Multidisciplinary Collaborations for Community Wellness Within Circumpolar Regions

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ABSTRACT:

Introduction:
Within circumpolar regions, the state of community wellness can be impacted by an overlapping, and often compounding, myriad of factors including rapidly changing climates, remote populations, large inequities, and distinct cultures. These multidimensional determinants of community wellbeing require creative intersectoral collaborations. This scoping review seeks to characterize the range of existing cooperative approaches for addressing these complex challenges, particularly those that have spanned traditional divisions between academic disciplines.

Methods:
We searched the Cochrane Library, JSTOR, Medline, Scopus, Ebscohost, CINAHL, Global Health Database, High North Research Documents, and online grey literature. Articles were included if they involved multidisciplinary research within Arctic regions of circumpolar nations and addressed community wellness. Throughout this analysis, ‘indigenous knowledge’ was defined as a discrete discipline different from conventional fields of study.

Results:
Though extraction and analysis are ongoing, initial results drawn from the first stage of review offer preliminary insights. Of the 409 articles identified, most focus on community wellness with regards to physical environment; other common areas of focus included mining, engineering solutions, food and nutrition, physical illness, education, socioeconomic status, community resiliency and social determinants of health.
Conclusions:
This scoping review reveals both the subject matter areas and circumpolar regions where valuable multidisciplinary work has already been implemented, as well as existing gaps for further research. Many of the creative collaborations included could guide work moving forward. Among the most vital disciplines, Traditional Knowledge is emerging as a field of scientific expertise and has much to offer future collaborative efforts.