

### Assess, Redress, Re-Assess:

The First Nations Lung Health Project “Assess, Redress, Re-Assess: Addressing Disparities in Respiratory Health Among First Nation People” is currently underway in two communities: Beardy’s/Okemasis and Montreal Lake Cree Nation. The purpose of the project is to assess the lung health of community members. Based on the results of the assessments, the communities and the University of Saskatchewan are working together to address the gaps in lung health among community members.

### Determinants of Reduced Respiratory Health:

It is known that environmental, social, life-style and health services delivery factors may have an effect on the respiratory health. These factors may lead to chronic bronchitis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), obstructive sleep apnea, asthma, and reduced lung function. This study is being conducted to better understand how these risk factors influence respiratory health in First Nations people.



### Building Capacity:

The Project is an ideal venue and model for building capacity in Indigenous communities. Kathleen McMullin, Lac La Ronge Cree Nation, is the Project Manager and Research Assistants include students from Beardy’s/ Okemasis and Montreal Lake First Nations. The Research Assistants were trained and certified as Spirometer Technicians by the Saskatchewan Lung Association. They have also acquired clinical skills in measuring blood pressure, height, weight and allergy skin testing. The students can carry these skills into future employment and the communities in turn will benefit from their work.



### Collaboration and Reciprocity:

In the spirit of reciprocity, the Project is gifting the Health Clinics with new Spirometer equipment. Participating schools will each receive a donation and community suppers and gatherings are being held. Adult participants receive an honorarium and parents are presented with gift cards for sharing their knowledge regarding their children’s health.

### Benefit to Communities:

The information gained will benefit the lung health of all rural Saskatchewan people. Community members who participate are given a copy of their test results which may be useful to them in managing their overall health. Results of the study will be shared through local newsletters, community radio, community suppers, academic journals and scientific conferences.

### Data Collection:

Questionnaire & Clinical Assessment - 4 Parts:

- 1) Interviewer-administered questionnaire
- 2) Measurements: height, weight, waist, blood pressure.
- 3) Lung function spirometer breathing test: measures the amount and speed of air during exhalation. Persons with below normal tests are directed to their family physicians for follow-up.
- 4) Allergy skin prick test: measures participants’ reaction to common allergens including cats, local grasses, mold, house dust mite.

*Adult Cohort* - Began 30/05/12. 734 adult community members have participated.

*Child Cohort* - Began 06/03/13. An estimated 975 children will be tested at their schools.

*Environmental Home Assessment* - Data collection will begin in the next several months.

### Next steps:

- “Addressing & Redressing” phase of obtaining community feedback and collaboratively designing intervention strategies
- “Reassessment” phase of follow-up questionnaires, clinical tests and collection of stories to evaluate intervention effectiveness
- Compare common incidences and nature of lung diseases among First Nations people living on reserves in rural Canada.
- The results will equip these communities to approach the causal issues, and will point the way in Canada for action in these areas.

### Aboriginal Framework

