

Scientific focus area: other

TITLE: Improving Chronic Illness Management with the Apsaalooke Nation: The *Baa nnilah* Project

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BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE: Since 1996, members of the Crow Nation and faculty and students at Montana State University have worked on a successful community-based participatory translational research partnership. Through a community-based process, we expanded our focus to develop and test a translational intervention research project to improve chronic disease management with and for members of the Crow Nation. American Indians experience high rates of health disparities, including disparities in chronic illness prevalence rates, hospitalization rates, and mortality rates.

METHODS: Existing models of chronic illness management include aspects that are not completely consonant with the Crow culture, neglecting community-identified factors that affect disease management including historical trauma and discrimination. To understand facilitators and barriers to chronic disease management, we conducted qualitative interviews with Crow Indian men and women with a chronic disease diagnosis. We asked participants to tell their story about what it is like to manage their disease.

RESULTS: We used these data to develop a model of chronic disease management and an intervention – *Baa nnilah* - to improve management specific to the Crow Nation.

CONCLUSIONS: This project will add to the existing science of health disparities by using a community-developed and culturally centered intervention as a vehicle for change and a community-based participatory research approach in a partnership between a university and an American Indian Nation.

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