

Wayne Warry^{1,2} PhD, Alain P. Gauthier^{1,3} PhD, John C. Hogenbirk¹ MSc, Kristen M. Jacklin^{1,4} PhD, Roger P. Strasser^{1,4} AM, Elizabeth F. Wenghofer^{1,2} PhD, Nancy L. Young^{1,2} PhD & Lorraine M. Carter^{1,5} PhD
¹Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research, ²School of Rural and Northern Health, ³School of Human Kinetics & ⁴Northern Ontario School of Medicine at Laurentian University, Sudbury, Ontario and
⁵Centre for Flexible Teaching and Learning, Nipissing University

- People in Northern Ontario have poorer health status with culture and geography posing unique challenges to their wellbeing.
- Our applied research program aims to improve access, delivery, and quality of care for remote, Aboriginal and Francophone populations and examines health human resources and telemedicine as a means to enhance quality of care for all residents of Northern Ontario.
- Our program uses ethically and culturally appropriate research with continuous involvement of knowledge users including the North East and North West Local Health Integration Networks, Aboriginal and Francophone Health Organizations to improve the health of Northern Ontarians.

1. Aboriginal Health

Aim: Develop and evaluate evidence-based and culturally appropriate health and mental health care services approaches for Aboriginal peoples that are transferable to other communities.

I. The Best of Both Worlds: Develop, pilot and evaluate a culturally safe, jurisdictionally integrated and inter-professional approach to the care of First Nations patients with complex co-morbid chronic and mental health illnesses with a focus on diabetes, dementia and depression.

II. ACHWM: a) Adapt and implement the Aboriginal Children's Health and Well-being Measure (ACHWM) for diverse First Nations to ensure cross cultural relevance; and b) evaluate the use of the ACHWM in programs and decision making.

3. Health Human Resources (HHR)

Aim: Focus on essential aspects of training and scope of professional practice for physicians that are unique to northern and rural communities.

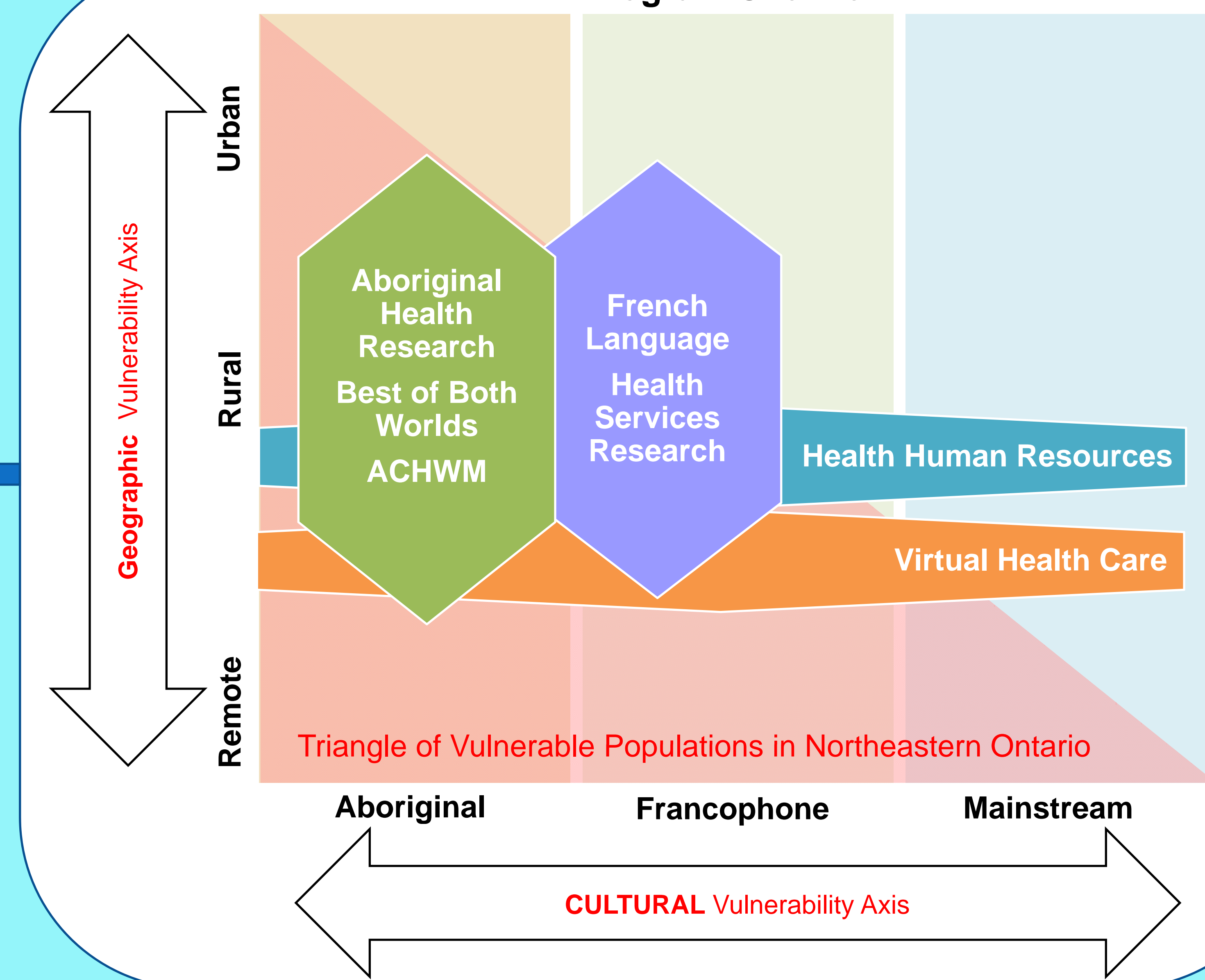
I. Identify unique aspects of rural and northern physicians' scope of practice;

II. Evaluate how health professional education, including continuing medical education and interprofessional collaborative practice, can be adapted to the specific needs of these physicians;

III. Investigate whether NOSM admission processes ensure that students are representative of the northern Ontario population; and

IV. Examine Aboriginal and Francophone NOSM student outcomes to determine if they practice in representative communities.

Program Overview



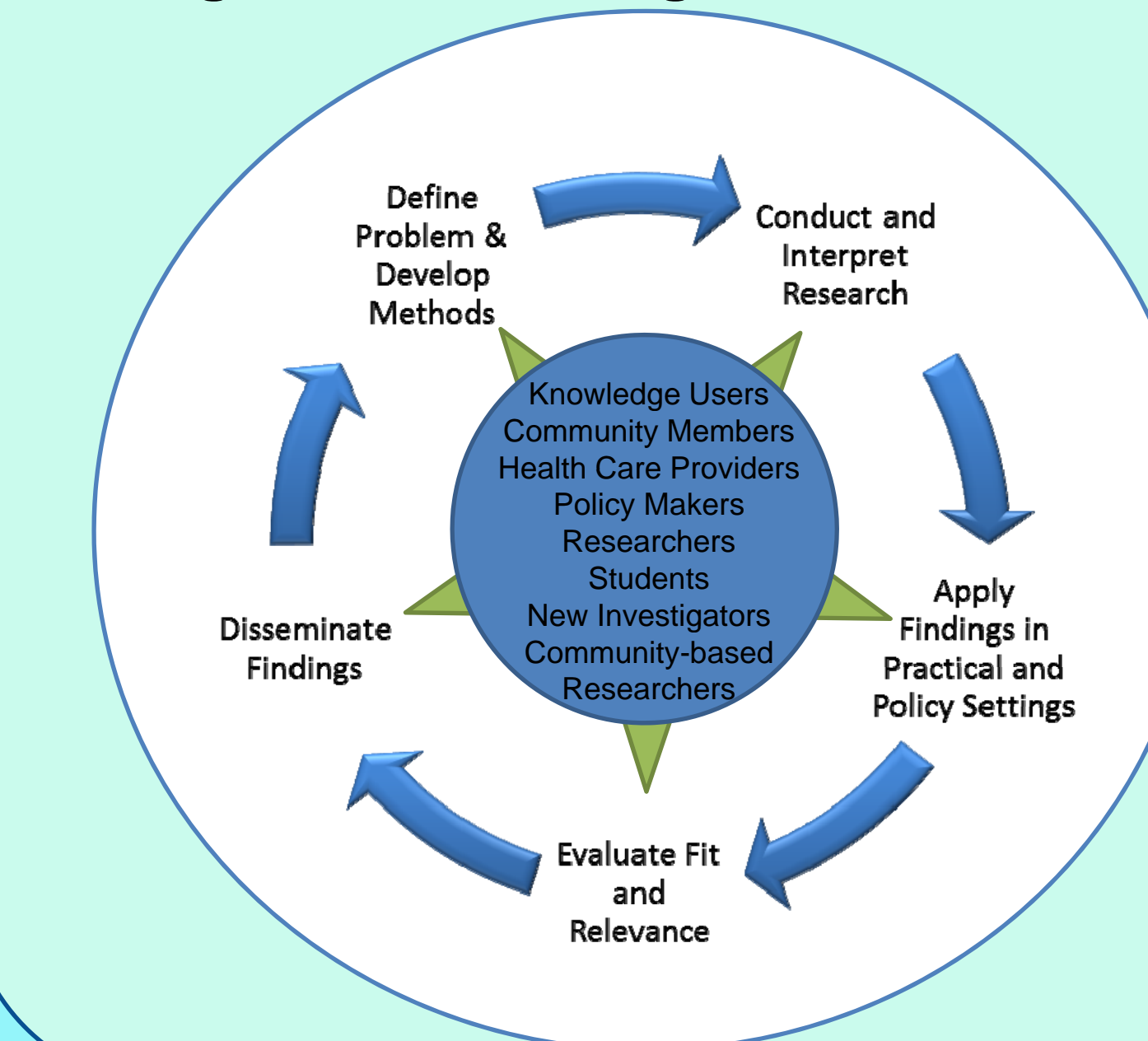
2. Francophone Health

Aim: To evaluate how Francophone culture and language influences practice patterns and quality of care for patients.

I. Describe the practice characteristics of physicians serving Francophones in Ontario's rural and northern communities; and

II. Assess whether physicians' language of service affects the quality of care received by Francophones living in the Ontario's rural and northern French speaking communities.

Integrated Knowledge Translation and Exchange



List of Knowledge Users

Anishinabek Nation
Chiefs of Ontario
Family Health Teams (e.g., City of Lakes)
Les Centres de santé communautaire
Les Réseaux santé en français du Nord et Moyen-Nord de l'Ontario
Mnaamodzowin Health Services
NE & NW Community Care Access Centre
NE & NW Local Health Integration Network
Nishnawbe Aski Nation
Noojowin Teg Health Centre
Northern Ontario
Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
Ontario Telemedicine Network
Sudbury District Health Unit
Treaty Three
Wikwemikong Unceded First Nation

4. Virtual Health Care (In collaboration with the Ontario Telemedicine Network-OTN)

Aim: To evaluate how virtual care provision of health, mental health and addictions services can be integrated into the current suite of health and social services delivered to vulnerable and special health needs populations in northern Ontario.

I. Examine how virtual health services are being used by vulnerable populations.

II. Assess whether virtual health initiatives create health system efficiencies while improving access and quality of care for vulnerable populations, including First Nations.

III. Examine how e-health modalities improve the efficiency and effectiveness of health provider training, continuing medical education and interprofessional communication.

Acknowledgements

"Improving Health Equity for Northern Ontarians" is funded by the Health System Research Fund, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. The authors are grateful to Vincent Guerin from CRaNHR for his assistance with the design of this poster.