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Indigenous Network Researchers' Perceptions of Readiness to Practice Indigenous Health Research

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The concept of Indigenous Readiness to Practice (RTP) encompasses the capability of healthcare professionals to execute their responsibilities competently and effectively. Indigenous RTP takes into account the distinctive cultural, historical, and social background of Indigenous people and their contribution to delivering culturally appropriate health and education services. The aim of this knowledge translation initiative was to utilize the Indigenous RTP framework and identify the skills required for a researcher to operate within the field of Indigenous health.

Eleven researchers and staff members from an Indigenous health research network participated in a knowledge translation event that combined Western and Indigenous qualitative research methodologies, using a talking circle format. The participants were queried about the competencies necessary for conducting ethical Indigenous health research.

Eleven key areas were recognized as the foundation of Indigenous RTP research, including: On-boarding experiences, relational disposition, cultural immersion, decolonized practice, educational experiences, personal attributes, professional development experiences, clinical experience, social experiences, Indigenous professional support, cognitive aspects, and research skills.

Although there was considerable overlap with the domains of Indigenous readiness to practice, there were also distinct competencies specific to Indigenous health researchers. This study will serve as the basis for creating and utilizing an evaluation tool to track changes over time in an individual's preparedness to conduct health research within Indigenous contexts.