

**APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF MOHLTC FUNDED PROVINCIAL CAPACITY BUILDING RESEARCH PROGRAM ENTITLED "URBAN ABORIGINAL HEALTH COUNTS: ADVANCING URBAN ABORIGINAL POPULATION-BASED HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND HEALTH SERVICE EVALUATION IN ONTARIO"**

Currently in Ontario there is a lack of both population based urban Indigenous health status and health care use data as well as evidence-based guidelines, standards and templates for Indigenous health service evaluation. This presents a major challenge for health service planning. The Well Living House, in partnership with 4 urban Indigenous health service providers received funding from the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care to conduct a research project that would address these gaps. The project is titled: "*Urban Aboriginal Health Counts: Advancing Urban Aboriginal Population-Based Health Needs Assessment and Health Service Evaluation in Ontario*". The goal of the overall project was to enhance the responsiveness, relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of urban Indigenous health services by working in partnership with Indigenous health service providers and additional urban Indigenous policymakers to: **A) Develop urban Indigenous population based health status and health care utilization data sets and B) Establish an evidence based approach to urban Indigenous health services evaluation using this data.**

In order to achieve these objectives, the following components are being carried out as part of the research study:

- The implementation of iHIKE, a provincial urban health information and evaluation network made of up of front line workers and other important stakeholders
- Building on our experience with respondent driven sampling (RDS), focusing on the health and health care access of urban Indigenous people in the Toronto, Hamilton, London and Kenora
- A policy relevant approach to data analysis in collaboration with Indigenous service providers and Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs)
- The development of evidence-based guidelines for urban Indigenous health service evaluation based on a review of the literature and input from an expert panel

Intrinsic to each study component will be the active translation of knowledge. This co-development and application of population health data and evaluation results will in turn translate into urban health services for Indigenous people that are more responsive, relevant, effective and efficient for both Indigenous specific health and mainstream services providing care to Indigenous populations. Furthermore, the capacity of Indigenous communities and health researchers to sustain and advance this work for future generations will substantively increase. A conceptual model of the research study highlights the different components as well as the overall vision for this project (figure 1).

**Figure 1. Conceptual Model for *Urban Aboriginal Health Counts: Advancing Urban Aboriginal Population-Based Health Needs Assessment and Health Service Evaluation in Ontario***



## RESEARCH APPROACH

The WLH is an action research centre focused on building and sharing evidence to support Indigenous infant, child and family health. The work of WLH is informed by both Indigenous and mainstream academic knowledge and expertise. WLH is located within the Centre for Research on Inner City Health (CRICH) of St. Michael's Hospital (SMH), and is co-governed by SMH and a Council of Indigenous grandparents.

In keeping with ethical requirements and evidence based best practices, the Well Living House engages in a **participatory action research approach**, drawing on our own research experiences as well as recommendations for and successful models of community-based participatory Indigenous health research. Our approach attempts to balance the power relationships between Indigenous community research partners; additional governmental, data, and public health stakeholders; and academic research team members throughout the research process, from initiation to dissemination, all the while maintaining rigour and policy relevance. Our methods of Indigenous community research engagement and health data partnership have been tested and refined over the past decade.

This research is being carried in partnership between the Well Living House and four Indigenous health service partners:

- 1 Seventh Generation Midwives Toronto (SGMT)
- 2 Dedwadadehsnye>s Aboriginal Health Centre in Hamilton
- 3 Southwest Ontario Aboriginal Health Access Centre (SOAHAC) in London
- 4 Waasegiizhig Nanaandawe'Iyewigamig Health Access Centre in Kenora.