

Alberta Primary Care Strategic Forum | May 3, 2025

Exploring the Patient Medical Home Model for Indigenous Primary Health Care Delivery in Alberta

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CALGARY



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en santé du Canada

Conflicts of Interest

The speakers have no conflicts of interest to declare.

Funding Disclosures

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The IPHCPR network is funded by CIHR under the leadership of the Institute of Indigenous People's Health.

Acknowledging the Land

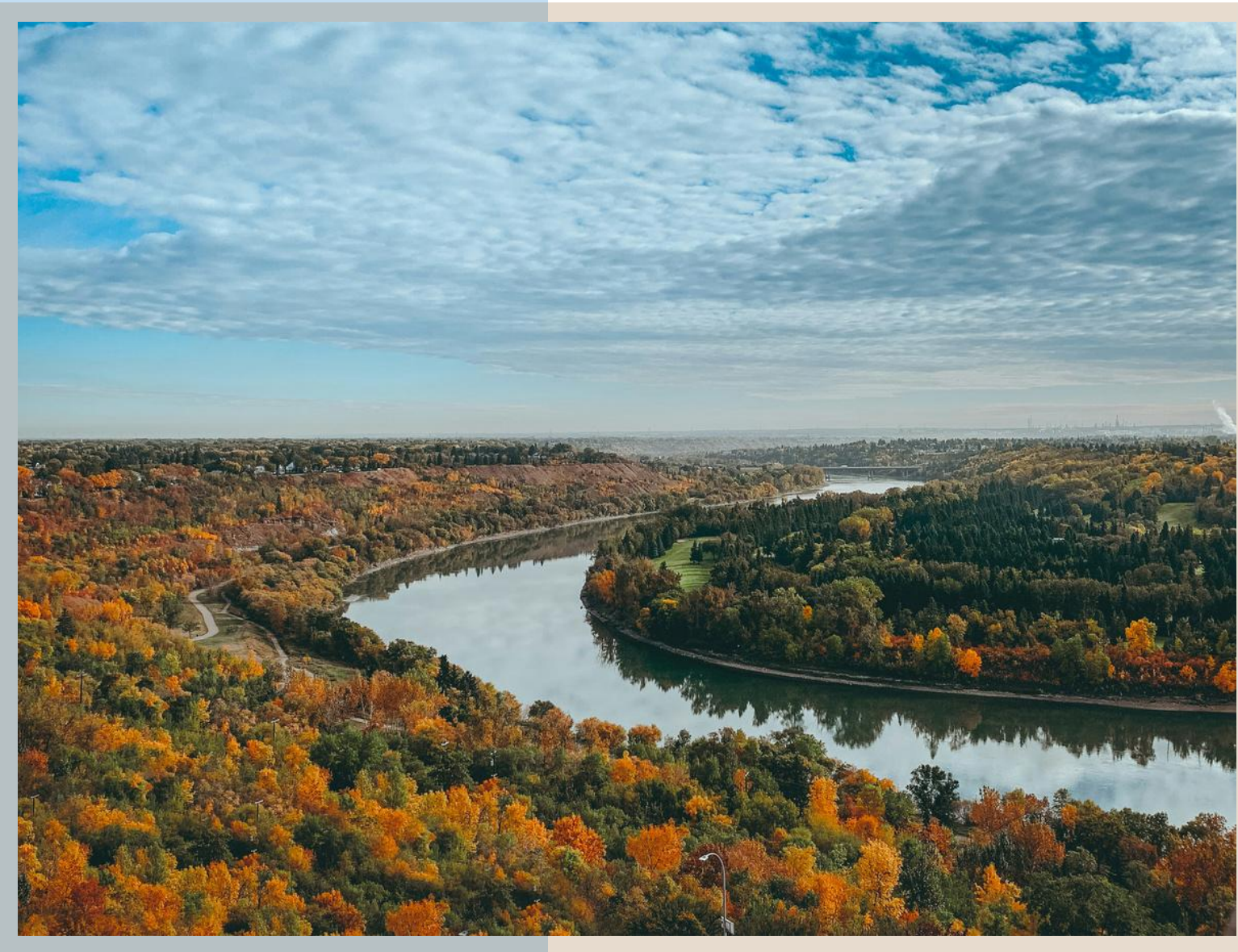


Photo by [Darby P.](#) on [Unsplash](#)

We acknowledge that our work takes place on the traditional territories of Alberta, Canada, of the many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit whose footsteps have marked the land for centuries before us.

The land is our teacher. The Elders who carry knowledge from time immemorial have generously shared teachings on world views, values and the interconnected ways of knowing. Teachings from Elders have greatly enhanced our understanding of broader conceptions of wellness, and the role of the land in promoting our health and wellness.

Outline

10:15 - 10:45 AM	Presentation on previous engagements exploring the patient medical home model for Indigenous Primary Healthcare delivery
10:45 - 11:00 AM	Roundtable Discussion: Question 1
11:00 - 11:15 AM	Break
11:15 - 11:45 AM	Roundtable Discussion: Questions 2 and 3
11:45 - 12:00 PM	Group Discussion and Wrap-Up

About Us



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Nominated Principal Applicant, IPHCPR Network

About the Indigenous Primary Health Care and Policy Research (IPH CPR) Network

Vision: A renewed and transformed primary health care system that promotes wellness and health equity with Indigenous populations.

Mission: Support Indigenous communities, health researchers and health systems partners to engage in research that renews and transforms PHC systems, that in turn, improves health outcomes with Indigenous Peoples.

Aim: Build capacity for engaging with transdisciplinary research methods and knowledges in defining critical innovations for transforming PHC.

Three Pillars: (1) Engagement & Reciprocity, (2) Capacity Building, and (3) Knowledge Mobilization.



IPH CPR Network Logo created by Dion Simon

Learning Objectives

The purpose of this interactive workshop is to:

1. Describe the key attributes and functions of the Patient Medical Home (PMH) model.
2. Understand the challenges and opportunities in adapting the PMH model for Indigenous populations.
3. Collaborate to identify critical factors for developing and implementing an Indigenous-focused PMH in Alberta.

Table Materials

**Findings from the March
2023 Expert Dialogue**
(digital only)



**Themes from the March
2023 Expert Dialogue**
(one copy per person)



**Individual Facilitation
Package**
(one copy per person)

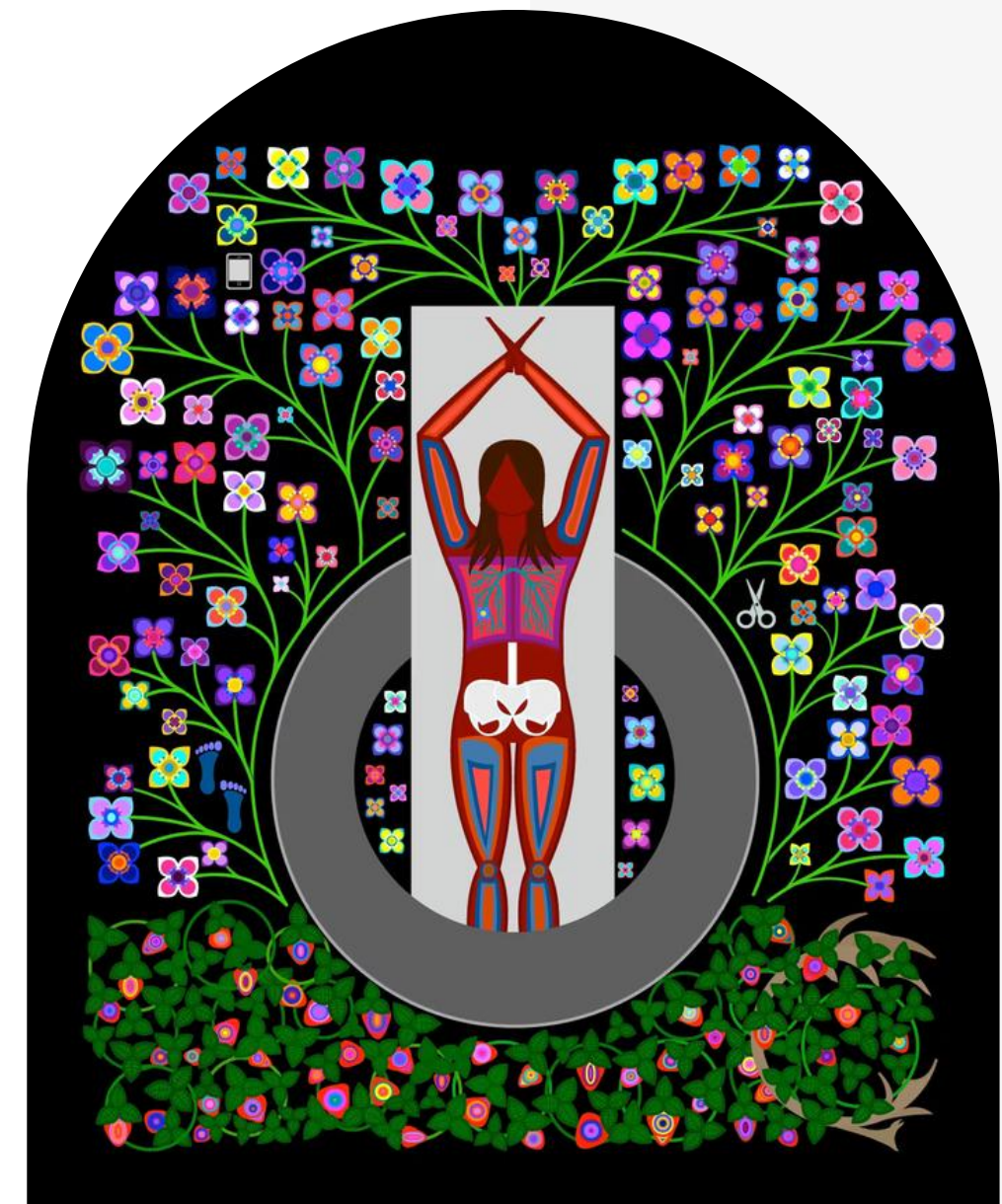


**Group Discussion
Notes Sheet**
(one copy per table)



Background

- Indigenous people continue to experience access barriers to care and diminished quality of primary health care (PHC) services.
- Indigenous patient-reported healthcare experiences highlight the persistence of systematic discrimination by health professionals.



'So far from Denedeh' by Lisa Boivin helps to bridge the gap between Western medicine and Dene traditional knowledge.

PHC Systems Transformation

- The evolution of Indigenous PHC arose from the inability of Western health services to adequately meet the needs of Indigenous communities.
- PHC transformation has been identified as a key pathway to achieve health equity for Indigenous peoples, where PHC services are underpinned by the values and principles of the communities they serve.

Recommendation #1 of the Indigenous Advisory Panel as part of the Modernizing Alberta's Primary Care System Initiative:

- “Support First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples across Alberta to access or connect with a culturally safe medical home and primary health care provider or physician (Alberta Health, 2023).”

What is the Patient Medical Home model?

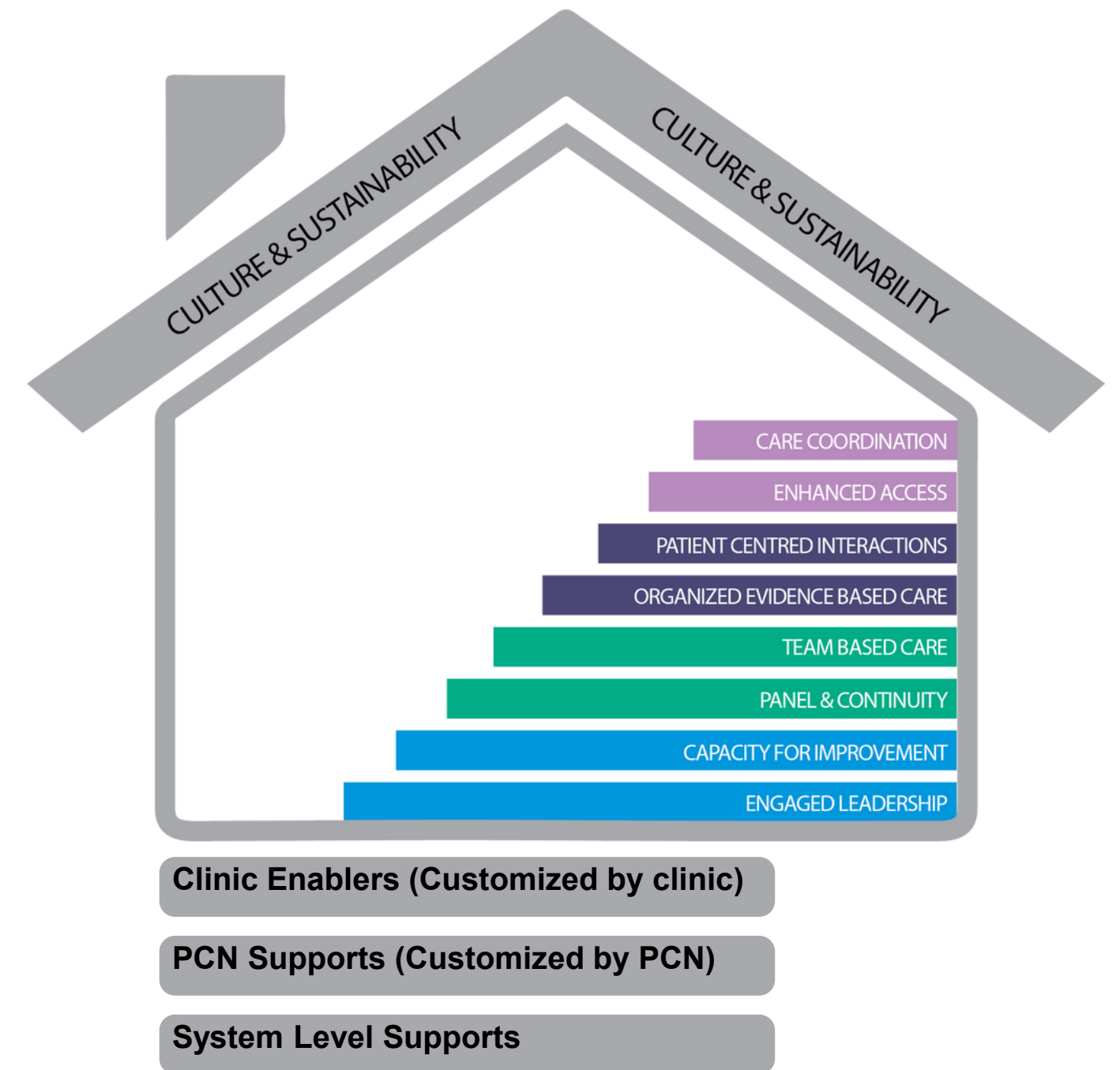
- The Patient Medical Home (PMH) model is also referred to as the 'medical home' or 'health home'.
- The model is proposed to enhance primary care delivery by providing team-based, patient-centred care for a registered patient cohort, thereby improving patient experience and quality of care.



Source: "Patient Medical Homes" (Prince Edward Island Government, 2024)

The Patient's Medical Home in Alberta

- In Alberta, the PMH had been adopted within Primary Care Networks (PCNs).
- **Eight implementation elements** were identified to develop a replicable, sustainable model for implementing the PMH across PCN clinics.



PMH model figure adapted from albertadoctors.org.

Move to Regional Primary Care Networks

Goal:

- To support care coordination in a way that works for patients in specific catchment areas.

Five key areas of the proposed model:

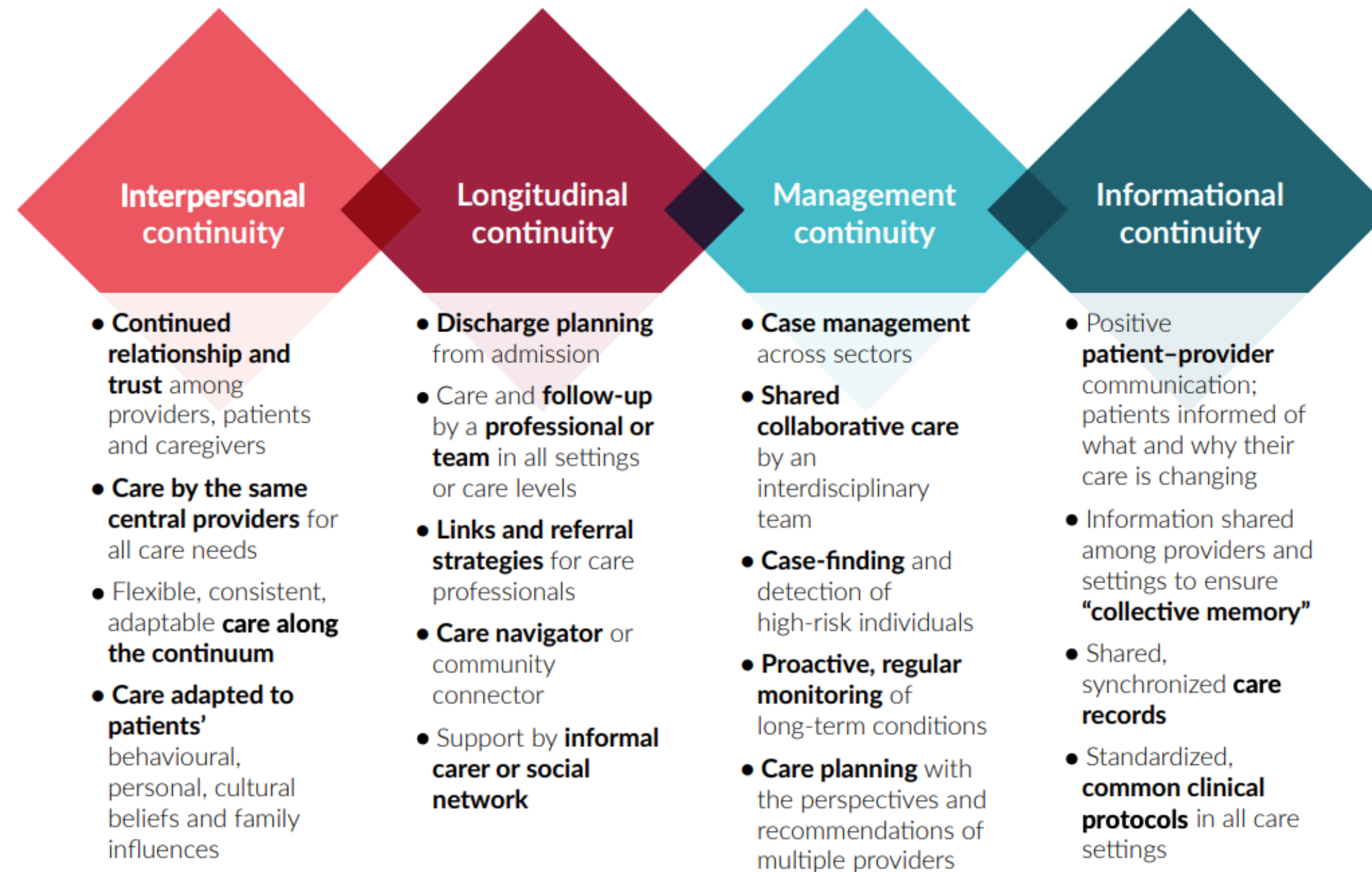
1. Patient care services
2. Population services
3. Unattached patient services
- 4. Support for PMHs**
- 5. System Coordination & Integration**

} System support functions



**Primary Care
Alberta**

Approaches to Achieving Continuity of Care



Source: "A practice brief to support implementation of the WHO Framework on integrated people-centred health services" (WHO, 2018)

Multiple Layers of Patient-Centered Care

Patient-centred or Individualized Care

Fundamental values: Patients and families as partners with healthcare providers to design and deliver individualized care.

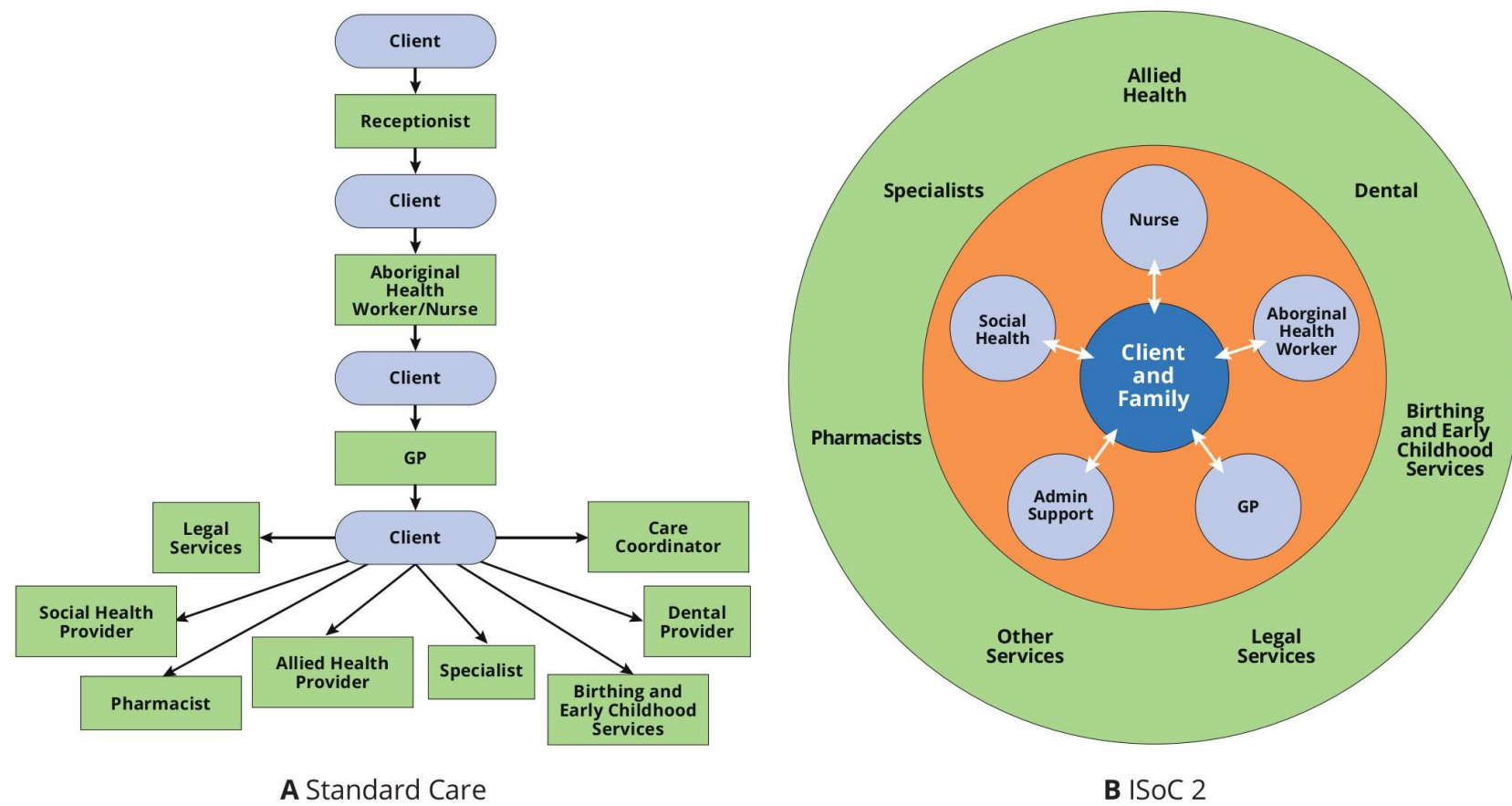
Principles: Respect, Dignity, Compassion, and Equity

Policy action: To improve healthcare inefficiencies and address patient safety issues.



Guiding Evidence

The Institute for Indigenous Health: Integrated Systems of Care 2 (ISoC2) or “Pod” model



Southcentral Foundation: Nuka Model

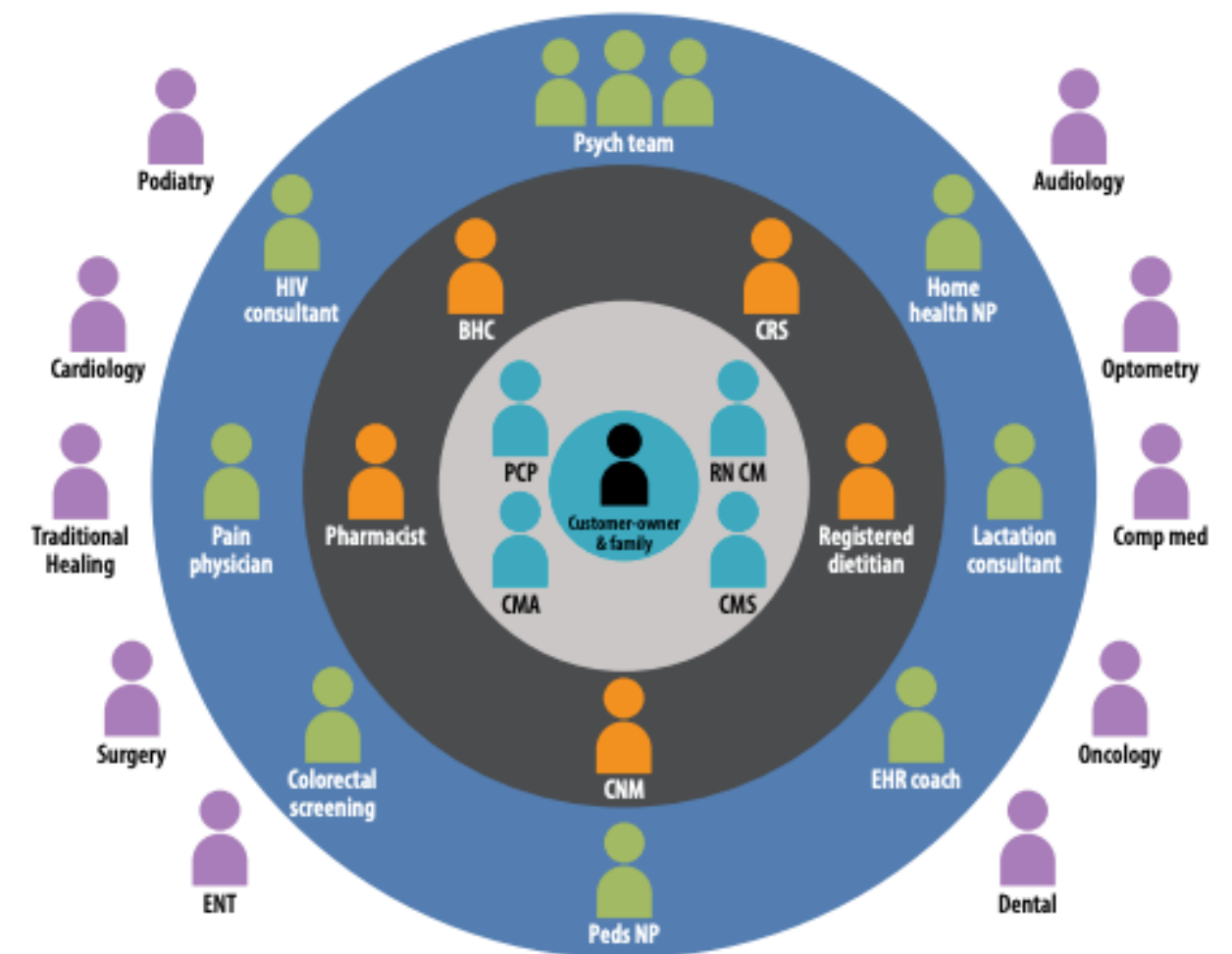


Figure 2. A) Standard care pathway compared with B) ISoC2 model of care. GP, general practitioner; ISoC2, IUIH System of Care 2. The visuals in this image were recreated from the original visuals in the publication by Butler et al., 2022.

Butler D, Clifford-Motopi A, Mathew S, Nelson C, Brown R, Gardner K, et al. Study protocol: primary healthcare transformation through patient-centred medical homes—improving access, relational care and outcomes in an urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, a mixed methods prospective cohort study. *BMJ Open*. 2022 Sep 1;12(9):e061037.

FIGURE 1B. The Nuka System of Care’s revised work flow relationship between customer-owner (patient) and primary and specialty care.

Source: Figure comes from the Behavior Health Integration, Participant Guide, provided in the Behavior Health Integration course.

Routledge R. Integrating specialty care into primary care: The Nuka approach. *British Columbia Medical Journal*. 2020;62(1):26–8.

Building on Previous Work

The IPHCPR Network hosted one virtual dialogue (May 2021) and one in-person dialogue (March 2023) to explore the PMH Model and its opportunities for grounding Indigenous PHC delivery.

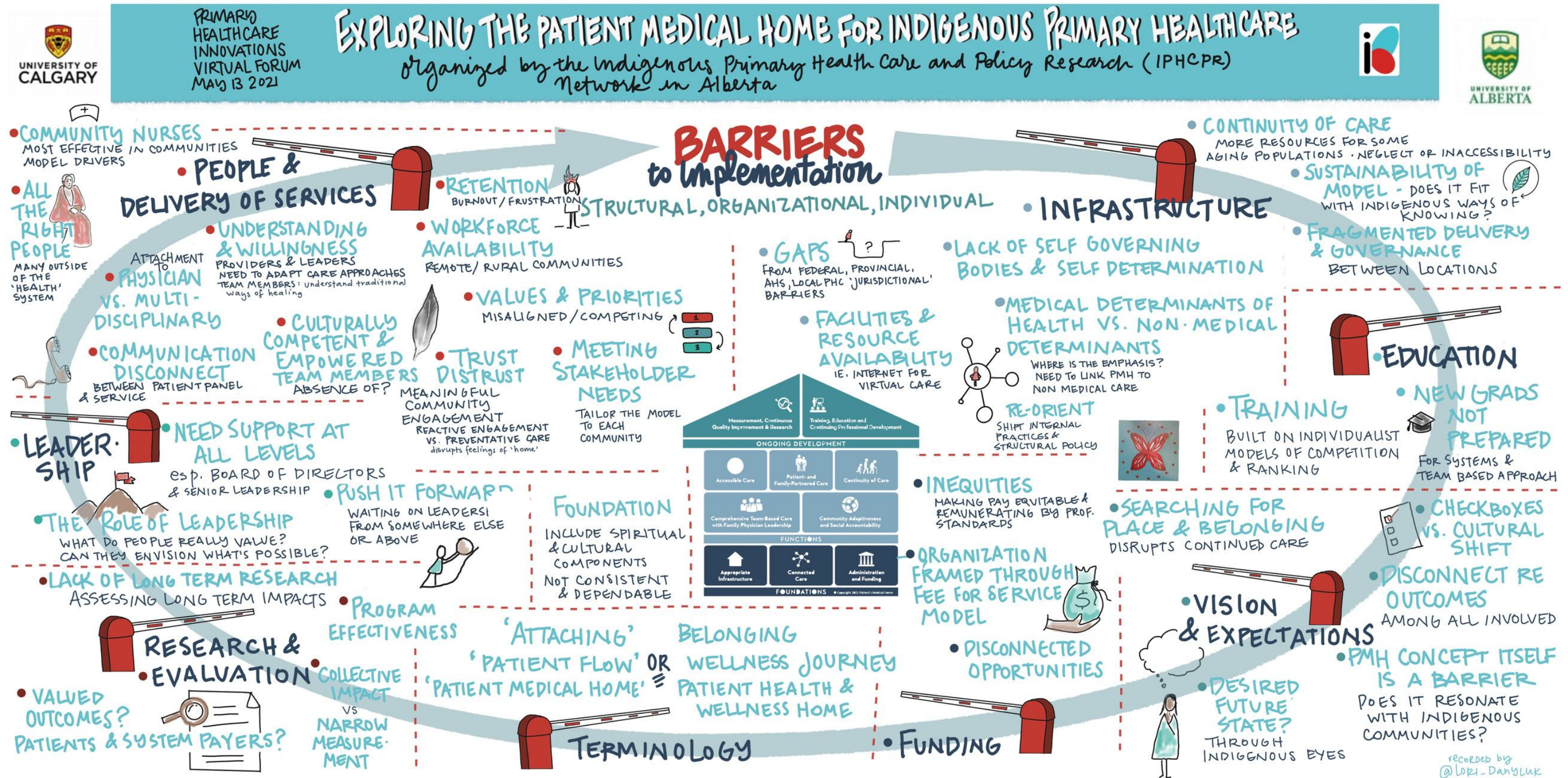
Key Objectives:

- Engage in a critical exploration of the PMH model.
- Identify opportunities for adapting the PMH model for Indigenous PHC delivery.
- Learn from an adapted PMH model for Indigenous patients in Australia.

May 2021 Virtual Dialogue

- Twenty participants attended, including Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers, as well as Indigenous-focused and mainstream primary care providers, and primary care researchers.
- Pre-circulated an evidence brief summarizing evidence from a global scoping review on Indigenous primary healthcare innovations.
- Discussions were synthesized by a graphic illustrator.

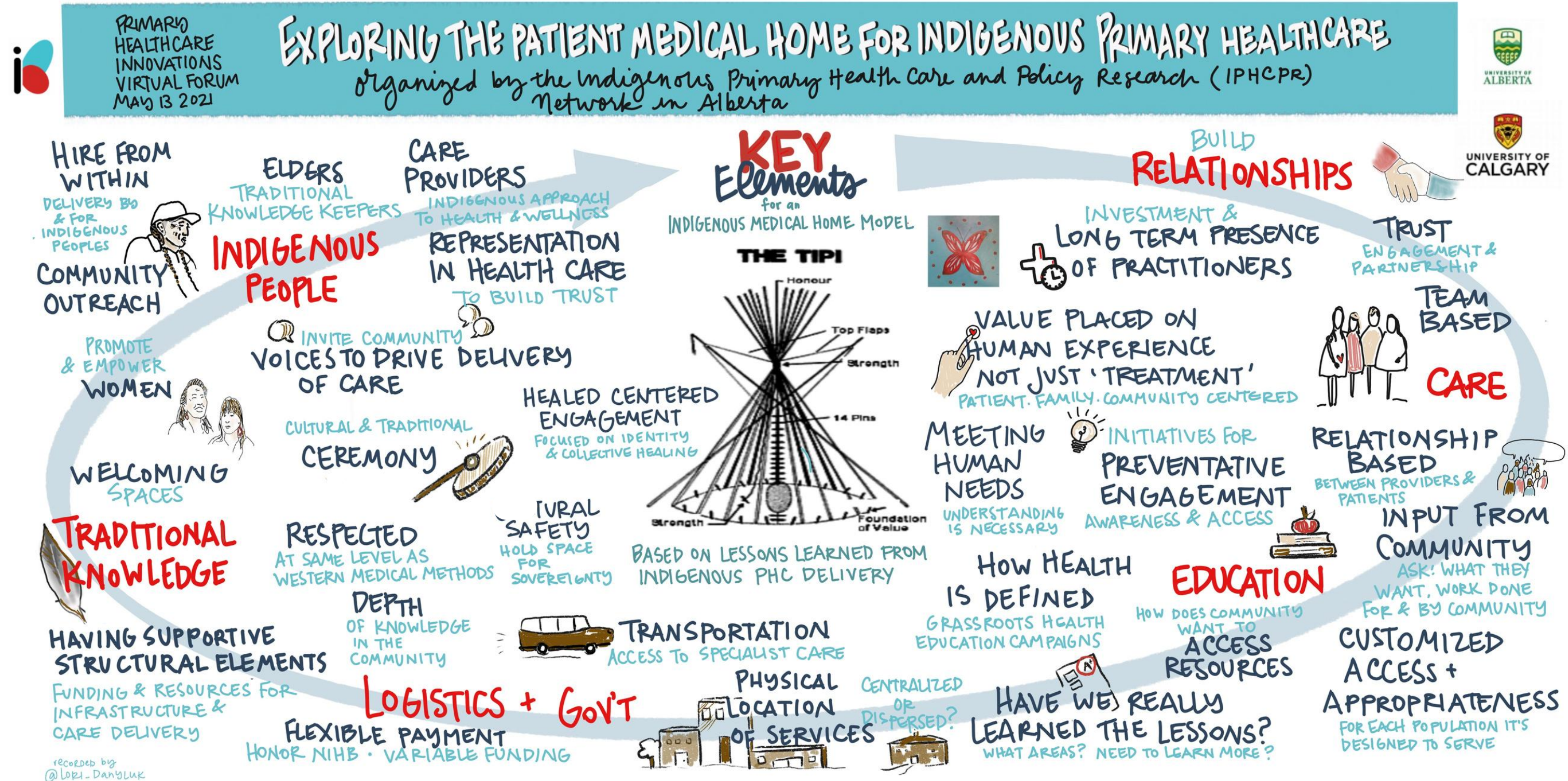
What are the barriers to adapting the PMH model for Indigenous PHC delivery?



Source: IPHCPR Network- Primary HealthCare Innovations Virtual forum: Exploring the Patient Medical Home for Indigenous Primary Healthcare

recorded by @Loki_DanBluk

What are the key elements of an Indigenous PMH?



Source: IPHCPR Network- Primary HealthCare Innovations Virtual forum: Exploring the Patient Medical Home for Indigenous Primary Healthcare

March 2023 Expert Dialogue

In-person half-day expert dialogue

- 25 participants, including members of the Alberta IPHCPR team, Alberta Health Services' Indigenous Wellness Core, the University of Alberta, the Alex Community Health Centre, Siksika Health Services, Stoney Health Services, the University of Calgary, and the University of Alberta.

Objectives

1. Engage in a critical exploration of the PMH model.
2. Identify opportunities for adapting the PMH model for Indigenous PHC delivery.
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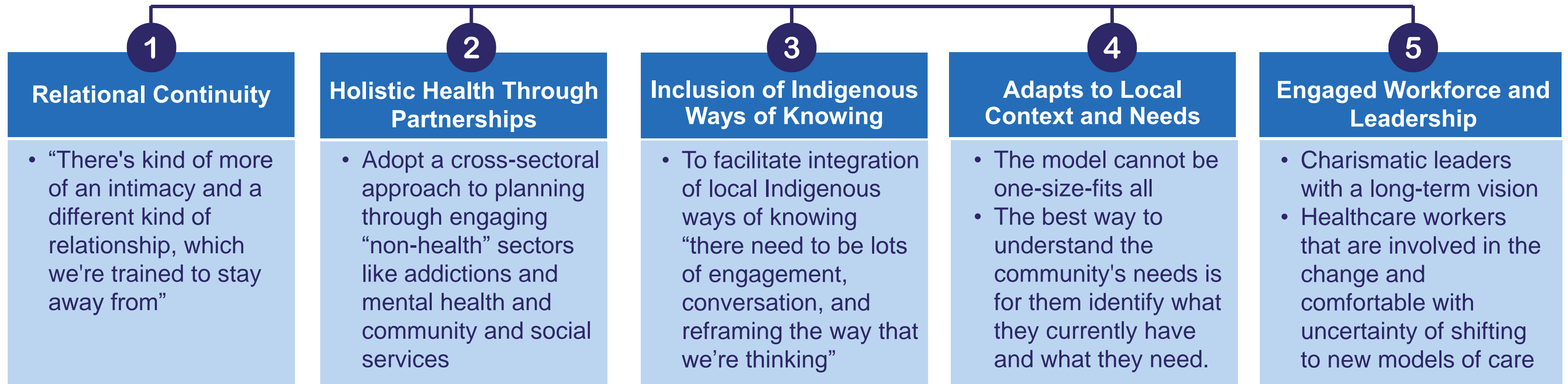
The agenda included:

- An introduction to the PMH model
- Small group discussions to communicate and reflect ideas followed by large group discussions
- A presentation on an adapted evidence-based Indigenous PMH model in Queensland, Australia



What features or components of the model are critical to explore or advocate for Indigenous PHC delivery?

Five main themes emerged when participants were asked what to consider if adopting the model for Indigenous-focused PHC delivery:



What are some concerns about the model?



Availability and distribution of resources

“until a client exists and is attached to a doctor, they don't exist, and then no doctor gets money for you, and then you're in an emerg department, so you're expensive, and your health outcomes are not great.”



The model perpetuates inequities due to how funding is delivered

“Why is it okay that some people can have this really super fancy, well-resourced health home?... if you want to use a hotel analogy, why did some people get to be at the Ritz and other people are at the Motel Six?”



The model is not situated to address upstream determinants of health

It's crucial to design an Indigenous PMH that addresses not only individual needs but also community needs, encompassing physical, structural, social, spiritual, and cultural determinants of health.



Emphasis on measurement and short-term outcomes

Western PMH models can be very focused on who is paying for it and what is being measured, versus the process required to deliver PHC that meets the needs of local communities.



Implementation models may conflict with Indigenous worldviews

Current models that support the development and implementation of a Western medical home model may not align with Indigenous worldviews and values.

Roundtable Discussions

Format of Roundtable Discussions

- You will assign someone at your table to take notes.
- A question will be displayed on the screen for you to discuss with the individuals at your table.
- You will have 15 minutes to discuss each question.
- The notetaker will document your group's response on the provided notetaking sheet.
- Facilitators and presenters will be in the room to answer questions and participate in the small group discussions.
- Once you have discussed all three questions at your table, we will hold a large group discussion where table groups can share their responses before we wrap up.
- We kindly ask that you leave your notetaking sheet behind when you leave the session.

Question One

**What resonates with you
in the model?**

Question Two

What features of the model are critical to explore or advocate for Indigenous PHC delivery?

Question Three

What considerations need to be made about the model given the evolving primary care system transformation in Alberta?

Large Group Discussion

Key Takeaways

- Establishing an Indigenous PMH in Alberta must incorporate Indigenous knowledge, reflect local contexts and needs, prioritize relational continuity of care, integrate services across health and social sectors, and strengthen both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous workforce to ensure culturally safe and appropriate primary care for Indigenous patients.
- The design of an Indigenous PMH prototype must align with Alberta's evolving health system landscape and the transition to Regional Primary Health Care Networks.
- The research team will utilize insights gained from discussions and collaborative exploration with key experts, clinicians, and primary care leaders to conceptualize key design features, characteristics, and implementation considerations for an Indigenous PMH model in Alberta.

Thank you!

email: Montesan@ualberta.ca | **website:** www.careresearchlab.ca

Learn more about our IPHCPR Network: <https://www.iphcpr.ca/>