Introduction to Traditional healing practitioners/knowledge and methods: working with the Aboriginal patient

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OBJECTIVES

- To share some basic knowledge in the life of a First Nations Person

- To share some basic information in the area of Traditional Healing Practitioners;

- Q & A

Understanding the past to understand the present;

- Education & changing economy-migration
- Loss of Language and life concepts within language and how that is changing, a 'waking up is happening'
- Social issues: housing, other…

- Addictions and recovery movement
- Relationships of the past

…these and other issues may be a part of the life of the patients we serve….

What is a Traditional Healing?

- Traditional Healing is a process where the whole body may be addressed in the care of an individual; physical, spiritual, mental, emotional conditions and are equally important in the healing process

- Wellness means being in a state of balance with oneself, family, community and the larger environment...a sense of connection

- Culture and Spirituality are the frameworks of treatment developed by First Nations Communities (front line workers in the social and health field) both community and family have a key role in helping individuals regain their sense of balance (which can include Health Care Providers, Traditional Healing Practitioners and other frontline workers)

What is a Traditional Healer?

- Traditional Healing Practitioners may be male or female, they have gone through a lifetime of teaching and lessons in many aspects; use of natural medicines/herbs, song and dance, prayer and sacred healing ceremonies (sweats, fasting, healing circles, other)

- May have 'helpers' who may translate (language and instructions) and or aid in the 'doctoring' of patients

- May be known as Spiritualist, herbalist, seer, medicine person, healer, elder

Understanding further….

- Spiritualist; focuses on the spiritual well-being of a person, might recommend lifestyle changes to the individual or family and makes offering to various spirits.

- Herbalist; uses knowledge of traditional medicinal plants to treat specific ailments and illness

- Seer; communicates with spirits that assist in the diagnosis in order to restore good health

- Medicine People; engage in ritual, ceremonial activity and prayer

- Healer; heals in a variety of ways, uses the gift of touch and or energy work

- Elder; considered exceptionally wise in the ways of culture

Philosophies

- Many traditional practitioners believe we each carry our own answers and solutions through the spirits that are connected to us, therefore it is the spirits that guide the traditional practitioner on how to assist individuals seeking healing or answers

- Traditional Practitioners 'assess' each individual through non-judgmental listening, individuals are asked to focus on what is causing them the greatest distress and speak directly to the Creator as they engage in the ceremonies or practices of healing

- Traditional Practitioners stress that the work they do must be by invitation from the individual themselves (shows the patient is attending freely and honestly and with an open heart and spirit, belief in traditional approaches also important)

Baawaating Family Health Team and our experience….

- Use of language and teachings aiding in the collection of information eg. Patient health histories

- Acknowledgement of relationships and protocol attached to those relationships through the use of language

- Comfort for the patient, access to 'own' people by choice

Return to Traditions, beliefs, use of language, ceremonies = Health

Successful integration of all gifts contributes to wholistic well-being!
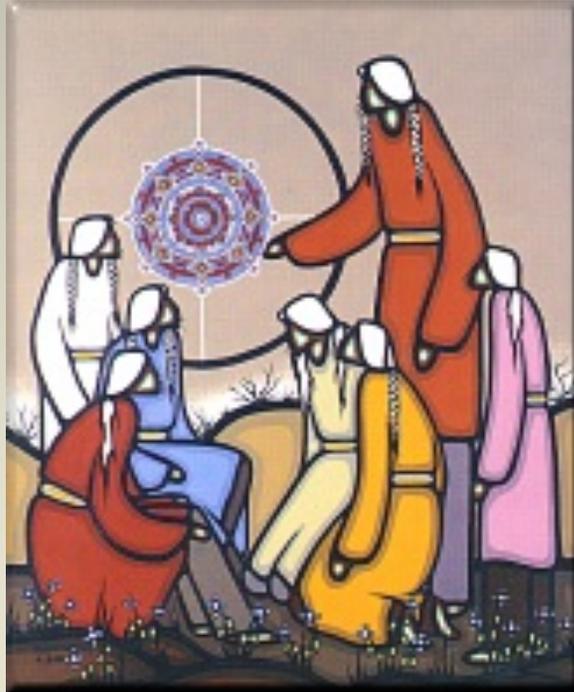
Chi-miigwech for your interest in gaining some knowledge in working with the Aboriginal Patient and potentially...their Traditional Healer/Practitioner