empowerment) has undertaken a mission to enhance the quality of life for marginalized populations by providing health and social support. As part of this mission, VOICE has initiated efforts to empower seniors with improved digital literacy skills.

Approach: In addition to serving South Asian seniors, a specific segment of this project was dedicated to empowering senior citizens from Bangladesh through digital literacy and edu-entertainment sessions. To cater to the unique requirements and interests of these seniors, a needs assessment was conducted, allowing us to design educational and entertaining sessions covering a wide range of topics. The primary goal was to educate and empower these seniors, enriching their lives through engaging content.

Observations: From March 2023 to July 2023, we completed 20 in person training sessions- 10 in Northeast and 10 in Northwest of Calgary. A total of 23 senior members of Bangladesh community participated. We selected Genesis Center library at Northeast Calgary and Nose hill library at Northwest Calgary as facilities as they were better accessible to the participants. We invited guest speakers from multiple disciplines to offer knowledge translation to the seniors including a cardiologist to share information on risks of heart diseases among seniors in one session. Other speakers included yoga instructor, family physician etc. From July 2023 We have started online sessions as of our project outline. So far, we have had 5 Zoom sessions. Our specialized curriculum and course materials focused to build basic digital skills among seniors and help them remain socially connected by using social media, to increase their online access to resources and services, e.g., online shopping, food/grocery ordering, online lab services booking etc., and to remain safe while using social media. Time to time we offered them ride and any help they might need. The seniors enjoyed potluck and social gathering organized through this project. Our observation- Seniors like digital literacy education through online or in person platforms. Transport was a limitation for seniors to attend these sessions. We are going to conduct two evaluations in fall 2023.

Conclusion: Seniors consistently exhibit strong motivation to engage in programs that promote learning and foster social interactions within a secure and stimulating environment. Our program has effectively delivered such programs to seniors, including those who frequently encounter barriers to accessing services.

(Re)Imagining Inclusion: Community-Based Art Project to Create an Environment for Immigrant Artists.

11:27 AM | Plaza #1

Authors | Nurgul Rodriguez

Abstract | Art, community, and immigration programs encourage participation in the cultural life and support local people in the development of interconnectedness. Community art and immigrant art projects have been used to get artists, educator, students, local ethnic and communities as well as with marginalized groups and minorities. This helps the researchers to generate new practices for developing provincial level and observe federal level community-based identity for newcomers, immigrants, and refugees their lives in a new country as a host culture. The emerging question is “Does art have the power to evoke change individually and/or collectively?” This topic has been discussed by many discourses, theorists, artists, scholars over the past three decades. The contest is how aesthetic forms engage, challenge, counter the social, cultural, and political conditions of society by scholars, artist, and citizens. At this point, arts-informed scholarship has become important vehicle for these kinds of questions to be explored. As an artist scholar and artist educator, I believe that contemporary art can offer hope and has potentiality for social activists, educators, and cultural workers worldwide. Consequently, my educational research project focuses on community and arts-based projects through thinking how community-based and artmaking can transform and contribute social change by working artists and makers form underrepresented immigrant groups and communities. Working with Contemporary Calgary and public program YYC/LRT public Program helped to develop such a project focusing on Calgary-based racialized immigrant women artists. Immigrants, in fact, through the economic and social conditions (both distance and detachments) they became linked to the different possible positions in social space (that is) as a new and host culture in Calgary.

Community Centered Approaches to Inclusive Public Safety Design.

11:39 AM | Plaza #1

Authors | Rofiah Somani, Aurelio Naraval, & Francis Boakye

Abstract | Within 15 years, Statistics Canada (2017) predicts that more than 30% of individuals living in Canada will be part of a visible minority. The education system plays an important role in the overall experiences of this demographic, and particularly their children, often identifying the school as their initial point of personal contact with their host country. Using an arts-based engagement ethnography, a methodology designed to engage participants more meaningfully in order to capture their cultural practices and social lives in the context of their complex experiences the study explores newcomer familial experiences during the COVID-19 epidemic as they set up their lives in Canada, specifically within the context of school. Six families participated in the study. They had immigrated from Ethiopia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Yemen, and Syria. The principal objective of this study was to provide context to ignite a dialogue within the educational community by repositioning newcomers' narratives. This involved having them focus on recounting their experiences through a strength-based lens. Results indicate families were motivated to share their experiences, and established positive connections to the school, which provided them with a sense of belonging and purpose, while also nurturing their well-being and mental health. This indicated a promising point of entry for newcomer youth and their families. There was a sense of identity, purpose, religious beliefs, and solid relationships within the community. Where the responses were negative, they ranged from misunderstandings of school/cultural expectations to issues of identity, and challenges fitting in with the new community and culture. Systemic implications of this research include the criticality in addressing the academic and psychosocial needs of newcomers (e.g., improving teacher training/preparation programs). This can be accomplished by increasing awareness of newcomer families' lived experiences, creating programming that is holistic, and providing additional supports to help newcomers overcome anxiety and isolation.

Exploring a mixed format approach to RISE for Health and Wellness for Immigrant and Refugee High School Students.

11:51 PM | Plaza #1

Authors | Riley Truscott, Naya Alnazar, Adibba Adel, Didem Erman, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Background: The RISE for Health and Wellness is a community-based summer program developed for immigrant and refugee high school students based in Calgary, Alberta. Over the course of two months, students attend sessions exploring mental health, physical health, social health, and life skills. This year introduced a mixed format where students could opt to attend lessons in-person or virtually, enhancing accessibility of sessions for students. Understanding student learning and engagement was of interest to inform future adjustments.

Methods: An ethnography was conducted using observations from program facilitators to understand the unique barriers and facilitators to program delivery in a mixed format.

Observations: Students and facilitators held varied views on the mixed format. It effectively alleviated financial, temporal and accessibility constraints, granting participants participant the flexibility to participate either in person or virtually tailored to their individual needs. However, technical issues and connectivity have impacted the session delivery. Students expressed a desire for more interactive activities, mixed delivery approach posed limitations. Logistically, securing library rooms was challenging due to the demand for accessible public spaces. Engaging students during activities and discussions was another barrier as some activities were best suited more for a virtual audience. The presence of multiple facilitators in both settings foster engagement, diversity of opinion, and build a conducive learning environment.

Conclusion: RISE should continue to offer both in-person and virtual sessions while consistently enhance efficiency and engagement. Integrating activities that cater effectively both in-person and virtual session dynamics is essential.

Creating Better Physical Activity Opportunities for Newcomer Children and Youth: Overview of Activities to Strengthen Community-Academic Partnerships.

12:03 PM | Plaza #1

Authors | Matthew Kwan, Sujane Kandasamy, Jennifer Konopaki, Mia Giffen, & Amanda Koyama

Abstract | Background: Newcomer children and youth have been found to have physical activity (PA) deficits when compared to Canadian-born peers. While the underlying reasons behind this is complex, the extant literature suggest that young newcomers to Canada face multiple unique barriers. The development of Community-Academic Partnerships (CAP) is considered vital towards creating meaningful system-level changes to address issues of access. The purpose of this presentation is to provide an overview (from both academic and community partner perspectives) of two innovative CAP initiatives aimed at creating better PA opportunities for newcomer children and youth.

Methods/Approaches: (1) Using a participatory approach, we conducted a CIHR-funded summit that brought together a multidisciplinary and multisectoral group of academics and community leaders to identify needs and opportunities. (2) Using a mixed-methods approach, we evaluated the impact of an 8-week pilot physical literacy-based program called the (IPLAY) program – conducted in partnership with WinSport and Calgary Catholic Immigration Society.

Results: The summit brought together a group of academics across Health Sciences, Psychology, Sociology, Kinesiology, and Education to hear the needs from community organizations looking to develop active programming for newcomers, identifying the need for more formative research, efficacy trials, and integrated knowledge translation strategies. Findings from the pilot IPLAY program with 36 refugee youths illustrates the potential positive impact of community programs targeting newcomer youths; although the process highlighted the saliency of community partnerships in recruitment and need for cultural responsiveness in program delivery.

Conclusions: CAP is critical to address the PA deficits for newcomer children and youth.

Models of COVID-19 Vaccine Delivery for Refugees.

10:00 AM | Plaza #2

Authors | Fariba Aghajafari, Alyssa Ness, Laurent Wall, Amanda Weightman, Krishna Anupindi, Deidre Lake, & Annalee Coakley

Abstract | Background: We explored the experiences of new refugees in Calgary, across different COVID-19 vaccine delivery models. The purpose was to understand the barriers and strengths of each model to support access to COVID-19 vaccination for refugees.

Method/Approach: We used a mixed method approach that included secondary vaccination data of refugees and primary interviews. A database of refugee COVID-19 vaccinations was used to inform findings and a thematic analysis was conducted on qualitative data. Qualitative data was collected with settlement and healthcare organizations stakeholders (N=13), refugee sponsors (N=3) and refugees (N=45). Interview participants were identified through purposive and snowball sampling.

Results: The COVID-19 models of vaccine delivery for refugees, included: mobile vaccine clinics, temporary based community clinics, on-site vaccination clinics in refugee processing hotels, mainstream vaccination clinics and pharmacies. Models of vaccination delivery were not static. They evolved as a result of contextual factors, such as refugee needs, shifts in demographics, changes in public health policy and funding mandates. As a result, the impact on refugee health also evolved. Most models provided services in a culturally responsive manner and served newcomers. Models created positive and culturally safe contexts through partnerships where barriers were mitigated, and patients could access vaccinations. Partnerships provided health navigators, outreach, translation, built trust and helped models form new partnerships to address the emerging needs of patients.

Conclusion: Public health systems can adapt through partnerships and provide culturally responsive ways delivering vaccines. This has implications for the approach to health care service delivery for specialized populations.

Patient Engagement: How It Can Help Immigrant Women Navigate Their Healthcare in Canada.

10:13 AM | Plaza #2

Authors | Farzana Ali and Anne Leis

Abstract | Background: Despite patient engagement becoming mainstream, the literature suggests that immigrants tend to be less engaged in their care. The power differential between patients and providers seems to be much wider for immigrants. Especially immigrant women across age and social positions often experience multiple barriers to healthcare. These obstacles are mostly due to the social determinants of health, often linked to language, ethnicity, culture, religion, limited access to services and so on. This community-based research (CBR) study aims to understand how immigrant women perceive the notion of "patient engagement", and how their experiences with health services in Saskatoon have shaped it.

Methods: This patient-orientated study is participatory in nature where immigrant women and patient/family advisors are active members of the research team. A semi-structured interview was co-designed, pilot tested, and implemented to distill experiences and perspectives from immigrant women of diverse backgrounds in Saskatoon.

Results: Based on the interviews (n= 25), different patterns, similarities and/or differences have been emerging from the perspectives shared by immigrant women. Regardless of their differences in background, the participants appeared to share somewhat similar experiences with healthcare, particularly with navigating within the Canadian healthcare system and struggling with the language barrier.

Conclusion: In any CBR study, the process is as important as the outcome. At the end of this study, a patient engagement model will be co-developed along with the community members to ensure it is appropriate for cross-cultural patients and reflects participants' perspectives.

Place-Based Trauma and Recovery: Navigating Emotional Landscapes Amidst Sudden Environmental Shifts.

10:24 AM | Plaza # 2

Authors | Tugba Altin

Abstract | The evolving relationship between individuals and their environments, particularly during sudden place-based changes, remains an essential area of inquiry. Whether individuals face forced displacements or confront climate-induced shifts, the ensuing emotional and psychological reactions are profound. This literature review dissects the depth of trauma experienced by those subjected to these changes, emphasizing the role of familiarity and pre-change memories in fostering post-event adaptation. One central discovery is the concept of "root shock," a form of grief that emerges when individuals are suddenly uprooted from their familiar settings. For those forcibly displaced, nostalgia emerges as a healing tool, anchoring them to memories of pre-displacement locales and aiding their transition. Conversely, climate-induced changes introduce a unique form of emotional turmoil termed "solastalgia." Unlike other displacements, these individuals remain amid their altered environment, continuously reminded of their loss. Their grief, thus, persists, amplifying the challenge of recovery. Central to these narratives is the inextricable bond between identity, memory, and place. Recognizing this connection is paramount for devising targeted interventions to support affected individuals. As the frequency of climate events and displacements rise, understanding these dynamics becomes crucial for policymakers, therapists, and community leaders alike, ensuring that the trauma stemming from place-based changes is addressed comprehensively and empathetically.

Empowering Seniors for Quality Life (ESQ).

10:36 AM | Plaza #2

Authors | Zaman Ara, Tayyiba Khan, Nusrat Sharmin, & Sadia Sheikh

Abstract | Background: With a mission to create a better quality of life through health and social support amongst disadvantaged populations, the Health & Social Research Centre (HSRC) Inc. started working with seniors with a goal to empower them for a quality life. Considering the high need for social services and programming HSRC implemented a one-year project 'Empowering Seniors for Quality Life' in the NW region of Calgary, funded by the Federal Government of Canada.

Approach: The project focused on empowering 25 seniors with digital literacy and edu-entertainment sessions. Volunteerism was the key approach. Needs and interests of the seniors were identified by conducting a need- assessment and were addressed through education and entertainment sessions on diverse topics of their interests.

Results: An evaluation was conducted focusing on four thematic areas; digital literacy, sense of belonging, socialization, and health education. Seniors dove into understanding the digital world and improved their skills with the support of program volunteers. Seniors felt a sense of belonging and purpose in life where often they felt forgotten. They shared their enthusiasm for the edu-entertainment sessions where they have made new friends. Even though language was a barrier, seniors were able to communicate through actions and a new language of understanding. They enjoyed learning on diverse topics and entertainment sessions.

Conclusion: There are continued high motivations from seniors to participate in programming that encourages engagement, learning and social interactions by creating a safe space. ESQ has successfully provided a platform for the seniors who often find services inaccessible.

Mindfulness for Social Recovery and Wellbeing of Immigrant Women.

10:48 AM | Plaza #2

Authors | Ivana Calina

Abstract | Introduction: Importance of taking care of our mental health was a lesson learned through living and surviving in conditions created by COVID-19 crisis. Literature says that uncertainty and loss of control are main reasons causing stress in people and these were at a peak in last 3 years. CIWA's Social Recovery and Wellness for Immigrant Women project brought in a mindfulness approach to program development for immigrant women dealing with gender-based violence and/or mental health issues.

Methods: The project scope included: 1) CIWA Staff trained in Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy 2) Customized curriculum developed; 3) Conducting mindfulness workshops with 60+ participants; 4) Innovative use of technology in the practice; 5) Mindfulness Training for Service Providers; 6) Customized curriculum for family members (spouses, youth, grandparents)

Results: 1) Vulnerable populations have the strategies to cope with future stressors that may arise after the pandemic 2) Civil society organizations have increased capacity to develop and implement innovative approaches to the delivery of programs and services

Conclusion: In the last sixteen months since commencing the project, we have measured significant positive impact on project participant's wellbeing. Anecdotes include finding hope, new life meaning and gaining emotional stability and connection with other project participants. Five of the project volunteers had engaged in other volunteer opportunities and acted as ambassadors for the project. Mindfulness Training for Service Providers Training has been welcomed by many professionals from other civil societies illustrating the above-mentioned result of the project.

Professional Immigrants: Confronting Multiple Barriers to Canadian Employment Opportunities.

11:15 AM | Plaza #2

Authors | Jasmine Calix and Asit Sarkar

Abstract | Background: Immigration Partnership Saskatoon (IPSK) received much anecdotal evidence of Internationally trained job seekers unable to find employment in their fields due to lack of Canadian experience and Canadian credentials.

Methods/Approach: Research project undertaken to understand the challenges internationally-trained and experienced immigrants face during the registration, certification and licensing processes when trying to find work in their fields, through Saskatchewan's regulatory bodies. IPSK created the Employment Resource Guide to help newcomers navigate some of the challenges uncovered in the research.

Results/Observation: This inability to meaningfully contribute their expertise in their new home country has led to feelings of being de-valued, distressed, and frustrated. Canadians are deprived of essential services that these professional newcomers can provide. Additionally, the socioeconomic fabric of our province is being depleted as we are unable to benefit from these highly skilled immigrants' knowledge and abilities.

Conclusion: These observations pose the question, Are employer/regulator requirements of Canadian-based education, training, experience, and professional eligibility a way of excluding immigrants from opportunities appropriate to their qualifications gained abroad? Further work is needed to shed light on not just generalizations from data, but actual evidence from immigrants; regulators; and Ministries who have data from Provincial Nominee Programs.

Grassroots Community Engagement: ActionDignity's Platform Strategy.

11:27 AM | Plaza #2

Authors | Humaira Falak, Aurelio Naraval, & Francis Boakye

Abstract | Art, community, and immigration programs encourage participation in the cultural life and support local people in the development of interconnectedness. Community art and immigrant art projects have been used to get artists, educator, students, local ethnic and communities as well as with marginalized groups and minorities. This helps the researchers to generate new practices for developing provincial level and observe federal level community-based identity for newcomers, immigrants, and refugees their lives in a new country as a host culture. The emerging question is “Does art have the power to evoke change individually and/or collectively?” This topic has been discussed by many discourses, theorists, artists, scholars over the past three decades. The contest is how aesthetic forms engage, challenge, counter the social, cultural, and political conditions of society by scholars, artist, and citizens. At this point, arts-informed scholarship has become important vehicle for these kinds of questions to be explored. As an artist scholar and artist educator, I believe that contemporary art can offer hope and has potentiality for social activists, educators, and cultural workers worldwide. Consequently, my educational research project focuses on community and arts-based projects through thinking how community-based and artmaking can transform and contribute social change by working artists and makers form underrepresented immigrant groups and communities. Working with Contemporary Calgary and public program YYC/LRT public Program helped to develop such a project focusing on Calgary-based racialized immigrant women artists. Immigrants, in fact, through the economic and social conditions (both distance and detachments) they became linked to the different possible positions in social space (that is) as a new and host culture in Calgary.

Ethics of Disabled Refugees.

11:39 AM | Plaza #2

Authors | Muna Farah

Abstract | This case presentation delves into the complex landscape of disability ethics that Muslim refugees encounter upon immigrating to Canada. Focusing on a specific instance, the study highlights the ethical dilemmas faced by a young adult Muslim female with an intellectual disability living under her parents' guardianship as she expresses her desire to explore romantic relationships. The presentation delves into the intricate interplay between cultural values, familial responsibilities, and the evolving autonomy of individuals with disabilities within the Canadian context. The case centers around the tensions arising from the clash between the family's cultural beliefs and the evolving perspectives on disability rights and individual agency in Canada. The young woman's expressed aspirations to engage in romantic relationships challenge traditional norms and beliefs held by her parents, who are dedicated to her care and wellbeing. This raises questions about the balance between respecting cultural and religious traditions while ensuring the fulfillment of her personal desires and aspirations. Through an analysis of this case, the presentation aims to shed light on the multifaceted challenges Muslim refugee families face in reconciling their heritage with the principles of autonomy, self-determination, and inclusivity that Canadian society upholds. Drawing upon ethical frameworks, legal considerations, and multicultural perspectives, the presentation will emphasize the importance of collaborative decision-making that respects the individual's autonomy while considering the familial and cultural context. By addressing this case, the presentation contributes to the discourse on disability ethics, cultural integration, and human rights, urging professionals, policymakers, and community leaders to engage in nuanced discussions on the rights and well-being of individuals with disabilities within diverse cultural contexts. The insights garnered from this case will catalyze fostering greater understanding, empathy, and cooperation among stakeholders involved in supporting and advocating for the rights of disabled individuals in the Canadian multicultural landscape.

Building Capacity for Community Engagement in the Research Ethics Process.

11:51 PM | Plaza #2

Authors | Jenny Godley, Amanda Koyama, & Amanda Weightman

Abstract | Background: Institutional research ethics processes are often far removed from both research participants and community-based organizations. We present our ongoing efforts to develop a community-based research ethics process for newcomer groups in Calgary.

Approach: A needs assessment carried out in 2020 identified the following issues: • Research conducted about newcomers in Alberta is generally not accessible to agencies, community members or research participants; • Immigrant serving agencies and community organizations rarely feel they are engaged as full partners in research projects led by academic researchers; • Immigrant serving agencies and academic researchers operate in different contexts, leading to divergent ideas about what constitutes 'ethical practice' in research. (Bragg, 2020) Following a review of the literature on community-based ethics processes and consultation with founders of two community-based research ethics boards (Jane Finch Community Research Partnership, 2021; Neufeld et al, 2019), we have taken the following initial steps: • Launched the Newcomer Research Library profiling plain-language summaries of Alberta-based research; • CCIS has successfully implemented a research screen and process for more equitable academic processes; • Recruited a representative from the CCCIS to sit on the University of Calgary's social science research ethics board. This board member reports back to the community regularly on the university-based ethics processes.

Observations / Conclusion Working across institutional boundaries has been fruitful and empowering. We anticipate next steps will include convening community conversations with past research and engaging with partners and key stakeholders with the aim of developing research principles and later establishing a community-based research ethics process.

References: Bragg, B. (2020). A strategy for equity in research with newcomers. Summary report produced for the CCIS / MITACS Partnership.

Neufeld et al. (2019). Research 101: A process for developing local guidelines for ethical research in heavily researched communities. Harm Reduction Journal 16:41. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12954-019-0315-5>

Jane Finch Community Research Partnership (2021). Principles for Conducting Research in the Jane Finch Community. <https://janefinchresearch.ca/research-principles>

Introducing "The Seeker": Bridging Service and Information Gaps for Professional Immigrants.

12:03 PM | Plaza #2

Authors | Geneca Henry, Marianne Barker, Fatemeh Kazemi, Gurleen Matharu, & Katerina Palova

Abstract | As Canada witnesses a growing influx of economic migrants, the need to enhance support for skilled immigrants in their chosen professions becomes increasingly paramount. In response to this imperative, we present "The Seeker," a comprehensive digital platform strategically designed to bridge service and information gaps for professional immigrants within Canada. Our method involves a two-phase knowledge-building strategy: an integrative literature review and an all-encompassing environmental scan, followed by a robust mixed methods study. The culmination of these efforts is "The Seeker," an easily accessible online platform that offers a range of resources, including career guidance, insights into workplace dynamics, networking strategies, and more. Content is tailored to Alberta-specific needs and resources and caters to distinct professions and diverse cultural backgrounds. Currently in the piloting stage, our process involves conducting interviews with our target audience to evaluate the platform's content, alongside a survey to assess its outcomes comprehensively. Initial analysis shows that the platform offers relevant information, enhancing service access to newcomers. Moreover, it streamlines information-seeking and provides timely guidance in their settlement and integration stages. This initiative addresses research gaps, promoting awareness of professional immigrant-tailored services and optimizing integration through increased settlement service utilization. "The Seeker" stands to enrich the experiences of those who seek to establish themselves in Canada's professional landscape. This project is a collaboration between TIES, The University of British Columbia and the University of Michigan, funded by the IRCC.

Healthcare Navigation in Alberta: How can We Employ International Medical Graduates to Improve Healthcare Access and Utilization.

02:00 PM | Plaza #1

Authors | Deidre Lake, Nashit Chowdhury, Punom Bhattacharyya, & Drew Bowman

Abstract | Background: International Medical Graduates (IMGs) in Canada face systemic barriers to medical licensure, resulting in high underemployment despite having advanced medical expertise. The Alberta International Medical Graduates Association (AIMGA) developed an innovative solution to address this gap while also improving healthcare access for newcomers.

Program Description: AIMGA designed and delivered a Patient Navigator Program in collaboration with York University to enable IMGs to serve as guides, educators, and advocates for newcomers navigating Alberta's healthcare system. The 3-month curriculum included patient empowerment, motivational interviewing, community interpreting, health promotion, cultural competence, ethical concerns, and practical clinical knowledge. By leveraging IMGs' medical skills and lived newcomer experiences, the program builds capacity for providing culturally and linguistically tailored support to refugees facing healthcare access barriers. To date, we have completed 2 cohorts of 18 participants each, and 1 cohort in progress.

Impact: Newcomers including immigrants and refugees have complex physical and mental health needs but a relatively low level of knowledge in terms of approach to health and healthcare system in Canada. Moreover, for many limited health literacy and language fluency often impede care. AIMGA's trained IMG patient navigators can help newcomers understand their conditions, book appointments, arrange interpretation, and build health system literacy. This simultaneously creates meaningful healthcare jobs for IMGs who are awaiting or unable to practice medicine presently. The model fosters integration and upholds social justice values.

Conclusion: This innovative program of AIMGA offers a blueprint for empowering IMGs to use their expertise in creative, community-engaged roles that fill critical health system gaps. If expanded, this model could strengthen health equity across Alberta. However, there is a need for awareness and initiative to employ IMGs in patient navigator roles and we call for proactive measures to advocate for policy changes that create formal pathways and funded positions for IMGs to work in these critical roles supporting equitable access to healthcare.

Voices and Images of Migration.

02:12 PM | Plaza #1

Authors | Laura Montes de Oca

Abstract | Background: We are a group of Latin American Women (Latinas) that moved to Canada to make a new life. Our group brings together Latinas that have been in Canada from 8 to 20 years, as well as newcomers that arrived in the past 2 or 3 years, and even some who arrived just months ago. Laura Montes de Oca is the academic leader of our group.

Methods/Approach: In April 2023, Laura invited us to create the collaborative project Voices and Images of Migration. With this project we want to give visibility to our experiences as Latinas living in Canada. The project is based on Photovoice and Digital Storytelling methods. With this approach we want to voice what we have lived in our resettlement & integration process.

Results/Observations: Calgary is a destination for many immigrants. In Voices and Images of Migration, we talk about our experiences as newcomers and immigrants in Canada. We share stories of hope, dreams, strength, and empowerment in everyday life. We narrate the obstacles faced, and the achievements we made. Why did we emigrate? Why did we come to Canada? What barriers did we encounter? How did we overcome everyday challenges? These are some of the questions that we answer with our stories.

Conclusion: Through our digital stories – to be posted on social media – we aim to echo the lives of many other women like us. We think that Voices and Images of Migration can mirror the journey of strength, hope and empowerment of thousands of immigrants in Canada.

Supporting Newcomers Beyond Settlement: A BIPOC-Led Strategy.

02:24 PM | Plaza #1

Authors | Anthony Olusola

Abstract | The general thrust of all settlement programs has been focused on the immediate, and time bound. needs of newcomers such as language, housing, employability, integration, etc. While of these serve useful purposes, most of these are stand-alone programs and leave significant unattended gaps with family and/or generational needs. It is also noteworthy to acknowledge that newcomers are constantly faced with unique challenges making it extremely difficult for them to adapt to their new community and receive tailored support -often because of cultural awareness ignorance and adherence to the status quo by most service delivery outfits. This presentation provides an overview of a “for and by” framework that encompasses holistic newcomer adaptation strategy post-settlement stages. The strategy has also been designed to address unique challenges faced by newcomers who are Black and other persons of colour. By providing programs for multiple generations and involving the whole family in supportive roles, the strategy also incorporates proactive elements to help understand the place of Indigenous values, race relations, and civic responsibilities in the Canadian society.

Using Data for Strategic Partner Outreach in the Newcomer Serving Sector.

02:36 PM | Plaza #1

Authors | Tihana Radojicic, Manisha Dave, & Amy He

Abstract | Background: This presentation highlights the collaborative journey undertaken by Immigrant Services Calgary (ISC) and its partners leading to the development of the Gateway initiative that focuses on offering seamless support for newcomers while minimizing service duplication. A distinctive partner outreach strategy, informed by real-time data on newcomers' settlement and integration needs is central to this presentation. Guided by the social determinants of health, ISC's Partner Success (PS) Team has harnessed aggregated and anonymized client data to identify trends in the newcomer serving sector. This approach has resulted in 80 strategic partnerships spanning across various industries and sectors, achieving 90% partner satisfaction, and maintaining 100% partner retention rate. Our overarching objective is to create a collaborative ecosystem that offers holistic support to newcomers.

Methods/Approach: The presentation outlines the utilization of data to guide ISC's approach to: Creating distinct partner segments to enhance the efficacy of the PS Team's efforts. Engaging potential partners based on their alignment with newcomers' needs. Developing a service directory for planners to make adequate client referrals. Leveraging interconnected digital platforms to facilitate client-service provider connections.

Results/Observations: Comprehensive segmentations have strengthened settlement, employment, health, and other support services for newcomers. Gateway planners now utilize the service directory for swift and precise referrals. Partners are utilizing Partner Portal for client referral management.

Conclusion: By leveraging data, collaborations can be tailored to meet newcomers' specific needs, fostering better outcomes for them. Additionally, the presentation emphasizes the need for comprehensive consideration of data protection and potential risks while implementing such strategies.

Belongingness of Newcomers Through Community Engagements: A Racialized Woman's Experiences.

02:48 PM | Plaza #1

Authors | Jebunnessa Chapola

Abstract | This presentation tells the story of a racialized settler woman's transformative journey toward belongingness and mutual empowerment through community engagements in Saskatoon, Canada. I will discuss how Indigenous Land-based learning became healing and empowering for me as a newly arrived settler woman of colour. I will also focus on how collaborative community learning has supported taking responsibility for understanding the meaning of Land in solidarity with Indigenous and newcomer communities through involvement in community garden activities, community radio shows, and various anti-racist, cross-cultural cultural community activities. Using decolonial, feminist, and relational autoethnography as my research methodology, this presentation will discuss my twelve years of community engagements in Treaty 6 territory. This presentation will also address how I challenged everyday racism and colonial practices ingrained in the daily lives of newcomer Canadians through community engagements. My doctoral research emphasizes a key lesson from this life journey: the need to be responsible for understanding the Indigenous meaning of Land to create belongingness with the Land and its original peoples while resisting the assimilationist forces affecting Indigenous and newcomer communities through their unique histories, despite the orchestrated biases operating through colonialist structures. The author concludes with the hope that analyzing decolonial, collaborative learning stories and connections with the Land and cross-cultural community engagements may help other non-Indigenous communities build meaningful relationships with the Land and create belongingness.

Community Belonging: Challenges and Opportunities for Newcomers.

02:00 PM | Plaza #2

Authors | Asit Sarkar & Jebunnessa Chapola

Abstract | Immigration to a new country brings many challenges. Besides immediate issues of settlement and making a living, conflicts arise concerning the duality of identities - with the home country or with the new country of immigration. At the same time, there are questions regarding the extent of welcome accorded to them by those who hold power and influence in the new community. The easiest path of many newcomers is to seek comfort among those who are culturally, linguistically or of similar faiths. This presentation focuses on the challenges faced by newcomers in belonging to or identifying with their new communities beyond that their zones of comfort. It also talks about missed opportunities because of not belonging (or not being able to belong). Through exploration of these issues, the presentation proposes what can be done by the newcomers as well as those who can help open doors to community belonging by newcomers. Insights from the authors' lived experiences with their own community groups as well as organizations in the larger community will be shared.

Racialized Communities, Equity and Precision Medicine in Canada.

02:12 PM | Plaza #2

Authors | Arafaat Valiani, Dave Anderson, Angela Gonzales, Mandi Gray, Lorian Hardcastle, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | In the last three decades, a cohort of genomicists have intentionally sought to include more racially diverse people in their research in human genomics and precision medicine. Whether the terms of such efforts to be inclusive in human genomic research and precision medicine are equitable for these communities remains to be explored. In this commentary, we review the context in which issues of inclusion arose with early genome and genetics projects. We then discuss attempts to include racialized peoples in more recent human genomics research. In conclusion, we raise critical issues to consider in the future of equitable genomic research and precision medicine involving racialized communities, particularly as it concerns working towards what we call Precision Health Equity. Specifically, we examine issues of genetic data governance and the terms of participation in inclusive human genomics and precision health research. We do so by drawing on insights and protocols developed by researchers working in the space of human genomics and health equity and propose exploring their application to precision health research involving racialized communities.

Mapping Experiences of (Un)Safety Amongst LGBTQ+ Newcomers.

02:24 PM | Plaza #2

Authors | Thomas Tri

Abstract | As of currently, there are 12 jurisdictions where same-sex intimacy is punishable by death and in 66 countries same-sex, consensual sexual activity is criminalized (Human Dignity Trust, 2023). Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning (LGBTQ+) newcomers escape violence and persecution from their home countries to seek safety abroad. However, notions of safety are not guaranteed as LGBTQ+ newcomers continue to face immense structural barriers upon arrival. This study sought to understand how practitioners can co-create safer spaces for LGBTQ+ newcomers. Using a community-based framework, this study collaborated with the Centre for Newcomers, a local non-profit that works closely with LGBTQ+ newcomers to recruit participants. Drawing from critical geography, this study not only sought to understand the effect of safety but the power dynamics of space and how it interweaves into participants' experiences. Participatory community mapping as well as semi-structured interviews explored participants' experiences of safety and unsafety across the migration trajectory. A thematic analysis was conducted, and four major themes emerged: experiences of violence, safety, unsafety, and navigating (un)safety. This study reveals the complex strategies and perceptions that LGBTQ+ newcomers encompass to not only survive but to reach self-actualization. By understanding experiences of safety, practitioners and service providers can better understand appropriate practices and programs that can support the needs of LGBTQ+ newcomers.

Establishing a Standardized Process for Obtaining Research Consent at a Sectoral Level.

02:36 PM | Plaza #2

Authors | Nchedo Udobata, Jeff Halvorsen, Ajwang Warri, & Vibha Kaushik

Abstract | Background: Establishing a streamlined process for obtaining consent in the newcomer and resettlement sector presents an opportunity to expand research and longitudinal analysis to improve newcomer outcomes. Service providers face significant challenges in securing research consent and data access due to ethical concerns about service users' privacy, data safety, and request timing. In line with its mission of generating new knowledge, co-creating solutions, and elevating best practices within the newcomer services sector, Newcomer Knowledge Hub (K-Hub) is seeking to develop a robust framework that offers a unified and standardized approach to obtaining consent.

Method: The Dynamic Collaborative workshop served as a focus group of stakeholders from academia and agencies across Calgary to identify the opportunities and challenges of creating a streamlined consent process.

Result: Some considerations highlighted as crucial to developing an ethical framework include informed and ongoing consent, recognizing barriers and service users' preferences, and upholding community engagement. Other recommendations are clearly articulating benefits and risks to potential partner agencies and adopting a strategic and nuanced approach to demonstrate feasibility and accelerate support.

Conclusion: While research in the newcomer and resettlement sector will continue to play a vital role in improving services, service users remain vulnerable to safety and privacy risks. A standardized framework for obtaining consent at a sectoral level safeguards service users' autonomy and curbs excessive research burden on the newcomer population.

The Construction of Refugees in the Canadian News Media: A Critical Discourse Analysis.

02:48 PM | Plaza #2

Authors | Jessica Naidu, Elizabeth Oddone Paolucci, Maureen Hiebert, Francis Boakye, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Introduction: Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada has estimated that 9,237 refugees arrived in 2020, and 20,391 in 2021. Many of these refugees have been racialized people who have encountered racism during settlement. News media reporting is one such channel of racism.

Objective: The aim of this paper is to answer the research question, how are refugees constructed in Canadian news media?

Theory: Using a Critical Discourse Analysis methodological approach, we adapted Ruth's Wodak's Discourse Historical Approach and Framing Theory of Media Analysis.

Methods: We used the ProQuest Canadian Newsstream database to search for articles across six newspapers: National Post, Globe and Mail, Calgary Herald, Calgary Sun, Edmonton Journal, and Edmonton Sun using the search terms "refugee" and "asylum seeker". We limited our search to articles published between 2011 to 2021. We used Nvivo version 12 to examine, code, and analyze our dataset.

Findings: We had a total of 1,618 results across the newspapers. After title and abstract screening, we had 1,293 articles and after screening full texts, 325 newspaper articles. We found three major themes, representing how refugee identity was constructed in Canada from 2011 to 2021. Two of these themes were frames. These were 1) *Commodity* and 2) *Threat*. There were two sub-themes under each of these themes. Under *Commodity*, there were *Helpless Victims* and *Working Bodies* and under *Threat*, there were *Terrorist* and *Criminal*. The third major theme was *Dehumanization*, which as opposed to a resulting frame, was a discursive strategy that underlay and weaved through the refugee identity constructs.

Conclusion: Our findings demonstrate that dehumanization is crucial to the construction of refugees in Canadian media as a precursor for humans to commit or support racist, punitive refugee policies. In effect, to dismiss the refugee's physical and psychosocial wellbeing, economic security, safe and healthy living environment, and other needs for survival, one must first dismiss the refugee's humanity.

Poster Presentation Abstracts

Patient Medical Image Consent Forms: A Content Analysis

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Lauren Asaad, Maushumi Bhattacharjee, Hannah James, Abdul Cadri, & Zack Marshall

Abstract | Background: Patient images from published medical case reports have been found in publicly accessible image repositories, such as Google Images. It is not clear how often consent forms for the publication of patient images in medical journals mention the possibility of images circulating online. This raises ethical concerns about patient privacy and lack of informed consent.

Methods: From a random sample of 1,755 case reports published between July 2017-June 2018 and indexed in PubMed, 492 case reports included at least one patient photograph that was found on Google Images. These case reports were published in 284 unique journals. We searched for consent forms to publish patient images on each of the journal and publisher websites.

Results: 118 journals (52.7%) included consent forms on their own or publishers' websites. 18 unique consent forms were identified. The most common component was anonymity and least common component was mention of social media.

Conclusion: 10 out of 18 consent forms mentioned photographs being available to an audience outside of the journal website, and only 3 out of 18 consent forms mentioned the possibility of the patient's images being linked to journal or publisher social media platforms. Risk related to patient anonymity was generally emphasized, however the risk associated with patient images circulating online was not emphasized or made clear, even in the forms that contained text related to social media. Consent form content varied across journals and publishers and there were many inconsistencies. A consent form checklist or standardized patient consent form could be beneficial.

Delay in Accessing Primary Health Care and its Impacts among Nepalese Immigrants Population in Canada.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Bishnu Bajgain, Mohammad Zi Chowdhury, Rudra Dahal, Kalpana Thapa Bajgain, Kamala Adhikari, Nashit Chowdhury, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Background: Equitable access to healthcare across the population, irrespective of social-economic factors and area of residence, is crucial. Delay in seeking care may decrease care access, later diagnosis, and delayed or inadequate treatment of health conditions which leads to poor health outcomes. This study aimed to assess delay in accessing PHC and associated factors among Nepalese immigrants residing in Calgary.

Methods: A cross-sectional study using a self-administered questionnaire was conducted in 2019. Delay in accessing care was measured based on a single-item question: “During the past 12 months, was there ever a time that you had to delay seeking medical service within any of the following services (multiple answers allowed)?” A follow-up question about associated factors was asked, and the responses were categorized into availability, accessibility, and acceptability. Descriptive and multivariable logistic regression was employed to assess the association between delay in accessing care and its predictors by using STATA.

Results: Of 401 study participants, over two-thirds (n=266; 66.33%) reported that they had a care delay during the 12 months. Delay in accessing care was over two times higher among those aged 26-45 (AOR 2.98) compared to those under 25 years of age, which was nearly seven times higher (AOR 6.96) among the older participants (≥56 year). The top two areas of delaying accessing care were referral and related services (69.17%) and dental and related services (55.64%). The top three reasons reported were waiting time (77.82%), cost (55.64%), services availability (53.38%). Overall, accessibility (n=170, 63.91%), availability (n=225, 84.59%), and acceptability (n=135, 50.75%) were a barrier to access care. Those who reported delay in accessing care also reported an impact on their lives personally and economically. The most reported personal impact was mental health impact, including worry, anxiety, and stress (n=198, 74.72%), and the most common economic impact reported was increased use of over-the-counter drugs (n=114, 43.02%).

Conclusion: Delay in accessing care is presented in the Nepalese immigrant population that impacts individuals’ personal health, daily life activities, and financial capacity. Strategies to improve access to PHC for deprived populations are crucial and need to be tackled effectively.

My Voices Heard: Participatory Action Research to Community Engagement of the Immigrant Seniors

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Gopal Bhatta, Bishnu Bajgain, & Shreekanta Aryal

Abstract | Background: The most common risk factors that increase the chances of immigrant seniors becoming socially isolated and vulnerable include lack of awareness of or access to resources, physical and mental health issues, and linguistic and socio-cultural barriers. Continuous hours of childminding further exacerbate the issue. The social isolation of seniors can cause higher social and financial costs.

Method: Realizing the compounding challenge of social isolation and failure to bring attention to vulnerable seniors in engagement activities aiming to reduce their social isolation and improve physical and mental health, the Nepalese Community Society of Calgary (NCSC) implemented participatory action research (PAR) using focused group discussion (FGD) and expert mapping as key tools to find out the most pertinent activities for this group that would bring buy-in and increase a wider uptake. The FGDs were done with a diverse group of participants from June to Sept 2022: male elders (n = 44), female elders (n = 31), male and female elders together (n = 67), adults (n = 83), and seniors and household members together (n = 140), to capture different perspectives. The issues and activities identified through FGDs were prioritized following the scoring method (1 to 10 scale) with randomly selected elders (n = 55). The results obtained through prioritization were further scored by the member of the project steering committee (PSC) and the project staff (n = 21) handling projects to have a ground truth and make a prioritization methodologically more robust and prioritized activities have a potential of uptake. Finally, a weighted average was calculated for each issue and activity.

Results and Conclusion: The results portray that socio-cultural activities stood to be a top priority to effectively engage seniors, help relieve their physical and mental stress, and pacify their craving for back home and which also bears the highest potential for intergenerational learning. Followed by this was the activity that mimics their lives back home: backyard gardening, as it makes them engaged with nature and transfer the culture to their offspring via agriculture. Senior meet and greet obtained the third highest score followed by the celebration of special days of the elders. The results from the participatory action research were an eye-opener for the community to start implementing a bottom-up approach while defining and refining engagement activities for the seniors. The degree of uptake in earlier activities (pre-prioritization) was poor while there has been a consistently higher rate of participation afterwards.

Patient-Reported Primary Health Care Experiences: The Challenges Faced by Nepalese Immigrant Men in Canada.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Rudra Dahal, Kalpana Thapa, Bishnu Bajgain, Kamala Adhikari, Iffat Naeem, Nashit Chowdhury, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Background: Despite the Canadian universal healthcare system, new immigrants face a number of challenges in accessing primary healthcare (PHC) services. As the level of immigration to Canada continues to grow, it is crucial to understand the nature of barriers to care immigrants face

Methods: A qualitative research using focus groups was conducted among a sample of first-generation Nepalese immigrant men who had some experience with PHC in Canada. Data collection and analysis: A total of 6 focus groups were conducted among 34 participants in their preferred language [Nepalese, or English]. Demographic information was collected prior to each focus group. Transcriptions of the discussions were prepared, and thematic analysis was employed to the qualitative data set.

Results: Participants reported experiencing barriers at two stages: before accessing PHC services and after accessing PHC services. The barriers before accessing PHC were long waiting time for an appointment with specialists, limited knowledge of own health- and services-related issues, limited-service availability hours, cultural differences in health practices, and transportation and work-related challenges. The barriers after accessing PHC were long wait time in the clinic to meet with family doctors during the appointment, communication problems and misunderstandings, high healthcare costs associated with dental and vision care and prescribed medicines, and inappropriate behaviors and practices of doctors and service providers.

Conclusions: Accessible primary healthcare is important for the health of immigrant populations in Canada. It is important to recognize the extent of barriers to effectively shape public policy and improve access to primary healthcare.

Experiential Learning Through Volunteering at RISE (Refugee and Immigrant Self Empowerment).

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Sukyoung Lee, Tobi Souza, Didem Erman, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Background: Volunteerism plays a crucial role in community development, fostering personal growth and community well-being. The RISE for Health and Wellness program, a community engagement initiative, has drawn volunteers from diverse backgrounds. In our presentation, we explore the values, experiences, and attitudes of volunteers in the RISE program, investigating the impacts of involvement on volunteers.

Methods/Approach: This research employs a qualitative approach, utilizing interviews and focus groups to gain comprehensive insights into the perspectives of volunteers. Volunteers are invited to share their experiences and the values they have acquired. By engaging participants in open conversations, we hope to comprehensively explore the multifaceted aspects of volunteer involvement and its effects on individuals and communities.

Results: Through interviews and focus groups, we expect to hear about the transformative experiences volunteers have had and the values they have embraced, such as empathy, teamwork, and a deeper connection to their community. While specific results are still forthcoming, it is anticipated that these insights will uncover how volunteer experiences influence personal growth, community relationships, and social dynamics.

Conclusion: The RISE program presents a unique opportunity to examine the intersection of volunteerism, values, and community impacts. By exploring the values, experiences, and attitudes of volunteers, our research aims to provide a deeper understanding of the underlying dynamics that contribute to the program's success. The anticipated findings will shed light on the ways in which volunteerism not only benefits the community but also enriches the lives of those who participate, showcasing the significance of such initiatives.

The impact of Racism on The Mental Health and Wellness of Refugees.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Jessica Naidu, Nashit Chowdhury, Elizabeth Oddone Paolucci, Maureen Hiebert, Francis Boakye, and Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Objective: The objective of this review is to systematically examine and analyze the literature on the impact of racism on the mental health and wellness of refugees.

Research Question: What is the impact of racism on the mental health and wellness of refugees?

Introduction: The Mental Health Commission of Canada states that we have a responsibility to foster incoming refugees' mental health and wellness. Media portrayals of refugees have constructed them as hidden terrorists, bogus claimants, and vectors of disease/risk. Research shows that racism harms health, hence the constructs above may harm refugee health and wellness. For this review, the population is resettled refugees of all ages. The outcomes are mental health and wellness, and psychosocial well-being among refugees.

Methods: We searched for published academic literature using MEDLINE (Ovid), PsycINFO, CINAHL, Evidence-Based Medicine Reviews, PubMed, Embase, and SocIndex and used Google Scholar, Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) <https://cmha.ca/>, The Canadian Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) <http://www.camh.ca/>, Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) <https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English>, Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) <https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/193.html>, Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html>, National Institutes of Health (NIH) <https://www.nih.gov/>, and OAISTER (WorldCat) <https://oaister.worldcat.org/> to look for published grey literature.

Findings: Our search yielded 3,116 citations. We had 2,532 articles after removing duplicates and 2,448 articles after title and abstract screening, leaving 84 for full-text review. Sixteen (80%) of the twenty articles found racism to be associated to poor mental health and psychosocial outcomes. Four (20%) of the articles did not find an association between racism and mental health.

Conclusion: This review found several articles that focused on racism in the media and its impact on refugee mental health. This finding emphasizes the importance of focusing on media-based racism and its impact on refugee mental health and wellness.

Supporting Integration of Internationally Trained Dentists (ITDs) into Canadian Dentistry.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Gurpreet K. Sahi, Ciza Z. A., & Kamal Sehgal

Abstract | Background: Immigration plays a pivotal role in stimulating Canada's economy, thereby fostering economic growth and development both in urban and rural communities. Canada attracts economic/skilled immigrants annually through various programs such as the Federal Skilled Worker Immigrant Program (FSWP) and the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) aiming to facilitate their integration and socioeconomic contribution. For internationally trained dentists (ITDs), who are considered skilled immigrants, the path to accreditation to practice as dentists in Canada involves successfully passing a series of equivalency examinations set by the National Dental Examining Board (NDEB). Only after passing these examinations can they proceed to take the licensing exam required to obtain a license for practicing dentistry in Canada. However, pursuing this licensing process has numerous challenges for ITDs. Overcoming these challenges often spans several years, resulting in a substantial financial burden, and eroding hope for many ITDs.

The Canadian Occupational Projection System (COPS) indicates the expected shortage of dentists at the national level. Over the period, 2022-2031, 13,500 job openings are expected in the field of dentistry while Canada's capacity to fill these positions stands at 10,500 resulting in a massive gap in the delivery of dental services, particularly to Canadians living in rural and hard-to-reach communities.

Approach: To fill this alarming gap. Alberta Network of Immigrant Women (ANIW), AB in Partnership with S.U.C.E.S.S. in BC and Open-Door Society in Saskatoon with a grant from the Foreign Credential Recognition Program of Employment and Service Development Canada (ESDC) is delivering a support program to ITDs.

Results: To date, 538, ITDs have received the required service. 17 ITDs passed the Assessment of Fundamental Knowledge (AFK), and 22 ITDs completed the Assessment of Clinical Judgement (ACJ). 4 passed the National Dental Examination of Clinical Competency (NDECC).

Conclusion: Many ITDs manage to surmount the obstacles and challenges that they face in their journey and accomplish their aspirations of having rewarding and satisfying careers in Canada. In order to achieve this, they require a robust and reliable support system that can help them at every stage of the process. This support system can consist of various sources of assistance, such as educational institutions that provide them with the necessary training and accreditation, professional organizations that offer them opportunities for networking and advocacy, and mentorship programs that give them valuable guidance and feedback.

Contributions to Community Health and Wellness: An Exploratory Study on International Medical Graduates Pursuing Alternate Careers.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Meriem Aroua, Nashit Chowdhury, Deidre Lake, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Objectives: Challenges in primary care have never been more pertinent, due to an aging and diversifying population, a growing burden of chronic diseases, and a shortage of healthcare professionals. In this article, we explored the contributions that International Medical Graduates (IMGs) can potentially have in addressing these concerns. We sought to obtain the perspectives of IMGs to explore potential non-physician roles, to improve community health and wellness, through this descriptive phenomenological study.

Methods: Eight focus groups in total were conducted (n=42), and we used an inductive thematic analysis approach to code the data. Themes and sub-themes were reviewed and finalized following revisions from community partners and participants.

Results: We aimed to gauge this population in discussion to capture perspectives within the IMG community about contributions to health and wellness. Participants gave a range of alternative contribution pathways other than that of a physician practicing medicine, as well as some challenges and barriers to those alternative pathways, and proposed mechanisms to making changes. Many themes were then conceptualized from three big questions asked, which were regarding Potential platforms for IMG contribution potential IMG roles, Avenues of IMG contribution to community health and wellness challenges, and mechanisms for change Perceived challenges to community health and wellness contribution.

Conclusion: Findings indicate that IMGs believe possess many suggestions and ideas surrounding there are many avenues and platforms for them to contribute to health and wellness in the community and are a source of insight when it comes to community planning if some of their challenges are addressed. Organizations must know that IMGs are willing to fill many important roles in the community, and that they are surely underutilized resources for community health and wellness.

Improving Inter-Cultural Connectivity Thru Cross-Cultural Community Organizing In Canadian Multi-Cultural Society.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Ruksana Rashid, Mohammad Shaikhur Rahman, Fatema Azim, Md Habibur Rahman, Khondoker Morshed, Shaminder Singh, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Background: In Canadian society, a cultural mosaic thrives, wherein diverse cultural groups, languages, and customs coexist harmoniously. This environment allows minorities to uphold their values and practices. Within this rich cultural mosaic of Canadian society, the interaction between these different cultural groups forms a tapestry of diversity and exchange. This dynamic interplay creates a unique blend of traditions, languages, and customs that enriches the collective experience. This interaction isn't merely about coexistence; it's a vibrant dialogue where ideas, beliefs, and practices intermingle, leading to a cross-pollination of perspectives. This diverse interaction doesn't erase individual identities; rather, it fosters a sense of unity through understanding and appreciation of one another's uniqueness. The continuous interaction between cultural groups encourages learning, empathy, and the embracing of differences, contributing to the inclusive and harmonious fabric of the Canadian society.

Approach: Hosted by the Foundation for the Voice of Immigrants in Canada for Empowerment (VOICE), this day-long outdoor event serves as a platform for open dialogue, cultural celebration, and intercultural exchange. It unites members of diverse ethnocultural communities in Calgary to foster a sense of belonging and promote unity. The festival offers a multifaceted program, including discussions on combating racism and religious discrimination, fraud prevention, and financial advice. Musical performances and cultural dances by various ethnic groups enrich the event, creating a vibrant atmosphere. Moreover, the festival features a free BBQ and showcases participating ethnocultural groups, allowing them to share their heritage through traditional clothing, history, and cuisine. Participants are encouraged to wear their traditional attire, reinforcing the celebration of diversity.

Observations: Site was selected as the Bowl at prairie winds park NE after getting approval from city of Calgary officials for the day of 29th July 2023 day long outdoor program. ActionDignity, Calgary Police Service, Scotiabank, and Dashmesh Cultural Centre partnered with the VOICE to organize this event. On top of 500 chicken BBQ, the Dashmesh Culture Centre also provided 500 vegetarian dinners along with snacks and a cultural drink called Chai. Performer from Bangladesh, Vietnam, Philippine, Nigeria, and Nepal did showcase their folk songs, dances, and handcrafts. The site was full of hundreds of people from different communities who enjoyed music, dances, and foods from VOICE and Dashmesh center.

Conclusion: The Summer Multicultural Festival 2023 stands as a testament to Canada's commitment to celebrating its rich cultural tapestry while acknowledging and addressing the persistent challenges of racism, discrimination, and intolerance. This event encapsulates the essence of multiculturalism in Canada. Through engaging discussions, vibrant musical performances, and cultural displays, the festival provides a unique opportunity for individuals from diverse ethnocultural backgrounds to come together, share their traditions, and broaden their horizons.

Understanding Ethnic Differences in the Risk of Cardiovascular Events and Mortality Among Immigrants in Canada: A Scoping Review.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Sneha Annie Sebastian, Inderbir Padda, Yashendra Sethi, & Gurpreet Johal

Abstract | Background: Immigrants make up the largest share of the population in Canada, and one in four Canadians has come to the country as an immigrant. The high level of immigration has resulted in significant ethnic diversity in Canada, with a cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk profile unique to their ethnicity and country of birth.

Methods: We performed a literature search of 6 electronic databases, including the grey literature sources of conferences, theses and dissertations from January 2000 until May 25, 2023. We included pertinent English language literature that summarized the evidence on ethnic differences in CVD risk among immigrants of the different ethnic groups in Canada.

Results: Of the 9968 studies identified, 47 studies formed the basis of the review. Four overarching themes were found, comprising individual characteristics, ethnic differences, gender-related risks, and duration of residence in Canada. Among the different ethnic groups, South Asians had the greater risk of cardiovascular events, in which males had a striking difference in mortality of (42%) compared to females (29%), whereas East Asians had the least risk. No significant difference in the incidence of CVD was reported with the duration of residence. However, East Asians showed a notable exception, with an increase in the incidence of CVD after 10 years of stay in Canada by 40% and 60% among males and females, respectively.

Conclusion: Ethnic inequalities in CVD attributes to a combination of modifiable and non-modifiable risk factors, and this disparity in CVD incidence can be tackled by targeting interventions according to ethnic differences in risk profiles.

Exploring Student Voices: An Analysis of Student Feedback from RISE for Health's 2023 Learning Sessions.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Sanam Sekandari, Rayyan Zuberi, Didem Erman, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Background: The immigrant population faces unique barriers and do not experience the same high standard of health as the non-immigrant population in Canada⁽¹⁾. Youth engagement programs have been shown to strengthen community well-being⁽²⁾. The RISE for Health program develops health sessions tailored to immigrant and refugee youth needs. These sessions aim to empower youth to become health advocates within their communities.

Purpose: Analyze the RISE for Health participants' feedback following the 2023 learning sessions and assess how participants aim to apply what they learned to their lives and communities.

Methods: Immigrant and refugee high school youth participated in a series of RISE for Health learning sessions from July to August of 2023. Following each session, students completed a post-session survey that asked students to provide a rating, suggestions for improvement, and how they will apply what they learned. Students' responses regarding how they planned to apply their newly gained knowledge were implemented into our analysis to assess knowledge uptake and application following participation in the RISE sessions.

Results: Analysis of the post-session surveys indicated that the majority of the participants aimed to apply their newly gained knowledge by informing family members, peers, and their broader community. Participants also highlighted the significance of improving community ties and a desire to become active advocates within their communities to encourage positive, healthy change. Moreover, many participants shared that the sessions motivated them to advance their own health (i.e., improve coping mechanisms, setting healthy goals, etc.).

Conclusion: The RISE for Health Program aims to advance newcomer health outcomes by empowering youth to become active health leaders within their communities. The findings of this analysis suggest that students are completing the sessions with the goal of applying their newly gained knowledge and skills to their communities. Youth engagement within communities is critical to strengthening the capacities and overall standard of health in immigrant communities.

References: (1) Ravichandiran, N., Mathews, M. & Ryan, B.L. Utilization of healthcare by immigrants in Canada: a cross-sectional analysis of the Canadian Community Health Survey. *BMC Prim. Care* 23, 69 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12875-022-01682-2>

(2) Sprague Martinez L, Pufall Jones E, Connolly Ba N. From Consultation to Shared Decision-Making: Youth Engagement Strategies for Promoting School and Community Wellbeing. *J Sch Health*. 2020;90(12):976-984. doi:10.1111/josh.12960

Nurturing Community Bonds Through Online Social Networking Site Based Communications: A Journey During COVID-19.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Ahmad Shaheen & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Introduction: Social networking sites like Facebook and YouTube play a crucial role in connecting people who share common interests, goals, or causes. They facilitate the formation of online communities, providing information, entertainment, education, and support. These platforms also enable participation in enriching online events, contributing to social capital and overall wellbeing.

Approach: At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown, driven by the need for social interaction, I initiated efforts using online social networking platforms. Beginning with small video group chats, these endeavors gradually expanded to larger group events encompassing a diverse range of activities. These engagements encompassed discussions on current topics, cultural presentations, and even live streaming of YouTube content of shared interest. As these activities unfolded, the desire arose to organize more focused initiatives through social networking sites. Consequently, I created an online communication platform named Mims TV and MIMS 24 and I orchestrated Talk Shows, Health Webinars, Religious Programs, and Live Musical Events, all on a scheduled basis. I am continuing these activities of Mims TV in social media even after the pandemic has been over.

Observation: The response from the community was overwhelmingly positive, both in terms of active participation and audience engagement in these programs. The Mims TV and MIMS 24 created a virtual space for social interaction and engagement. These provided a sense of connection and belonging, helping community members combat feelings of isolation. Cultural and religious programs offered familiarity, while health webinars provided valuable pandemic guidance. Diverse activities, including cultural performances and live streams, enriched the experience. In terms of community engagement, we currently have 90,000 community members following this page. The program related to New Community Shopping information has been viewed by 2,100 people. Other programs, such as buying and selling homes and Fashion Vlogs, have been viewed by 1,100 and 1,000 people respectively. Additionally, approximately 30 Reels, focusing on topics such as Grocery prices, Cooking styles, and travel shoots, have also garnered views of 5,900, 3,800, and 2,700 respectively.

Conclusion: This experience emphasizes the pivotal role that social networking sites can play in community development, serving as dynamic spaces that bridge geographical gaps and facilitate meaningful interactions. As we navigate a digitally-driven world, these platforms stand as powerful tools to nurture social capital, promote well-being, and empower communities to collectively grow and thrive.

Collaborative Priority Setting for Enhancing Primary Health Care Access among the Nepalese Community in Canada.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Kalpana Thapa, Mohammad Chowdhury, Bishnu Bajgain, Rudra Dahal, Kamala Adhikari, Nashit Chowdhury, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Background Extensive research concerning potential resolutions to immigrants' healthcare access in Canada is limited, and the viewpoint of immigrant communities regarding priorities and feasible solutions remains inadequately captured. The objective of this article is to portray a research endeavor in which grassroots community members assumed the role of priority-setters for research on primary care access concerns.

Aim: This cross-sectional study aims to solicit input from Nepalese-Canadian immigrants in Calgary to rank ten predefined primary care access topics based on their perceived importance for research centered on solutions.

Methods: A self-administered survey was conducted where ranking options for the ten primary care access challenge themes were provided to the participants. The themes were identified based on comprehensive literature reviews conducted by the members of the program of research. The survey questionnaire was pilot-tested and refined by team members before administering it.

Results: We received 401 responses; of the respondents, 50.37% were men. There were significant differences between males and females in age, educational attainment, yearly household income, and length of stay in Canada variables. Healthcare costs, lack of resources, workplace-related barriers, cultural differences/preferences/perceptions, and transportation barriers were among the top-ranked research priorities by the participants.

Conclusion: There is a growing recognition that health solution priority-setting approaches should embrace interdisciplinarity and collaboration, with community participation as a pivotal factor. This involvement enhances the healthcare system and fosters the creation of interventions that more effectively cater to the community's needs.

Data Governance in Precision Health as a Path to Equity for Racialized Communities.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Arafat Valliani & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Introduction: Human genomics, and by extension precision health, is currently encountering calls to consistently include racialized communities whom, so far, are unevenly involved in this area of health research, care and wellness. In this paper, we discuss the context in which concerns about inclusion in recent human genomics research emerged and how inclusion may be undertaken.

Methods/Approach: Employing transdisciplinary methods from post- and de-colonial science studies, we review the existing literature regarding human genomics, precision health, health disparities and histories of biomedicine in global context, in addition to drawing on collected archival material and anecdotal evidence collected from open-ended ethnographic interviews to chart the bioethical issues involved in introducing precision health to clinical settings particularly for members of racialized communities.

Results/Conclusion: We suggest that the future of equitable genomic research and precision health involving racialized communities must be both inclusive and equitable. One dimension of equity on which we focus comprises genetic data governance among researchers and participating communities.

Adapting Arts-Based Engagement Ethnography for Different Newcomer Groups.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Michelle Zak, Farah Charania, Linnea Kalchos, Veronica Shim, & Anusha Kassan

Abstract | Background. In 2021, Canada’s newcomer community (individuals who have arrived in Canada as immigrants, refugees, or international students within the last five years) had increased significantly to 1 in 4 people (Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada, 2023). For many newcomers, schools and communities are their first experience of Canadian culture and the site in which they learn about the norms of their host culture (Areepattamannil & Freeman, 2008; Berry et al., 2006; Rossiter & Rossiter; 2009).

Methods. An arts-based engagement ethnography (ABEE) is an innovative, culturally sensitive, and multimodal approach to qualitative research conducted with underrepresented communities (Goopy & Kassan, 2019; Kassan et al., 2020). The intersection of social justice principles and ABEE form a unique research process that is participant-driven and easily adaptable to working with newcomer youth and families, allowing researchers to unearth how newcomers experience integration into Canadian society both individually and collectively. Each participant is given a set of cultural probes (e.g., iPad, diary, maps, stationary, and polaroid camera) and asked to create artifacts that document their integration experiences. The content of participants’ artifacts is used to develop individual interview protocols for each youth or family member, followed by a collective interview through focus groups with students or a family interview.

Observations. Results and key learnings from current and past ABEE studies with newcomer youth and families will be presented, including cultural artifacts and integration themes.

Conclusion. We present implications for researchers, as well as graduate students, practitioners, and service providers working with newcomer youth and families.

What People Call People: Language and Reflexivity in Participatory Research.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Batool AlMousawi, Brenna McGillion, Meng Wang, Melody Morton Ninomiya, Tanvir Turin Chowdhury, & Zack Marshall

Abstract | Background: Participatory research, which includes community-based research, patient-oriented research, and citizen science, is an investigative approach that engages community stakeholders as partners in the research process. The increased prominence of participatory research in the world of science signals change, however, there is a noted absence of data that captures who academic researchers are engaging in participatory research, and what language is ascribed to community partners.

Methods: Through Shift: Working for Change in Participatory Research, a survey invitation was sent to 5,480 principal investigators funded by Canadian Tri-Council agencies between 2013-2018. The survey included questions about community stakeholders and their research roles, remuneration, and researcher demographics. Open-text responses were inductively double-coded using in-vivo content analysis.

Results: 1,005 survey respondents who conducted participatory research were asked two questions about community stakeholders: “Which community stakeholders were involved in this participatory research study?” and “What terminology do you generally use to refer to the community stakeholders on your team?”. In addition to selecting from a list of response options such as “community researchers”, and “peer researchers”, respondents provided 440 open-text responses. Terms referred to a variety of different community partners, including people in the education, arts, governance, health, industry, and social justice sectors.

Conclusion: Academic researchers used multiple terms to refer to community collaborators. Knowing this, we hope to examine how power differentials are created and maintained through language, amplify voices that have been historically excluded from science, and advocate for researchers to be mindful of language choices when referring to community partners.

First Steps in Community Engagement and Research: Mapping the Filipino Community Ecosystem in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Heny Panghulan, Pauela Deris, Mohammad Raihan, Nashit Chowdhury, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Background: Community ecosystem mapping is a framework for understanding the intricate characteristics, values, and norms of a specific community. Every community has its unique history, culture, values, and challenges that shape its identity and experiences. Therefore, understanding the community ecosystem helps those who are interested in working with the community to be respectful of the community's culture. This study provides an overview of the Filipino community living in Calgary, Alberta, Canada through community ecosystem mapping.

Methods: In mapping the ecosystem of Calgary's Filipino community, demographic information was obtained from Statistics Canada. Next, information obtained from the Filipino researcher's personal experiences was cross-validated with information gathered from community champions such as non-profit immigrant organizations. Information about the community was also cross-validated with websites that served to inform Filipino newcomers. All the information obtained was then compiled to create the overall mapping component.

Results: Filipinos are the third largest immigrant group in Calgary. The largest religious group among Filipino Canadians is Christianity (93.8%), followed by Islam (0.287%) and Buddhism (0.03%). Given the large number of Christian Filipinos, Christian values are embedded in the Filipino culture. Activities like going to mass with family and attending church events like Simbang Gabi are common in Filipino culture. Among Filipino Canadians, 91.7% are 15 years old and older. The occupations of Filipino workers primarily belong to the service and healthcare industry. A large proportion of adults in the community can be attributed to temporary Filipino workers who arrive in Canada with hopes of achieving a permanent residency status. Filipino international students also account for a large proportion of adults in the community. In the Filipino community, respect for elders is greatly valued and honorifics are often used.

Conclusion: Community ecosystem mapping is an ongoing process and will be used throughout the duration of the project, to ensure that trust is constantly being maintained with the community.

Community Ecosystem Mapping in the Nigerian Calgarian Community: An Exploration for Meaningful Community Engagement.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Tobi Souza, Nashit Chowdhury, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury.

Abstract | Background: Current research highlights a limited knowledge of the barriers Nigerian immigrants face accessing primary healthcare in Canada. Understanding their circumstances can inform public policy that alleviates these burdens and improve their overall health outcomes. Doing so requires understanding the community, its history, cultural spaces, and traditions that encompasses Nigerian immigrants. This project follows a community-based participatory approach that gains insight into the Nigerian community.

Method: Following a model of community engagement adapted by Chowdhury et al. (2022) with the Bangladeshi community, I mapped the Nigerian community ecosystem in Calgary, Alberta. This included gathering my observations as a Nigerian community member, utilizing census and archival data, and meeting with community champions. I also reviewed previous literature involving Nigerian immigrants globally. This multi-faceted community-engaged approach helped me capture the social dynamics and integration patterns.

Results: 24.1% of all Africans in Calgary are Nigerian. Most Nigerians tend to come from the Southern portion of Nigeria, comprised mostly of the Igbo and Yoruba tribes, due to wealthy oil and gas industries, whereas the North consists of the agricultural Hausa tribe. Local socio-cultural organizations, like the Nigerian Canadian Association of Calgary, restaurants like Delish Dining, and religious organizations like the Nigerian Canadian Muslim Congregation Calgary provide communal spaces for Nigerians. Common traditions include fasting and prayer for healing, and many Nigerians look to faith leaders for alleviating medical conditions.

Conclusion: I learned about the Nigerian immigrant community through community ecosystem mapping and developed collaborative relationships with community leaders. I used this information to tailor my focus group questions to their cultural health beliefs and examine the clashes between Nigerian culture and the Canadian healthcare system.

Equitable and Empowered Access to Primary Care: Challenges faced by Immigrant Nigerian Women in Canada.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Tobi Souza, Nashit Chowdhury, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Background: Statistics Canada's 2021 Census reported that 19.5% of recent African immigration (January 2016 to May 2021) to Canada comprised of Nigerian immigrants. Despite the country's unique tribes and cultures, Nigerians are often lumped in with other nations when studying health patterns amongst African immigrants. As more immigrants settle in Canada, understanding the unique challenges they face accessing primary healthcare will help address their needs. A sample of Nigerian immigrant women were interviewed through focus group discussions to understand their experiences and challenges accessing Canada's primary healthcare.

Method: Using a community-based participatory design, eight focus groups were conducted among 41 first-generation Nigerian immigrant women on Zoom. The focus groups were conducted and transcribed in English. A thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) guideline was then performed to identify emerging themes and patterns.

Results: The focus group discussions noted five major themes, following the socioecological model. Intrapersonal level barriers revealed financial pressures due to un/employment and past traumas with physicians. Interpersonal level barriers included difficulties communicating with physicians and dismissal of their health concerns. Institutional level barriers included wait times for primary and emergency services, unavailable female physicians, and limited cultural competency from providers. Community level barriers included religious and cultural stigmas towards mental and sexual healthcare, and policy level barriers revealed extreme costs of prescriptions, dental, and vision care.

Conclusion: Nigerian immigrant women are a unique group as they do not report many language barriers due to speaking English back home, which differs from studies conducted on other immigrants. However, they experience many barriers and their large presence in Canada necessitates an awareness of their health needs in local, provincial, and federal health policy.

Representation of Ethnic Minority Patients in Caesarean Section Clinical Trials: A systematic review and meta-analysis.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Nashit Chowdhury, Maryam Nasr-Esfahani, Fatima Subaita, Lauren Bresee, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Background: Caesarean section (CS) is the most common surgery performed in the world and rates have steadily increased in the last two decades. There are reports of both higher rates of CS and a greater frequency of complications in people with various ethnic backgrounds. We aimed to assess the representation of ethnic minority groups in CS randomized controlled trials (RCT) in the USA and Canada and quantify the trial characteristics that are associated with reporting ethnicities in this systematic review and meta-analysis.

Methods: RCTs that evaluated patients undergoing CS and published between 2002 and 2022 were included. We searched MEDLINE and EMBASE databases and Cochrane CENTRAL register in November 2022. Risk of bias was assessed using Cochrane Risk of Bias (RoB2) tool. Analysis was performed to determine the proportion of RCTs that represented ethnic minorities in CS RCTs and the trial characteristics associated with reporting of ethnicities of the participants. We also conducted a meta-analysis to determine the proportion of ethnic representation within those RCTs reporting ethnicity and the associated trial characteristics. Sub-group analysis and meta-regression were conducted to explore heterogeneity.

Results: A total of 224 RCTs (42 from Canada, 182 from USA) including 61,475 participants were included in the current analysis. 42.41% of RCTs reported ethnicity that included White, Black, Latino, Asian, and others. None of the RCTs reported subgroup analyses based on ethnicities. Having external funding ($p < 0.001$) and obstetrics (e.g., post-partum hemorrhage/infection) related studies ($p < 0.001$) were more likely to report ethnicities as opposed to trials with internal funding and trials that focused on anesthesia and pain-related concerns. In alignment of this, we observed a higher likelihood of reporting ethnicities among studies that included surgical (53.73%) and non-surgical procedures (44.44%) such as therapy or educational intervention compared to those with pharmacological (31.45%) interventions ($p < 0.001$). Unblinded (68.00%) and single-blinded (50.00%) studies more commonly reported as opposed to double-blinded studies (32.03%), which was found statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). Sample size ($p = 0.485$) were not associated with a greater likelihood of reporting ethnicity. Multi-sited study tended to report ethnicities (57.58% vs 43.86%); however, it was not found statistically significant ($p = 0.148$). The pooled proportion of ethnic participants in the studies that reported ethnicity was 0.51 (95% CI 0.41, 0.62).

Conclusion: There is underreporting of the ethnicity in the USA and Canada CS RCT trials and no mention of further subgroup analysis of findings based on ethnicities in the USA and Canadian CS RCTs. Future CS RCTs should focus on recruitment of ethnic minority groups to ensure external generalizability. In addition, if feasible, subgroup analyses based on ethnicity should be conducted to identify if differences in treatment efficacy and safety exist in patients undergoing CS.

Unveiling the Maze of Researcher's Identity: Navigating Insider or Partial Insider Roles in the Community Engaged Research.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Introduction: Community-engaged research (CER) entails collaborative work with individuals who possess lived experiences and are directly impacted by the issues under investigation. Undertaking research within communities introduces a distinctive dimension, where researchers' own identities assume a pivotal role in influencing interactions, perceptions, and research outcomes. In this context, distinct research identities for researchers have been acknowledged in existing literature. The conventional dichotomy of "insider" and "outsider" research identities has been established. Depending on the degree of alignment or differentiation in terms of identity, culture, experience, or affiliation with the community, a researcher can assume the role of an insider or an outsider.

Approach: In this article, we recount our journey in establishing a community-engaged research program within the Bangladeshi-Canadian immigrant community in Calgary, Canada. The research team shares an affiliation with the Bangladeshi-Canadian community, consequently endowing us with an insider research identity. This article encapsulates our experience in this endeavor.

Observation: Initially, we presumed that our community background would grant us a significant advantage in engaging and collaborating with community members, given our shared ethnicity, culture, and identity. Yet, as we embarked on research activities like participant recruitment, interviews, and workshops, it became evident that the community perceived us more as partial insiders from a research standpoint. Partial insider refers to individuals having some affiliation with the group under study, though insufficient to qualify as complete insiders. While the community acknowledged our insider status, they also maintained skepticism about our identity as university-affiliated researchers. Consequently, we needed to establish research relationships at the community level, transitioning from community members to researchers through genuine engagement efforts.

Conclusion: We learned that being insiders of a community does not automatically guarantee immediate and active engagement for the research, as the community may have different definitions, perceptions, or expectations of insiders. We also learned that being partial insiders requires us to be aware and respectful of the diversity and complexity of communities, and to adopt a flexible and responsive approach to community engagement in research.

Outsider Championship of Insider Research: A Collaborative Approach to Community Engaged Research in Cross-Cultural Settings.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Introduction: The researcher's positionality is among the numerous factors influencing community engaged research (CER) outcomes in cross-cultural settings. Factors include community traits, research topic, methods, participation, collaboration level, and communication quality, all intricately intertwined. This intricate interplay precludes a universal approach, emphasizing the necessity of customizing each CER venture based on distinct context and research objectives.

Approach: Our research program addresses challenges faced by immigrant/racialized communities in Canada, marked by considerable racial/ethnic diversity and cultural distinctions. While working with immigrant communities different from my own, I may be seen as an outsider researcher by those communities due to our differing identities. Outsider researchers lack shared identity with their research communities, facing access and rapport challenges. On the other hand, we also had insider researchers from those communities in our team. In this article, we recount our journey in establishing a CER program within several immigrant/racialized communities in Calgary, Canada.

Observation: As outsider yet trained researchers, we possessed expertise and resources that could benefit the community we engaged with, including technical skills, academic credentials, funding prospects, and network connections. Our outsider status also allowed us to bring a fresh perspective and critical viewpoint to the research topic, unburdened by community assumptions or norms. Nevertheless, outsider researchers encounter challenges like mistrust, resistance, misunderstanding, or skepticism within the community. Conversely, our insider team members leveraged their insider knowledge and community access to bolster trust-building, rapport, data collection, and interpretation. Insider researchers also acted as community advocates and allies, equipped to understand and address needs. Ultimately, the outsider researchers assumed a championing role, facilitating the insider researchers' efforts.

Conclusion: Our cross-cultural CER experience illustrated how we managed the challenges and embraced the opportunities stemming from our team's mixed positionality, blending outsider and insider members. The strategy of championing insider research by outsiders, involving facilitation, support, and empowerment, proved instrumental in advancing our research program. We also recognized that adopting either insider or outsider roles mandates sensitivity to community diversity and complexity, alongside a flexible, responsive approach to research engagement.

Work in Progress Abstracts

Defining the Black Population in Canadian Health Research: A Scoping Review.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Marie Claire Uwamahoro, James Idowu, Nashit Chowdhury, Sumedh Bele, Naomi Popski, Francis Boakye, Charles O'Ankrah, Doreen Rabi, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Introduction: Health research in Canada has used various terms or labels to refer to the Black population resulting in a reduction in study comparability and efficiency. Using a broad term like "Black" or its equivalent may not capture the diversity and complexity of the ethnocultural backgrounds of people who are racialized in this way. It may also obscure the nuances of their experiences and health outcomes. This study aims to examine and analyze how health researchers have defined "Black" in their work.

Methods: We are conducting a scoping review where both peer-reviewed databases and grey literature are used to search for articles on health and wellness. We have developed and employed a comprehensive and sensitive search strategy. We are including original articles published in both English and French. The screening process consists of two stages: the title and abstract screening, followed by a thorough examination of full-text articles. Additionally, single citation tracking, and manual search of reference lists will be conducted.

Preliminary results: A total 10,664 articles were identified from the academic databases. The grey literature search yielded 1655 Articles. A total of 3116 duplicates were removed. The screening process is ongoing where about 2517 articles have been screened. Most health researchers are lumping together Black population. Some authors are using different labels without any rationale of application of each label.

Conclusion and significance: Race is a social construct that is often used to identify subpopulations in health research studies. However, using "Black" as a race identifier may be too simplistic and overlook the diversity and complexity of this population. By exploring the reasons behind the use of Black related terminologies, we aim to understand how this population is represented and addressed in health research in Canada.

Caregiving Practices of Older Persons in Africa: A Scoping Review for Transformative Social Work Practice.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Chika Ikeorji & Ajwang Warri

Abstract | Background: In Africa, caregiving of older adults is embedded in the culture and norms such that younger adults provide care for their parents in the home. Some older adults prefer to age in place due to abuse and lack of financial support often reported in residential care. However, in recent times, there has been a change in traditional caregiving practices due to the global increase in migration patterns caused by shifts in family structures and support systems. This scoping review aims to examine the caregiving practices in African communities, the factors that trigger the changing pattern, the impact on older adults, and its implications for transformative social work practice. This research seeks to contribute to the existing literature by offering a deeper understanding of the dynamics of changing patterns in caregiving practices within African communities.

Methods/Approach: A secondary method of data collection will be used to gather relevant information for this study. The literature will be sourced from reputable academic articles and books from various reputable academic databases.

Results/Observations: The findings of this study will provide insights into the caregiving practices of older adults. It will reveal how migration, abuse, and lifestyles have impacted caregiving practices, care recipients, and caregivers. Findings will show how social workers involved in care for older adults advocate, protect, rehabilitate, and educate both care recipients, their families, and communities to enhance the well-being and resilience of older adults in African communities.

Conclusion: The collaboration of family members, policymakers, and social workers will lead to intervention strategies that address the unique circumstances African communities face due to the changing pattern in caregiving practices of older adults.

Navigating the Alberta Health Care System: Pamphlets for Newcomers.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Lucy Yang, Breanna Fang, & Yvette Yao

Abstract | Background: Alberta is the province with the third highest influx of newcomers in Canada⁽¹⁾. While Alberta's healthcare system is designed to be inclusive and accessible, newcomers might face challenges in receiving enough information or understanding its intricacies⁽²⁾. This can delay care or contribute to preventable illnesses. Language barriers can intensify these hurdles. In response, this research project explores the information and cultural considerations required to create a health pamphlet, to enhance healthcare accessibility for newcomers to Alberta.

Approach: The team will first collaborate with healthcare professionals to identify barriers immigrants face in healthcare access. Then, newcomers will be interviewed through focus groups to understand their lived experiences and gather suggestions. Based on their feedback, pamphlets will be designed and translated into multiple languages using professional services. We will partner with newcomer societies for distribution. Finally, the pamphlet's effectiveness will be assessed through interviews with its users.

Observations: Preliminary results indicate that newcomers raise common areas of concern with their access to healthcare. Major areas of concern raised include: 1) no resources that streamline the approach to accessing healthcare, especially in their native language; 2) unawareness of services and resources covered by public health insurance; 3) uncertainty about where and from whom to seek care.

Conclusion: The research demonstrates a need for clear resources to guide newcomers through Alberta's healthcare system. By addressing identified concerns and integrating culturally sensitive information into the pamphlets, we can significantly enhance healthcare accessibility and reduce potential care delays for Alberta's growing immigrant population.

References:

1. Fullerton, M. M., Pateman, M., Hasan, H., et al. (2023). Barriers experienced by families new to Alberta, Canada when accessing routine-childhood vaccinations. *BMC Public Health*, 23(1), 1333.
2. Lane, G., Vatanparast, H. (2022). Adjusting the Canadian healthcare system to meet newcomer needs. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(7), 3752.

Enhancing National Sector GBA Plus Capacity.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Christian Ladores

Abstract | The Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA)'s project, titled “Enhancing National Sector GBA Plus Capacity”, aims to improve the settlement sector’s capacity to mainstream gender equality and Gender-based Analysis Plus in their organizational programming and policies. The research activities of the project support the settlement sector’s knowledge to meet the specific needs and priorities of diverse newcomer populations. Key deliverables include a collective impact model, environmental scan, literature review, and interviews with service provider organizations across Canada.

Fostering Inclusivity through Allyship: A Comprehensive Analysis of Discrimination Policies and Initiatives in Calgary High Schools.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Didem Erman, Aria Ahadzadeh Ardebili, Karam Senjar, Riley Truscott, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Background: Immigrant children and youth still encounter discrimination in high schools. Overcoming discrimination and promoting inclusivity are an ongoing challenge in the education system, requiring comprehensive policies, programs, and strategies. This research aims to investigate the discrimination policy effectiveness, allyship concept integration, and potential gaps within high schools in Calgary, utilizing a multi-method approach. Allyship is the active and intentional support of for marginalized communities, advocating for their rights and standing against discrimination and oppression.

Method: This community-based participatory research employs mixture of methods including environmental scan, literature reviews, semi-structured interviews, and cross-sectional surveys. These approaches provide comprehensive understanding of the current allyship initiatives within the discrimination policies. Surveys targeting high school students, administrators, teachers and parents utilize SPICE framework (Setting, Perspective, Interest, Comparison, Evaluation_ to collect participants perceptions. Semi-structured interviews with high school students, administrators, teachers will help gain deeper insights.

Results: Thorough analysis of the discrimination and allyship policies and initiatives within Calgary high schools, we expect gaining valuable insights into challenges, effective strategies, and areas of improvements to the existing discrimination and allyship strategies. Furthermore, it will determine the necessity for new discrimination and allyship initiatives or policies outlining the fundamentals for successful implementation that fosters a supportive and non-discriminatory environment within Calgary's high schools.

Discussions: This study establishes the basis to comprehension and improving current policies, strategizing new initiatives, and providing recommendations to provide an inclusive, equitable and effective implementation of allyship policies within Calgary's high schools.

Equitable Access Challenges for Primary Healthcare Faced by Egyptian Immigrant Women in Canada.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Salma Zein, Mohammad Raihan, Nashit Chowdhury, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Background: Primary healthcare services are often the first services accessed when one experiences a health issue and where inequities in healthcare access are likely to appear. To date, there is a scarcity of health-related research that has been conducted among Egyptian-Canadian immigrant women. The primary objective of this study is thus to gain a deeper understanding of the nature of primary healthcare access barriers among Egyptian immigrant women residing in Calgary.

Methods: Using a community-engaged research approach, we conducted three focus group discussions (FGDs) among first-generation Egyptian-Canadian women in Calgary. Community-engaged research is a collaborative research approach engaging researchers, community members, and community stakeholders in identifying societal inequities throughout every step of the research process. The recorded FGDs will be analyzed using thematic analysis by generating codes and defining key themes.

Results: There were 14 participants in the 3 FGDs with an average age of 38.1 years. Among the participants, 64.3% were married, and all had university-level education. As the study is currently ongoing, we conducted a preliminary analysis with the three FGD transcripts. Based on preliminary data from conducted FGDs, it is anticipated that barriers will include wait times, communication barriers, and lack of trust based on prior negative experiences with the Canadian healthcare system.

Conclusion: This project focuses on studying equitable healthcare access within an underrepresented immigrant population, with the goal of promoting more research in the field of immigrant health. This project has implications for health policy, as this may help inform and raise awareness about the barriers immigrant women may face when accessing primary healthcare and potential solutions.

Preventing hepatitis associated hepatocellular carcinoma through screening innovation and linkage to care (HbcCare).

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Anayo N. Ofoto, Cari Egan, Cayley Shukalek, Chinedu Diribe, Tanvir Turin Chowdhury, & Mark Swain

Abstract | The Alberta Health funded Cancer Research for Screening and Prevention (CRSP) study is a comprehensive initiative addressing the increasing burden of hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC), a form of liver cancer, primarily driven by hepatitis B (HBV) and hepatitis C (HCV) viral infections. HCC incidence is rising in Canada, with HBV and HCV responsible for over 50% of cases. Despite the availability of effective treatments, gaps in testing and treatment persist, particularly among marginalized, rural, immigrant, refugee, and newcomer communities, in which chronic viral hepatitis has a higher prevalence, exacerbating the HCC burden. The CRSP project aims to bridge this gap by implementing community-centred strategies in Calgary. It seeks to provide low-barrier, accurate Dried Blood Spot (DBS) testing for HBV and HCV (by finger prick), streamline treatment referrals, and enroll individuals at risk into an established automatic-recall HCC ultrasound-based screening program. Key objectives of the CRSP study include establishing grassroots community-led screening programs, documenting, and evaluating patient experiences, linking infected individuals to established HCC screening and viral hepatitis treatment programs, and defining implementation requirements. The project's multifaceted approach encompasses close community engagement, knowledge translation activities, co-identifying research themes, participant recruitment, collaborative data analysis, and taking results directly back to the community. It emphasizes lasting partnerships aligned with community needs. The project, *Preventing Hepatitis-Associated Hepatocellular Carcinoma through Screening Innovation and Linkage to Care* unfolds in three linked phases: strengthening relationships with community organizations, linking HBV and HCV cases to care, and reducing disease burden. Expected outcomes include early detection, reduced HCC risk, improved access to treatment, high-prevalence area identification, and enhanced health outcomes.

Test Your Concept: Proposal Abstracts

Experiences of Black Francophone Patients with Multimorbidity about Navigating The Health Care System in Alberta.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Marie Claire Uwamahoro, Julie Babione, James Idowu, Tasmira Mohib, Sumedh Bele, Naomi Popeski, Doreen Rabi and Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Introduction: Managing chronic disease multimorbidity poses several challenges for both healthcare providers and patients. Multimorbidity disproportionately affects individuals from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and racialized communities. Language barriers and other factors can exacerbate existing health inequities. This study aims to explore the experiences of Black francophone patients with multimorbidity who interact with Alberta's health care system, using an intersectional and collaborative approach.

Methods: The research will employ the patient journey mapping (PJM) method. The study will enroll approximately 50 adults aged 18 and above with multimorbidity. The data will be collected through individual interviews. The participants will also be encouraged to write down their experiences in a journal. To solicit guidance for the interview guide, participant recruitment, and data collection procedures and strategies, we engaged a community advisory committee. Inductive thematic analysis will be used to analyze the data. Based on the findings, a collective patient journey map will be constructed, which will then be presented to the participants for validation. The community advisory committee will play a key role in guiding the knowledge translation and dissemination process. All elements of this research were reviewed by the Conjoint Health Research Ethics Board (CHREB), University of Calgary.

Progress: We held two meetings involving an 11-member Community Advisory Committee (CAC), during which they engaged with the proposed questions. Overall, the CAC members agreed that the questions were well organized. They made minor adjustments to some sentence structures to align with the community's language and cultural context. Individual interviews are starting in the coming weeks.

Conclusion: We propose that this understanding is fundamentally important as it follows that personal situations influence capacity for self-care which can improve health outcomes of racialized patients.

The Influence of the Neighbourhood Built Environment on Leisure and Transportation Physical Activity among Canadian-born, and Recent and Established Immigrants to Canada: A Cross-sectional Study.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Hasti Masihay Akbar, Tanvir Turin Chowdhury, Dana Olstad, and Gavin McCormack

Abstract | Background: In Canada, immigrants, especially recent ones, engage in less physical activity than the Canadian-born population. Their physical activity primarily revolves around active commuting, rather than participating in recreational physical activities. Consistent evidence demonstrates that among the general adult population, the neighbourhood built environment can support or restrict physical activity. However, it remains unclear as to what extent the neighbourhood built environment can support participation and duration of domain-specific physical activity among immigrants, based on their time of settlement in Canada. We aim to assess the associations between the neighbourhood built environment and leisure and transportation physical activity in Canadian-born, recent, and established immigrant adults in Canada.

Methods: We will use cross-sectional national data from 2017-2018 Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS), linked with 2016 Canadian Active Living Environment Index (Can-ALE). Generalized linear regression models will estimate the weighted covariate-adjusted differences in weekly participation and duration of leisure and transportation physical activity between Canadian-born, recent, and established immigrants. We will also use generalized linear regression models to estimate weighted covariate-adjusted associations between the Can-ALE index and leisure and transportation physical activity and test for effect modification by immigration status.

Anticipated Results: We hypothesize that the associations between neighbourhood built environment and leisure and transportation physical activity differ between Canadian-born, recent, and established immigrants.

Significance: Our results highlight the need for targeted health promotion initiatives in high-immigrant, low-walkable neighbourhoods. Our findings might also have the potential to inform urban planning, transportation initiatives, and community development strategies about the unique needs of immigrants.

Community Organizing to Combat Food Insecurity.

12:15 Pm – 02:00 Pm | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Zaman Ara, Tayyiba Khan, & Nusrat Sharmin

Abstract | Background: The proposed project aims to pilot a suspended meal initiative in Calgary, Alberta. Suspended meals involve prepayment by customers who, in turn, are served to those requesting them later. This advance payment by customers caters to individuals in need. The project's objective is to alleviate hunger and cultivate a future society free from deprivation. This initiative strongly encourages community involvement in feeding the underprivileged, ensuring that no one experiences hunger and to combat food insecurity.

Approaches: Pilot period would be fifteen months; six months for advocacy, six months for actual implementation and three months for evaluation. Whole-of-society approach would be the key with three prongs strategies; i) advocacy and community mobilization at different layers of the society to encourage them to contribute for suspended meals, ii) advocacy with food industries to mobilize and encourage them for their participation, iii) promotion and awareness creation among underprivileged people through homeless shelters, social media, community organizations and others for successful implementation.

Results: On a daily basis, approximately 50 suspended meals will be provided to individuals in need, with the intention of assisting 5000-6000 economically challenged individuals throughout the pilot phase. An evaluation will be conducted to assess the project's success and efficacy in addressing "Hunger & Poverty." Subsequent actions will be determined based on the evaluation's outcomes.

Conclusion: Reason for sharing this project in this forum is to invite a novel partnership among donors, industries, civil society, academia, and communities to move forward for a meaningful change in the society. Together, we can make a change!

Seniors Day Care Centre.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Tayyiba Khan, Zaman Ara, and Naman Awan

Abstract | Background: The proposed program is going to be tailored to meet the evolving needs of our aging population, offering a comprehensive and supportive environment for senior citizens. Centered on enriching their quality of life and fostering social engagement, the program strives to establish a safe and stimulating space where seniors can flourish physically, emotionally, and cognitively.

Approach: The center will offer a structured daily schedule that includes a range of activities tailored to individual interests and capabilities. From physical exercises and wellness sessions to cognitive games, creative arts, and group discussions, participants will have opportunities to stay active, maintain mental acuity, and foster meaningful connections with peers. Trained and compassionate staff members will be on hand to facilitate activities, monitor health needs, and ensure a positive and nurturing atmosphere.

Results: This program will provide older adults an opportunity to get out of the house and receive both mental and social stimulation and the continuing care they need. By participating in a variety of engaging activities and interacting with peers, seniors can maintain their cognitive abilities and prevent social isolation. In parallel, caregivers will benefit greatly from this initiative. Juggling the responsibilities of caregiving along with other commitments can be overwhelming and this program will offer them the much-needed relief they deserve and reduce stress.

Conclusion: The success of the program will be measured through a comprehensive evaluation. As the aging population continues to grow, the program aspires to bring a positive impact on their lives and their families, fostering a sense of community and well-rounded support in their golden years.

Grassroots Community Engagement: A Collaborative Approach for Mitigating Senior Isolation in Bangladeshi Community in Edmonton.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Fatima Subaita & Fahami Anis

Abstract | Background: Senior isolation presents a pressing challenge with implications for the mental, physical, and emotional well-being of immigrant and ethnocultural communities in Canada (Seniors Social Isolation in Canada, n.d.). This abstract advocates for grassroots community engagement to uncover factors contributing to senior isolation in the Bangladeshi Community in Edmonton and to co-create solutions that resonate with the community's cultural nuances.

Methods: This root-level community engagement model extends beyond data collection to involve seniors in co-creating activities or intervention strategies through senior involvement. First, we will collaborate with root-level Bangladeshi community organizations in Edmonton to reach out to the seniors. Recruited seniors will share their experiences, challenges, and aspirations related to isolation. They will be engaged in planning and organizing activities that will be culturally tailored to enhance integration into the new Canadian culture and combat senior isolation.

Observations: The impact of community engagement will be evaluated through regular focus groups, interviews, and surveys of the target population where we will capture their perceptions, experiences, and any observed changes. Prior to implementing the activities tailored by the seniors, a baseline assessment of the seniors' levels of isolation, social engagement, and well-being will be conducted. Finally, a comparison will be made between the baseline assessment and the post-intervention data to identify changes and trends. This analysis will help determine whether the activities have effectively addressed senior isolation and contributed to improved outcomes.

Conclusion: Through this grassroots community engagement, a platform will be established to empower seniors, enable cultural preservation, and foster meaningful connections for a more inclusive and cohesive society.

Perceived Barriers and Unmet Primary Healthcare Access Needs of Iranian Immigrant Women in Canada.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Nazanin Abolghasemi Taree, Nashit Chowdhury, Hasti Masihay Akbar & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Background: As Canada continues to be a destination for immigrants, it is imperative to systematically identify the barriers faced by specific immigrant communities to ensure equitable access to health care services. This is particularly important for those communities which are smaller in size and distinguished by their language, culture, and socio-economic backgrounds, and relatively less studied. As such, Iranian immigrant women may face distinct challenges when trying to access primary healthcare (PHC). Considering the limited literature describing their experience with the Canadian healthcare system, we intend to comprehend the perceived barriers and unmet needs of Iranian immigrant women in Canada and explore ways to redress them.

Method: We will employ a community-based participatory research approach, using descriptive phenomenology to learn from the lived experiences of the participants. We will hold 7-10 focus group discussions with a purposive sample of Iranian immigrant women in Calgary, Alberta, using a semi-structured discussion guide. We will employ descriptive analysis for examining socio-demographic characteristics and reflexive thematic analysis to synthesize the findings.

Results: We anticipate discovering a number of barriers that may include linguistic challenges, limited understanding of the Canadian healthcare system, difficulty accessing healthcare centers, or the unfamiliarity of where to seek appropriate care. We also expect to identify certain barriers that may be unique to the Iranian immigrant women population, given their discrete cultural and societal norms. We expect to identify the repercussions of these barriers manifesting in various ways within this population. With more in-depth analysis, we also anticipate identifying the mechanisms underlying these barriers.

Discussion: This study will provide a foundation for understanding the unique healthcare needs and barriers faced by Iranian immigrant women in Canada. It paves the way for more effective strategies that cater to the needs of this community and assists governments in promoting equitable healthcare for all residents.

Variability in Prevalence of Anxiety and Depression Among Visible Minorities in Canada: A Systematic Review, Meta-analysis, and Meta-Regression.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Mohammad Raihan, Chinmoy Roy Rahul, Nashit Chowdhury, Mohammad Chowdhury, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Background: Depression and anxiety disorders are two of the most prevalent types of psychiatric illnesses, and they significantly impact the overall burden of mental illness worldwide. Millions of visible minorities prefer to migrate to Canada due to its friendly immigration policies; however, they start having emotional and mental health problems soon after they arrive in Canada. Understanding the prevalence of anxiety and depression among Canadian visible minorities is essential to devising appropriate mental health interventions and cultivating culturally sensitive solutions for them. This paper proposes a systematic review and meta-analysis of the variability in the prevalence of anxiety and depression among visible minorities in Canada.

Objective(s): The objectives of this study are to conduct: (a) a systematic review of cross-sectional and longitudinal studies, (b) a meta-analysis of the prevalence of anxiety and depression, and (c) a meta-regression of variability of the prevalence of anxiety and depression.

Methods: We will search academic databases for quantitative research articles using specific search terms. Two independent reviewers will screen articles based on titles, abstracts, and full texts. Citation tracking will locate additional articles. Relevant data on anxiety and depression prevalence will be collected. We will assess the quality of the selected study using the JBI critical appraisal checklist for studies reporting prevalence data. We will perform a meta-analysis to obtain a pooled estimate of the prevalence of anxiety and depression. Also, a meta-regression will be performed to identify the source of heterogeneity in the pooled prevalence estimates.

Results: The systematic review will provide a comprehensive, evidence-based overview of the prevalence of anxiety and depression among visible minorities in Canada. We will summarize data in a table based on the study characteristics, such as study location, data sources, sample, type of immigrant group, the prevalence of anxiety and depression, and their measurement tools. The aggregate prevalence of anxiety and depression will be demonstrated using a forest plot.

Conclusion: This research will help us gain a comprehensive understanding of existing research, aiding in identifying the aggregate prevalence of anxiety and depression in visible minorities in Canada to promote appropriate health interventions and policies for improving their mental health.

Factors Affecting the Mental Wellbeing of Immigrants/Racialized Communities in Canada: A Systematic Review and Meta-analysis.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Chinmoy Roy Rahul, Mohammad Raihan, Nashit Chowdhury, Mohammad Chowdhury, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Background: Among the G7 nations, Canada has the highest proportion of foreign-born residents, with one in five Canadians being born abroad. Research indicates that immigrants/racialized communities often experience emotional and mental health challenges upon arrival in Canada. Although there are studies on the factors of common mental health issues, a systematic review with meta-analysis to identify the factors associated with anxiety and depression among immigrants/racialized communities specific to Canada is lacking. This study aims to systematically review and meta-analysis the factors associated with the prevalence of anxiety and depression among immigrants/racialized communities in Canada.

Objective(s): We will conduct a systematic review of quantitative studies about anxiety and depression in immigrants/racialized communities. We will perform meta-analyses of each identified factor (beta coefficient) to obtain their aggregate estimates and explore sources of heterogeneity through a meta-regression.

Methods: Five electronic databases (MEDLINE, PsycINFO, EMBASE, CINAHL, ProQuest) will be searched using a set of keywords. Two independent reviewers will screen articles based on titles, abstracts, and full texts. Additional articles will be added through Grey literature search. We will assess the quality of the selected study using the Newcastle and Ottawa Scale (NOS) for studies reporting prevalence data. We will perform a meta-analysis and meta-regression of the variability of the factors associated with the prevalence of anxiety and depression. Also, a meta-regression of individual factors' beta coefficient variability will be performed.

Results: This study will identify the important factors that are associated with anxiety and depression among immigrant/racialized communities. Data will be presented in tabular form and graphically using a forest plot. Also, publication bias will be assessed using a funnel plot. The identified study's quality will be assessed and classified based on quality indicators of the NOS.

Conclusion: This study will help us to understand the important factors associated with the prevalence of anxiety and depression among immigrant/racialized communities in Canada. The results of this study will also be important to highlight gaps in the current evidence base and priorities for future research directions.

Breaking Barriers for Equitable Healthcare Access: A Systematic Review and Evidence Mapping of Challenges Faced by Racialized/Immigrant Communities.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Mohammad Raihan, Nashit Chowdhury, Nafiza Rahman, Zack Marshall, Regine King, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Background: Population well-being hinges on adequate healthcare access. However, racialized/immigrant communities, originating from diverse cultural and socio-demographic backgrounds, often encounter hurdles in accessing healthcare in their new country. To cultivate culturally sensitive solutions, comprehending these barriers systematically is crucial. This paper proposes a comprehensive overview and evidence mapping of healthcare access barriers faced by these communities.

Aim(s): A systematic review and evidence mapping will be conducted to create an inventory of reported healthcare access barriers and evidence mapping for different perspectives of the barriers.

Methods: Academic and Grey literature databases will be searched for primary research articles using appropriate search terms. Two-step screening for title-abstract and full-text will be conducted to identify relevant articles by two independent reviewers. Citation tracking will be employed to identify any further articles. Pertinent information about the articles and reported barriers will be collected from the finally selected articles. Descriptive and thematic analysis will be used to report study characteristics and to establish the evidence map.

Results: The systematic review will provide a detailed inventory of barriers faced by racialized/immigrant communities. Through the evidence mapping, we will present the global distribution of the research, the prevalent barriers in different communities and healthcare systems, and potential interventions that have been shown to be effective in addressing these barriers. We will illustrate the identified barriers grounding them in the conceptual frameworks such as the Socio-Ecological Model, Andersen Healthcare Utilization Model, and Healthcare Access Barrier Model.

Conclusion: This research will help us gain a comprehensive understanding of existing research, aiding in identifying trends, gaps, and key studies to promote equitable healthcare access for racialized/immigrant communities.

Framing the Underlying Root Causes of Equitable Primary Health Care Access Challenges Faced by Racialized/Immigrant Community: A Community-Engaged Concept Mapping Research.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Mohammad Raihan, Nashit Chowdhury, Nafiza Rahman, Zack Marshall, Regine King, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Background: Primary health care encompasses all the services within a community that address the daily health requirements of citizens across all life stages. Access to primary care plays a crucial role in upholding good health. However, immigrant/racialized communities, arriving from diverse cultural and socio-demographic backgrounds, often face health maintenance challenges in their new country. This situation creates disparities in accessing primary health care services, subsequently impacting their overall well-being.

Aim(s): This study utilizes a community-based participatory research approach to capture racialized/immigrant communities' experiences while accessing primary health care in Canada. The broad objective is to provide a community-vetted framework to explain the barriers to inform interventions that increase healthcare accessibility.

Methods: A community advisory group will be engaged with the research team in all phases of this research. We propose activities in two phases: (i) Group Concept Mapping of primary health care access barriers and (ii) Root Cause Framework Construction of the identified barriers to understanding “what leads to what”. We will perform 20 different FGD sessions with the immigrant/racialized community members to create a barriers list, sort them into piles, rate them and create final cluster maps using concept system software. Finally, we will validate the final cluster solutions with the respondents in separate sessions with them. The root causes of each cluster of barriers will be identified with our trans-disciplinary research team using the “what leads to what” technique and corroborating the diagram with the community through World Café events. Finally, we will conduct one-on-one interviews with different key care stakeholders and develop a cause-and-effect diagram using the Ishikawa model.

Results: The expected outcomes of this project include the development of a framework that can help inform interventions to increase healthcare accessibility of racialized/immigrant communities.

Conclusion: Conducting research on this topic will illuminate the unique healthcare challenges faced by immigrant/racialized communities, enabling the development of tailored interventions that promote equitable access and improved health outcomes.

Empowering Community Voices: A Case Study of Community Members' Involvement in Planning, Conduct, and Dissemination of an Equity Focus Community-Engaged Research Project with Racialized/Immigrant Community.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Mohammad Raihan, Nashit Chowdhury, Nafiza Rahman, Zack Marshall, Regine King, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Background: Patient and public involvement in research offers diverse perspectives enriched by community members' insights, crucially important when considering immigrant/racialized populations. Active engagement is pivotal for authentic experiences and effective solutions. This aligns research with real needs, making it relevant and grounded, fostering a co-creative process for culturally sensitive solutions. Engaging community members bridges academia and lived realities, enhancing research validity while amplifying voices and addressing needs authentically.

Aim(s): We've established a community advisory group (CAG) comprising racialized/immigrant community members to guide all research phases. This study aims to depict researcher-community collaboration experiences. Key questions include: (a) Community members' research involvement perceptions and expectations, (b) Emotional, administrative, and intellectual investments by both parties, and (c) Integrating community involvement in community-based health research processes.

Methods: We will use an explorative single-case study design as a guiding framework to capture the group interaction of CAG members. To explore the perception towards community member involvement in research, expectations, motivation for joining CAG, and work experiences, we will conduct one entry interview and one exit interview with each community partner after finishing all the activities. Meeting documents will help us operationalize the community member involvement as part of the research process in community-based health research.

Results: Through this case study, we will be able to provide useful recommendations needed to follow when involving community members as research partners.

Conclusion: Our study aims to develop a deep understanding of the complex aspects of engaging community members in a meaningful way in the research process. We believe that community members have valuable insights and experiences that can inform and improve the quality and relevance of health research. By involving them in every stage of the research cycle, from identifying research questions to disseminating findings, we hope to foster a collaborative and respectful relationship between researchers and communities.

Perception of Immigrant Communities on Adaptability to Climate-induced Risks and Disasters: A Study on Turkish-Canadian Immigrants in Calgary.

12:15 PM – 02:00 PM | Plaza #3 & Plaza #4

Authors | Mozharul Islam, Didem Erman, Ranjan Datta, & Tanvir Turin Chowdhury

Abstract | Background: Climate change brings uneven implications not only to countries around the world but even to the people living in the same country based on their socio-economic status, access to resources, participation in the decision-making process, and so forth. Climate change affects not only developing countries, but it also affects the developed countries. As a developed country, Canada, especially the Western region of Canada, is observing climate-induced risks and hazards. This Western region is also home to many people with immigrant status, making them more vulnerable. Therefore, this study aims to understand how the immigrant communities (Turkish-Canadian) define the climate change impacts, how they translate their perception to develop adaptation strategies, and whether they take part in the climate decision-making process developed by the City of Calgary.

Methods: In this research, we will employ the relational theoretical approach to explore how the Turkish-Canadian communities experience climate risks and disasters and how their socio-cultural knowledge helped them develop adaptation strategies to cope with climate risks and disasters. Through this relational approach, we will conduct 15 in-depth interviews using a non-structured interview guide. The interview will be transcribed into themes and sub-themes, leading to interpretative thematic analysis. Potential

Outcomes: The study results show that the vulnerability of Turkish-Canadian communities intensified due to their intersectional positionality, i.e., immigrant status in Calgary and systematic inequality, which limited their access to government-led adaptation policies and resources. The results explore that the members of this community use various adaptive mechanisms to cope with climate-induced risks and disasters.

Conclusion: Although there are some studies on immigrant communities and their adaptation challenges, there is a gap in how Turkish-Canadian immigrants perceive climate-induced disasters and the barriers that limit their adaptability to the risks and disasters. Therefore, this study's results will be helpful for researchers and policymakers to develop a holistic approach to fully delineate the climate risks and disasters and minimize structural inequality, increase awareness, build resilience, and engage all the racialized communities in the state-led adaptation strategies.

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