

Promising Practices for Strengthening Primary Care

Global Spine Care Model



The challenge

Back and neck pain have consistently been the leading causes of disability in Canada and remain among the most common reasons people seek primary care. In Manitoba, First Nations, Inuit, and Métis populations experience a disproportionate burden of injuries, including both acute and chronic conditions such as spinal disorders, compared to non-Indigenous populations.

The promising practice

The Global Spine Model of Care is an evidence-informed model of spine care that provides culturally safe, non-pharmacological treatment for managing spine-related health issues. It follows the Global Spine Care Initiative Model of Care, which includes triaging patients to the most appropriate member of the primary care team for the treatment of spine and spine-related health conditions. By offering services within the Cross Lake nursing station, this model helps alleviate the burden of travel, making treatment more accessible and closer to home in a northern community.

Example impacts

Since October 2023:

- Community members with spine and musculoskeletal health needs have improved access to care in their communities, including:
 - Spine care services in an interdisciplinary team environment composed of medical, mental health, and public health providers.
 - Telehealth options with medical providers based at academic hospitals, enhancing clinical offerings and collaboration.
- Providers have improved access to patient Electronic Medical Records (EMRs) and charts to review and update patient information in real-time.

“This program changed people’s lives by helping with their pain relief and being able to get that treatment in their own community instead of having to travel hours to get it elsewhere.”

– Patient partner



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Keys to success

- **Collaborate with the community** to understand their needs and ideas, ensuring culturally safe and relevant care.
- **Provide flexibility in clinical services**, including appointment times, to better meet the needs of community members.
- **Provide ongoing education** on the use of promising practice specific tools to support use.
- **Maintain a clinical database** summarizing patient utilization and clinical outcomes to inform continuous improvement of service quality.



Lessons learned

- Regularly convene community members, including providers, in-person to improve the practice. This approach fosters trust, provides valuable insights into community needs and ideas, and allows for the practice to evolve over time.
- A commitment to continuous reflection on the part of clinicians, researchers, and community partners is essential for developing a promising practice, particularly when working with equity-deserving populations.

How can I learn more?

Contact the organization.

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Why was this summary created?

Cross Lake Band Health Services participated in Healthcare Excellence Canada's (HEC) Strengthening Primary Care (SPC) program. SPC brought together 20 primary care organizations from across Canada to advance practices to improve access to safe, including culturally safe, team-based primary care.

This promising practice summary was co-produced with Cross Lake Band Health Services to help others learn about their work and generate discussion about how similar approaches could be adapted and applied elsewhere.



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