

Community-based, participatory research on *H. pylori*: making microbiology results meaningful to participants

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The Canadian North *Helicobacter pylori* (CANHelp) Working Group conducts community-based, participatory research in Arctic Aboriginal communities to address community concerns about health risks from *H. pylori*. While *H. pylori* transmission has decreased in developed countries, evidence suggests that Arctic Aboriginal populations have a disproportionately high prevalence of the bacteria. Our collaborative initiative aims to describe the burden of disease, and seeks to identify effective public health strategies to reduce associated health risks. This research links Northwest Territories and Yukon community representatives, health care practitioners and health care decision makers, with faculty from various disciplines at the University of Alberta.

A component of our research involves culturing *H. pylori* from gastric biopsies obtained from participating community members. From these cultures, housekeeping genes have been sequenced to identify strain types and determine relatedness within households and communities. An important element of this work is the dissemination of research results in a manner that is meaningful to a variety of audiences. Because of differences in knowledge structures and world views between Aboriginal communities, health officials and researchers, the development of effective strategies for the dissemination of meaningful microbiology results is essential to successfully address our community-driven research goals. This process requires collaboration with community representatives to understand which results are of interest to community members and how they would be best presented. The process through which these decisions were made and the methods of dissemination chosen by community representatives will be described in a case study of the Aklavik *H. pylori* Project.