Mental healthcare performance measurement in circumpolar regions

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ABSTRACT:

Introduction
The sparse population distribution, environmental hazards, conflicting government health mandates, and history of the Arctic’s indigenous peoples make measuring the performance of mental health systems in the circumpolar context uniquely challenging. The objective of this study was to identify performance indicators that apply to mental healthcare systems in circumpolar regions and to explore alignment with indigenous models of health and wellness.

Methods
We searched Pubmed, Scopus, High North Research Documents, grey literature and key reference lists. Articles were included if they presented a compendium of mental healthcare indicators or described the indicator development process, and the population of interest included indigenous people, or people receiving mental healthcare in circumpolar, rural or remote regions.

Results
Six articles were included. Three were research articles describing community health interventions, two were literature reviews, and one was a review describing a government-funded indicator development process. We extracted 179 individual health measures and characterized each as either a ‘domain’, ‘indicator’, or ‘determinant’ of mental health status. Many articles described strength-based measures and assessment of a patient’s relationship to their community/environment, though usage of these measures across health systems was limited.
Conclusions
This preliminary scoping study indicates that indigenous values are not widely integrated into evaluation criteria for health systems in circumpolar regions, despite previous implementation at the local level. One Health models that explore human and environmental interactions could provide a framework for a health systems performance measurement lens more in accordance with indigenous models of mental health.