



FACT SHEET 1: Introduction to Community-Based Research

Defining Community-Based Research

Community-based research (CBR) is based on community involvement, community relevance, partnerships based upon mutual respect and equal opportunity to contribute, appropriate methods, and ethical review. The goal of CBR is to develop research that is culturally and community meaningful, that results in positive outcomes for participating communities and other stakeholders, and that is grounded in a strong research methodology.

HIV and AIDS Community-Based Research with Aboriginal Communities

CAAN leads and supports CBR projects about HIV and AIDS in Aboriginal communities. We incorporate CBR in the context of research with and for Aboriginal communities, programs, and projects. Working on research with Aboriginal communities means involving the community in all decision-making, developing a project that is relevant to the community with community direction, and using research methods that are identified as community relevant yet scientifically sound.

- **Community Involvement:** community members understand and are active in all aspects of the research process – including identifying the research issue/question, collecting and analyzing data, and reporting and applying the results.
 - Aboriginal participation is demonstrated in all stages of the research process, for example: team development, needs assessments, identifying research question(s), collecting and analyzing data, and reporting and applying research results.
 - In the context of HIV and AIDS research, Aboriginal people living with and affected by HIV and AIDS are actively included in all aspects of the research process from planning through to final reporting.
- **Community Relevance:** the research provides information that benefits the community where the research takes place.
 - The diversity of Aboriginal communities throughout Canada is acknowledged and honored, including communities defined by constitutional/legal status, geographic region, economic status, gender, sexuality, cultural/spiritual beliefs, values, and practices.
- **Equal Partnership:** all partners – community and academic, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal – have an equal voice in deciding how the research will be accomplished.
- **Relevant Methods:** research must meet scientifically accepted research standards and also be understandable in the community.¹
 - All research projects emphasize partnership, collaboration, and flexibility while reflecting and promoting a balance between culturally respectful, traditional indigenous ways of gathering information, western research methods and ethical conduct.
 - **Ethical Review:** all initiatives must be ethically reviewed by an approved institution (usually a university research ethics board [REB]) and approved to be sure that participants are not harmed by any aspect of the research process.

¹ CAAN Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network, 1-902-433-0900