

RESEARCH SNAPSHOT

Evaluating transformative health leadership education for Indigenous health

WHAT IS THIS RESEARCH ABOUT?

Leaders in healthcare systems have the responsibility to transform healthcare delivery to address inequities and injustices. Education on anti-racism and structural competency is one way to begin this transformative change. The Practical Leadership for University Scholars 4I: Reconciliation Leadership Foundations (PLUS4I) course was developed to assist leaders in applying strategies and skills into practice personally and professionally. The goal of PLUS4I is institutional change to eliminate systemic racism faced by Indigenous people.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The Practical Leadership for University Scholars 4I: Reconciliation Leadership Foundations course was created to provide skills and strategies for leaders to address systemic anti-Indigenous racism in healthcare systems. A course evaluation revealed significant improvements in perceived knowledge and skills, while suggesting systems-level changes are required to address structural racism and implement high-quality Indigenous health and anti-racism education.

WHO ARE WE?

Our study team included two racialized cisgendered women learners, a white cisgendered woman research assistant with qualitative research experience, two white cisgendered women educators with experience in faculty development, one white cisgendered disabled man with leadership experience in faculty development, and a cisgendered Indigenous woman with education leadership experience.

WHAT DID THE RESEARCHERS DO?

To evaluate the effectiveness and learning outcomes of PLUS4I, our team used a mixed methods design. First, using a 6-point Likert scale, participants retroactively rated their change in perceived knowledge and skills before and after attending the training on four categories: 1) applied understanding of the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action; 2) which Calls to Action to focus on as a leader; 3) authentically and ethically engaging with cultural humility; and 4) applying a framework for an equitable and safe workplace.

Next, our team did interviews with 25 participants. Our semi-structured interview guide aligned with the Likert scale categories.



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WHAT DID THE RESEARCHERS FIND?

The PLUS4I training led to a significant increase in confidence levels across all four categories of: 1) applied understanding of the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action; 2) which Calls to Action to focus on as a leader; 3) authentically and ethically engaging with cultural humility; and 4) applying a framework for an equitable and safe workplace.

Interviews with participants highlighted two main themes: 1) PLUS4I helped break down previous knowledge and support critical applications; and 2) PLUS4I supported participants to build new knowledge and change-making competencies. Cognitive dissonance theory, expert facilitators, and scaffolding principles contributed to the success of the program.

In addition, participants highlighted the significance of ongoing learning and connection through follow-up meetings to encourage and support one another to affect lasting change. This was subsequently put into practice through quarterly Community of Action virtual meetings, where participants could reunite and discuss the initiatives and projects they had been working on since the end of the PLUS4I course.

HOW CAN YOU USE THIS?

PLUS4I can support the development of intercultural competency among faculty leaders, including the knowledge, confidence, and skills to engage in anti-racism work. Future work is planned to expand the PLUS4I course into other work environments and faculties, where the learning environment, structure and relevant TRC Calls to Action may be different. We hope that this work will create more opportunities for systems-level change to address structural racism through high-quality Indigenous health and anti-racism education.

ABOUT THIS SNAPSHOT

The full research article can be found at:

Lu, M., Moinul, D., Crooks, R., Kelly-Turner, K., Roze des Ordon, A., Keegan, D., & Roach, P. (2023). Evaluating transformative health leadership education for Indigenous health: a mixed methods study. *BMJ Leader*. <https://doi.org/10.1136/leader-2022-000721>

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