



## **The Canada Northwest FASD Research Network's**

### *FASD Prevention from a Women's Health Determinants Perspective*

#### **Purpose**

The Network Action Team (NAT) on FASD Prevention from a Women's Health Determinants Perspective links researchers, service providers, and policy advisors in Canada's western provinces and northern territories, in order to build upon the current knowledge base of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder prevention, and bring it into health promotion, prevention, treatment, harm reduction, and policy development, as well as further research.

A women's health determinants perspective on FASD prevention assures that social determinants of health are taken into account in our prevention efforts. Social determinants of health, such as food security and safety affect women's drinking during pregnancy, as mothers, and throughout child bearing years. Understanding and acting on the factors that increase, or reduce, women's risks for developing addictions and having a child with FASD requires collaborative action among women, service providers, policy makers, researchers, and the communities who are affected.

#### **History**

In the fall 2006, the Canada Northwest FASD Research Network began funding of this Network Action Team (NAT) which focuses on women's health issues in the prevention of FASD. Since that time, the NAT has been building a network of researchers, service providers, community partners and health planners working on FASD prevention issues in the four western provinces and three northern territories.

#### **Network Action Team Description**

The NAT has over 35 active members from Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon. The NAT's members have:

- expertise in conducting research on FASD, women's substance use, and many other areas related to women's health
- direct involvement with community-based service delivery
- expertise in health education, psychology, sociology, nursing, epidemiology, First Nations and Inuit health, public health
- expertise in health policy and planning, program evaluation and knowledge translation

The team meets regularly through face-to-face and virtual meetings, and networking is facilitated by an online community of practice (CoP)

New participants who interested in the NAT's goals and activities are welcome.



## Network Action Team Activities

The current aims and activities of the Network Action Team are:

- **Network building** - Build a network of researchers and research collaborators dedicated to FASD prevention from a women's health determinants perspective in the northern territories and western provinces in Canada.
- **Research** - Build multidisciplinary research teams, develop research proposals, and conduct research identifying and examining how social determinants of health mediate women's substance use during pregnancy and inform FASD prevention efforts.
- **Influencing policy and service provision** - Facilitate the incorporation of gender-based analysis and traditional indigenous knowledge into FASD prevention efforts, surveillance research and measurement tools, addictions treatment, and harm reduction services for pregnant women and mothers, and as well into program and policy development.
- **Collaborative knowledge translation** - Utilize and evaluate a virtual Community of Practice (CoP) model as a mechanism for knowledge exchange, engaging researchers, policy makers, government representatives, clinicians, community-based service providers, advocates, and women concerned with FASD prevention from a women's health determinants perspective.

Members of this NAT work with organizations and institutions such as:

Aurora Centre, BC Women's Hospital, BC	Sheway, BC
Arctic Health Research Network Northwest Territories	Stanton Aboriginal Health Authority, NT
BC Association of Pregnancy Outreach Programs, BC	Thompson Rivers University, BC
BC Centre of Excellence for Women's Health, BC	University of British Columbia, BC
Centre for Aboriginal Health Research, MB	University of Calgary, AB
Centre for Northern Families, NT	University of Lethbridge, AB
Dawson Creek Aboriginal Family Resource Society, BC	University of Manitoba, MB
Fir Square Combined Care Unit, BC Women's Hospital	University of Saskatchewan, SK
Healthy Child Manitoba, MB	University of Victoria, BC
HerWay Home, BC	Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, BC
Indigenous Peoples Health Research Centre, SK	Vancouver Island Health Authority, BC
Interagency FASD Program, MB	Women Abuse Response Program, BC
Inter Tribal Health Authority, BC	Women's Health Research Institute, BC
Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association, National	Yukon Alcohol and Drug Services, YK

### For more information please contact:

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