



Health Equity, Race and COVID-19

Moderator: Samantha Peters (She/Her)



Acknowledgement Of Land



The University of Ottawa Centre for Health Law, Policy and Ethics is located on unceded Algonquin Territory.



Question #1

In an article titled “Covid-19 and the Decolonization of Indigenous Public Health” by Lisa Richardson and Allison Crawford, they wrote that:

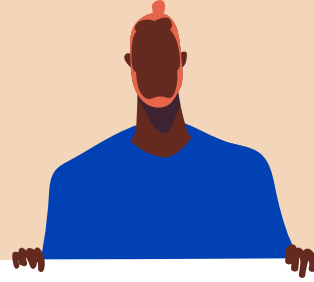
Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island, the land now known as North America, have suffered waves of infectious diseases since the arrival of Europeans more than 500 years ago, including small pox, the Spanish flu, tuberculosis (TB), H1N1 and now COVID-19.

Although public health measures such as social distancing and the adoption of hygiene practices have been Canada’s approach to containing COVID-19, these measures require people to have access to housing, water, food and income security, which are often inadequate in Indigenous communities.

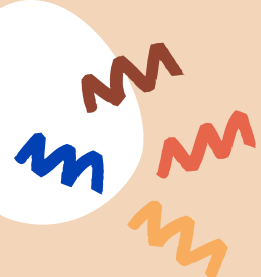
Such deficiencies in basic determinants of health have led to global calls for health-equity approaches to COVID-19 that urgently address the social determinants of health in Indigenous communities specifically.”

According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs,

“The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic poses a grave health threat to Indigenous peoples around the world. Indigenous communities already experience poor access to healthcare, significantly higher rates of communicable and non-communicable diseases, lack of access to essential services, sanitation, and other key preventive measures, such as clean water, soap, disinfectant, etc. Likewise, most nearby local medical facilities, if and when there are any, are often under-equipped and under-staffed. Even when Indigenous peoples are able to access healthcare services, they can face stigma and discrimination”



**what does a decolonial approach
to discussing Health Equity, Race
and COVID-19 look like?**



Question #2


China was the first country to report cases of COVID-19 and since then, anti-East Asian racist comments and violence has surged worldwide.

According to the Chinese Canadian National Council for Social Justice, since the onset of COVID-19, there have been over 600 incidents of anti-Asian racism reported on elimin8hate.org. Of those 600+ incidents, 65% of the reported cases have been verbal harassment, nearly 30% of incidents have been assault (such as targeted coughing, spitting and physical violence), and 60% of all reported incidents have been made by women. Most reported incidents occurred in public spaces like sidewalks and parks (45%) and the majority of incidents have been reported by those 19-54 years old.

With respect to where these incidents have occurred, 28% are in Vancouver, 26% in Toronto and 3% in Ottawa.

In an effort to put an end to anti-East Asian racism, the City of Toronto partnered with the Chinese Canadian National Council for Social Justice (CCNC-SJ) and community partners to create a campaign that focuses on confronting stereotypes and myths about East Asian communities.

In a recent CBC article titled “Winnipeg's Asian community speaks about racism during COVID-19”, a Manitoba campaign called *The Act to End Racism*, which ran until the end of October 2020, called on people to share their stories of racism related to COVID-19 and encourages them to report it.



**what should a post-pandemic recovery
plan include in order to help address
the increase in Anti-East Asian
racism and xenophobic sentiments?**

The illustration features four stylized human figures from the waist up, holding a large white banner. From left to right: a man with a beard in a dark blue shirt, a woman in a yellow shirt, a man in a blue shirt, and a woman in a red shirt. The background is a solid light orange color. Decorative elements include a blue circle with orange wavy lines in the top left, a rainbow and a yellow circle in the top right, and a white circle with blue and orange wavy lines in the bottom left. There are also some brown, rock-like shapes in the bottom right corner.

Question #3

Black Canadians are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and it is due to a wide range of factors including:

- Working conditions (for example, not having access to personal protection equipment);
- Working multiple precarious front-line jobs which in turn means that they are in contact with more people;
- Living conditions, such as crowded, multigenerational homes and living in shelters; or
- Pre-existing medical conditions that can increase risk, which are often associated with poverty.

Thus, the lack of data is literally hurting Black Canadians.



