

# An Indigenous Cancer Roundtable as a Way Forward in Canada

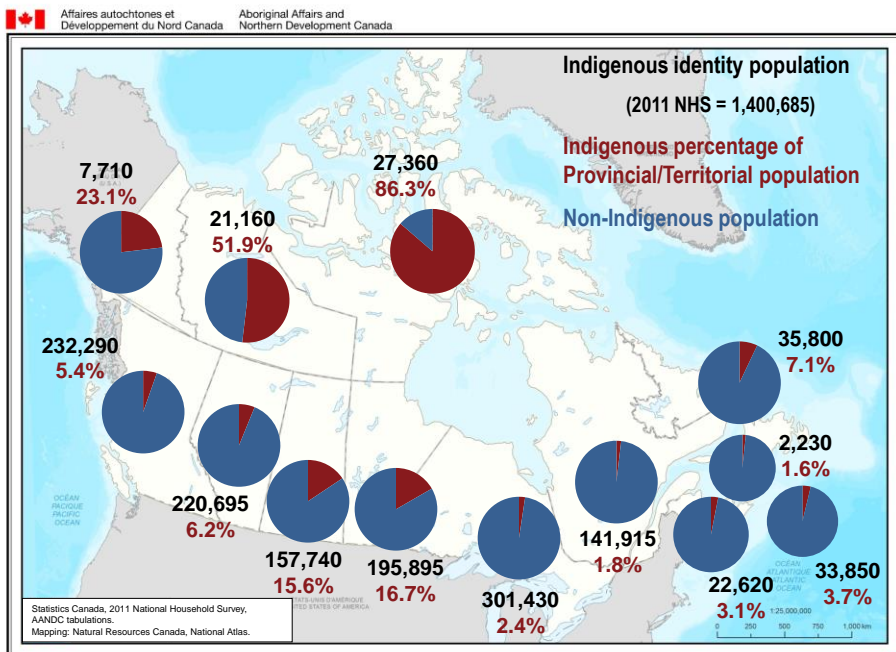
Malcolm King, PhD

Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation

Professor, Health Sciences, Simon Fraser University

Scientific Director, CIHR Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health

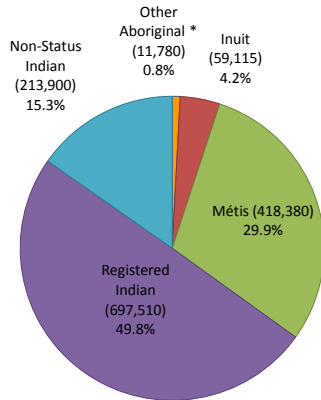
Nadine Caron, Brenda Elias, Becky Gormley,  
Alexandra King, Angeline Letendre



Canada

## Demographics

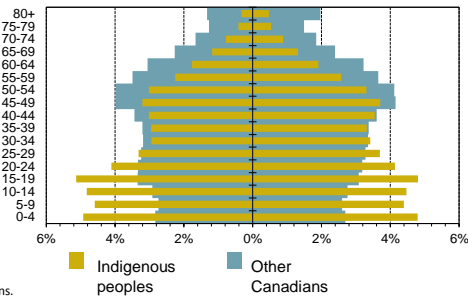
In 2011, there were 1,400,685 Indigenous peoples in Canada. This was 4.3% of the total population.



Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey, AANDC tabulations.

The age structure of the Indigenous population is much younger than the rest of the Canadian population.

46% of First Nations, Inuit and Métis are under age 25 (versus 29% for the rest of the Canadian population).



## An Indigenous Cancer Roundtable as a Way Forward in Canada

- An Indigenous Cancer Roundtable “Cancers & Cancer Research in Indigenous Populations” was held in Vancouver, Canada in September 2014 in connection with the International Group on Indigenous Health Measurement biannual meeting.
- This presentation articulates workshop themes, discusses inequities impacting access, and suggests that data shortcomings represent an important barrier to improving Indigenous cancer outcomes.

## **IGIHM-IAPH Cancer Roundtable 30 Sept 2014, Vancouver, BC**

*Cancer Incidence in American Indians and Alaska Natives*  
Melissa Jim, MPH, Albuquerque, US

*Maori Cancer Experiences and Access to Psycho-Oncology Support*  
John Waldon, MPH PhD, Palmerston North, NZ

*Closing the Gaps in Indigenous Cancer Survivorship*  
Gail Garvey, MEd, Brisbane, AU

*Northern, Rural & Aboriginal Population Perspectives on Enhancing Oncology  
Surgical Care* Nadine Caron, MD, MA, Prince George, CA

*First Nations, Inuit, Métis Pathways and Strategies in Re-Connecting Cancer  
Prevention to Survivorship* Angeline Letendre, Edmonton, CA

*A First Nations Cancer Strategy from Prevention and Screening to Survivorship*  
Shannon T. Waters, MD, MHSc, West Vancouver, CA

## **An Indigenous Cancer Roundtable as a Way Forward in Canada**

### ***Several important themes emerged from the Roundtable***

- Culturally safe cancer care is needed to appropriately treat and care for Indigenous populations.
- The first step is to rectify misclassification of Indigenous status in cancer registries. Intervention strategies cannot be implemented when fundamental data is missing.
- From examples of where this information is appropriately collected, it is evident that cancer rates among Indigenous populations are higher than those in non-Indigenous comparator populations.
- Further, there are significant disparities in cancer treatments, as well as cancer clinical outcomes.

## **An Indigenous Cancer Roundtable as a Way Forward in Canada**

- The inequalities can be explained by examining the barriers that Indigenous cancer patients face in accessing health care systems, in both surveillance and treatment.
- Racism is pervasive in health care practices, and Indigenous patients are falling through the care cascade.
- Research needs to be done to address why treatments are being ended early, and why many are electing to not participate in screening and/or treatment programs.
- Relationships with the community and health care professionals are important in dealing with the anxiety and uncertainty of a cancer diagnosis.

## **An Indigenous Cancer Roundtable as a Way Forward in Canada**

- Change and advancement need to include collaboration with cancer networks and other national partners.
- In order to make significant and competent changes, Indigenous leadership needs to be involved in all stages of the process.
- Research and program delivery cannot be kept in their individual silos; community priorities need to be involved in the decision making process.
- Traditional and spiritual practices need to be integrated into treatment services and programs.

## An Indigenous Cancer Roundtable as a Way Forward in Canada

- The Vancouver Roundtable underscored the need for a national cancer network focusing on First Nations, Métis and Inuit, liaising with an international network.
- *The Canadian Indigenous Research Network Against Cancer* (CIR-NAC) is an action-oriented network aimed at highlighting and addressing gaps in the cancer care and prevention continuum, and the way change is monitored through surveillance and evaluation.
- This nascent network has already achieved some success: a CIHR grant, December 2015. *Taking Action: Canadian Indigenous Research Network Against Cancer*  
PI: Elias, Brenda D; co-I: Caron, Nadine R; King, Alexandra; Letendre, Angeline D

## Cancer in the Context of Indigenous Wellness

- The Indigenous Cancer Roundtable was held in Vancouver, Canada on 30 Sept 2014 in connection with the International Group on Indigenous Health Measurement biannual meeting.
- Another part of that meeting was the Indigenous Wellness Indicators Day, jointly held with the First Nations Health Authority of BC, along with CIHR-IAPH.
- On 3 Oct 2014, experts from several countries were brought together to share their knowledge and unique insights with respect to Indigenous Wellness.
- Alexandra King will be presenting information from this workshop as part of her Thursday morning plenary presentation entitled *Wellness, in the Context of Illness*.

## **A Synthesis: Indigenous Wellness Indicators Day**

A collaboration of the CIHR  
Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health, the First Nations Health Authority of British Columbia and the International Group on Indigenous Health Measurement

