Impact of Historical Trauma on American Indian Health Disparities

Donald Warne, MD, MPH
Oglala Lakota
Director, Master of Public Health Program
North Dakota State University

May 7, 2015
Pine Ridge Indian Reservation
Pine Ridge Reservation
Kyle, S.D.
Pine Ridge Indian Reservation
Indian Health Service Areas
# American Indian Health Disparities

## Life Expectancy in Years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>74.1</td>
<td>79.5</td>
<td>76.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPAIHS</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>71.0</td>
<td>67.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disparity</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Average Age at Death in ND (2005-2010):

- **75.7** years in the White population
- **54.7** years in the American Indian population
AI Health Disparities

Death rates from preventable diseases among AIs are significantly higher than among non-Indians

• Diabetes 208% greater
• Alcoholism 526% greater
• Accidents 150% greater
• Suicide 60% greater
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Dakota</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Dakota</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Underlying mortality data provided by NCHS (www.cdc.gov/nchs). Rates are per 100,000 and age-adjusted to the 2000 US Std Population (19 age groups, Census P25-1130) standard.
Diabetes Death Rates
(Rate/Per 100,000 Population)
Alcohol Related Death Rates
(Rate/Per 100,000 Population)
Cancer Death Rates
(Rate per 100,000 population)

Smoking Disparities by State

- WI: 56.0% (American Indian Rate), 20.8% (State Rate)
- NE: 54.5% (American Indian Rate), 18.6% (State Rate)
- MN: 51.7% (American Indian Rate), 21.1% (State Rate)
- SD: 49.1% (American Indian Rate), 20.4% (State Rate)
- ND: 47.9% (American Indian Rate), 19.5% (State Rate)
Traditional Tobacco ≠ Commercial Tobacco
2.5 times as many AI/ANs as whites live below poverty level

Adults ≥18 years who live below federal poverty level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AI/AN</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CDC Health Disparities and Inequalities Report 2011, MMWR, Vo. 60
Poverty in North Dakota
Historical Context

1492
Historical Context

Map showing the United States in 1830.
Historical Context

1860
State Ticket.

For Governor.............. Stephen Miller, of Stearns.
For Lieut. Governor... Chas. D. Sherwood, of Fillmore.
Secretary of State...... David Blakely, of Oilston.
Auditor of State......... Jas. McIlraith, of Nicollet.
State Treasurer........... Chas. Schuyler, of Washington.
Attorney General....... Jordan E. Cole, of Rice.
Clerk Supreme Court.. Geo. F. Potter, of Houston.

County Ticket.

For State Senator.......... Thomas Simpson.
For Representatives......... Earle S. Youmans.
                        Thomas P. Dixon.
For Sheriff.............. Lynch J. King.
For Treasurer............. Mathew J. Norton.
For Surveyor............... N. Felix Hibbert.
For Coroner................ Edward Llyt.

The State reward for dead Indians has been increased to $200 for every red-skin sent to Purgatory. This sum is more than the dead bodies of all the Indians east of the Red River are worth.
AI/AN Population by County

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171) Summary File, Table P1.
Inter-Generational Basis for Chronic Disease Disparities Among American Indians and Alaska Natives

Historical Trauma

Genocide

Chronic Disease Disparities
Historical Trauma

Nazi Concentration Camp

Wounded Knee
Perceived loss related to: Land, language, spiritual ways, family ties, self respect, trust, culture, respect by children

Anxiety, depression, loss of concentration, isolation, poor sleep quality

Anger, avoidance, discomfort around white people, shame, rage, fear, distrust

Coping behaviors: Unhealthy lifestyle behaviors (smoking, substance abuse, poor diet, sedentary behavior)

Dysmetabolism
Inter-Generational Basis for Chronic Disease Disparities
Among American Indians and Alaska Natives

Historical Trauma

Gestational Stressors

Birth

Chronic Disease Disparities

Boarding School Experiences
- Abuse (physical, sexual)
- Neglect
- Abandonment
- Forced Removal
- Loss of culture & language
- Forced Christianity
- Lost traditional parenting & family structure

Genocide

© Warne & Lajimodiere 2012
**Historical trauma is the collective emotional wounding across generations that results from massive cataclysmic events – Historically Traumatic Events (HTE)**

- The trauma is held personally and transmitted over generations. Thus, even family members who have not directly experienced the trauma can feel the effects of the event generations later.
Inter-Generational Basis for Chronic Disease Disparities Among American Indians and Alaska Natives

Historical Trauma

Gestational Stressors

Childhood Stressors

Birth

Chronic Disease Disparities

Genocide

Boarding School Experiences
- Abuse (physical, sexual)
- Neglect
- Abandonment
- Forced Removal
- Loss of culture & language
- Forced Christianity
- Lost traditional parenting & family structure

WIC

FDPIR

Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Abuse (physical, sexual)
- Neglect
- Substance Abuse in home
- Mental Health Dx in home
- Witnessing violence
- Divorce
- Food insecurity
- Family member in prison

© Warne & Lajimodiere 2012
Inter-Generational Basis for Chronic Disease Disparities Among American Indians and Alaska Natives

Historical Trauma

- Genocide

Gestational Stressors

- Boarding School Experiences
  - Abuse (physical, sexual)
  - Neglect
  - Abandonment
  - Forced Removal
  - Loss of culture & language
  - Forced Christianity
  - Lost traditional parenting & family structure

- Childhood Stressors
  - Adverse Childhood Experiences
    - Abuse (physical, sexual)
    - Neglect
    - Substance Abuse in home
    - Mental Health Dx in home
    - Witnessing violence
    - Divorce
    - Food insecurity
    - Family member in prison

- Adulthood Stressors
  - Adverse Adulthood Experiences
    - Alcoholism & SA
    - Suicide rates / death rates
    - Poverty / Poor nutrition
    - Racism
    - Role models
      - Few positive
      - Many negative
      - Parenting

Chronic Disease Disparities

© Warne & Lajimodiere 2012
Inter-Generational Basis for Chronic Disease Disparities Among American Indians and Alaska Natives

**Historical Trauma**
- Abuse (physical, sexual)
- Neglect
- Abandonment
- Forced Removal
- Loss of culture & language
- Forced Christianity
- Lost traditional parenting & family structure

**Gestational Stressors**
- WIC

**Childhood Stressors**
- FDPIR

**Adulthood Stressors**
- Alcoholism & SA
- Suicide rates / death rates
- Poverty / Poor nutrition
- Racism
- Role models
  - Few positive
  - Many negative
  - Parenting

**Chronic Disease Disparities**

**Boarding School Experiences**
- Abuse (physical, sexual)
- Neglect
- Abandonment
- Forced Removal
- Loss of culture & language
- Forced Christianity
- Lost traditional parenting & family structure

**Adverse Childhood Experiences**
- Abuse (physical, sexual)
- Neglect
- Substance Abuse in home
- Mental Health Dx in home
- Witnessing violence
- Divorce
- Food insecurity
- Family member in prison

© Warne & Lajimodiere 2012

Next generation
Does Racism Still Exist?

May 10, 2014 – Grand Forks, ND (UND)
Does Racism Still Exist?

May 7, 2014 – Waddington’s Auction House
Does Racism Still Exist?

May 7, 2014 – Waddington’s Auction House
## Significant Challenges

### Social Determinants
- Poverty
- Trauma
- Politics
- Inattention/Neglect
- Racism
- Inequity

### Outcomes
- Health Disparities
- Education Inequality
- Generational Poverty
- Ongoing Racism
- Worsening Inequity
- Suffering and Death
Specializations/Tracks

- NDSU MPH
  - Health Promotion (CHES)
  - Management of Infectious Diseases
  - Public Health in Clinical Settings
  - American Indian Public Health
MPH Curriculum

• Core Courses
  – 18 Credits

• Specialization Courses
  – 18 Credits

• Practicum and Master’s Paper
  – 3 Credits each

• Total Credit Hours
  – 42
Specializations/Tracks

American Indian Public Health

- **Required Courses**
  - American Indian Health Policy
  - American Indian Health Disparities
  - Cultural Competence in Indian Health
  - Research Issues in Tribal Communities
  - Case Studies in Indian Health

- **Elective Courses (Choose 1)**
  - American Indian Elder Care
  - Indigenous Food Systems and Nutrition
  - Other MPH Course
“Peace comes within the souls of men when they realize their oneness with the Universe, when they realize it is really everywhere, it is within each one of us.”

~ Black Elk