

Building Reconciliation at the U of S

College of Pharmacy and Nutrition – Division of Pharmacy: Jaris Swidrovich, Kevin Riffel, Yvonne Shevchuk, Jason Perepelkin, Kishor Wasan



Integrating Indigenous Learning Outcomes in the Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) Program

DESCRIPTION

The U of S College of Pharmacy and Nutrition will admit the first cohort of students into its brand new entry-to-practice Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) program in September 2017. The curriculum design and associated assessment learning commitments (Competency Based Assessment and Decision Making) of the PharmD program will incorporate Indigenous learning outcomes, as well as other methods of Indigenizing the program and College. Employing Indigenous content delivery styles, and renewed practices of assessment and evaluation that are consistent with Indigenous ways of knowing, learning, and doing will be an important shift in realizing this Indigenization process of our PharmD program.

Indigenous learning outcomes have been drafted by a First Nations faculty member using Bloom's Taxonomy and proposed in a way that each year students will build on their learning from the previous year(s) as they approach higher-level learning outcomes. Moving forward with the "nothing about us without us" approach, a grant application has been submitted to allow the First Nations faculty member, with the assistance of an undergraduate or graduate student, to visit a number of First Nations communities for consultation.

While Indigenous learning outcomes are being integrated to improve the competence and confidence of pharmacy students on their road to becoming health professionals who will be working with Indigenous clients and patients, the ultimate reason for the integration of Indigenous content is for the benefit of each and every Indigenous patient, client, and community that graduates of pharmacy will interact with in their careers. Not only will integration of Indigenous learning outcomes directly respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action, it will strengthen our students' ability to provide culturally safe care.

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PURPOSE

Indigenous Canadians experience considerable health inequities that require both reactive and proactive action toward reconciliation. Pharmacists are the most accessible health professionals and are often ranked as the number one most trusted professionals. Pharmacists and pharmacy schools in Canada

have an incredible opportunity to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada's Calls to Action as a means of closing the health care gaps that Indigenous Canadians continue to experience.

The accreditation of pharmacy degree programs across Canada

do not currently mandate the inclusion of Indigenous content and, as such, critical information about Indigenous history, health, and cultural safety is either not included, partially included, or delivered within a limited-enrolment elective course. The Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy (BSP) program at the U of S

continues to deliver select Indigenous content, too.



SUCSESSES AND CHALLENGES

CHALLENGES:

Limited financial and human resources to coordinate the integration of Indigenous learning outcomes is a significant challenge, as well as the knowledge, experience, and comfort levels of faculty and staff in teaching Indigenous content and/or teaching in an Indigenous way.

SUCSESSES:

The involvement and leadership of an Indigenous faculty member has been instrumental in moving forward in a good way. Some successes thus far include, but are not limited to: approval of the new PharmD program with the inclusion of Indigenous learning outcomes, scheduling of a half-day faculty education and

development workshop on Indigenous history, health, cultural safety, and Indigenizing pharmacy education, and engagement of students in Indigenizing the College with the creation of an Indigenous Engagement Committee for students. Both pharmacy and nutrition have already responded to student feedback on increasing

Indigenous learning in the curriculum and improving support for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students in this area. Relationships have been developed with numerous Indigenous stakeholders and communities, which will help guide this continued process.

HOW IT BUILDS RECONCILIATION

This initiative builds on reconciliation by first providing the "truth" necessary to move forward to reconciliation. While the efforts of the College are connected to all seven of the TRC Calls to Action related to health, the inclusion of Indigenous learning outcomes in the PharmD program is a direct response to

Calls to Action #22, 23, and 24.

While there are countless interpretations of what reconciliation means, there is a unique interface of Indigenous traditional and sacred medicines with Western medicine (prescription and over-the-counter pharmaceuticals).

Reconciling the relationship of the pharmacy community with our Indigenous communities will further facilitate harmonious integration of traditional and sacred medicines with Western medications and therefore promote a holistic approach to health and wellness .

Through honouring Indigenous ways of knowing, learning, and doing in the classroom and elsewhere in the PharmD program, we are also hopeful to build reconciliation by attracting and retaining Indigenous students who feel comfortable, supported, and celebrated by our College.