

Community-driven research on *H. pylori* infection in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region

Summary

Project Leader(s)

Goodman, Karen

Despite limited systematic data on its presence in northern Canada, *Helicobacter pylori* infection has been an emerging health concern in northern Aboriginal communities, where people are becoming aware of its health risks. In many such communities, people worry about the link between *H. pylori* and stomach cancer, a cancer that occurs more frequently in this region than on average across Canada. Physicians in the north view this infection as a major challenge because it is found in many patients with common stomach complaints and standard treatment is often ineffective in this setting. Health authorities have identified the need for research aimed at developing *H. pylori* control strategies appropriate for the north. The proposed research seeks to generate knowledge about how health care decision makers can effectively manage *H. pylori* infection in a manner that addresses community concerns. To achieve these goals, the applicants formed the Canadian North *Helicobacter pylori* (CANHelp) Working Group, a collaborative team that links the University of Alberta with northern health officials and community organizations. While the research goals require data from multiple northern settings, the team conducted a pilot project as a starting point in Aklavik, NWT, where they found that 58% of 313 participants had *H. pylori* infection, and among those infected, there was a high prevalence of precancerous stomach conditions. The objectives of the current proposal, developed at the request of the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, are to: 1) Expand the research to additional communities in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region to obtain representative data required for developing regional public health strategies pertaining to *H. pylori* infection; 2) Identify cost-effective *H. pylori* management strategies for northern communities; 3) Create knowledge exchange strategies to help community members understand *H. pylori* health risks and currently available solutions.

People

Network Investigators

Chatwood, Susan - University of Toronto
 Fletcher, Christopher - University of Alberta
 Goodman, Karen - University of Alberta
 Keelan, Monika - University of Alberta
 Phillips, Carl V. - University of Alberta
 Veldhuyzen van Zanten, Sander - University of Alberta

Collaborators & Research Associates

Buckle, Robert - Aklavik Health Committee
 Kandola, Kami - NWT Health and Social Services
 Lennie, Crystal - Inuvialuit Regional Corporation
 Morse, John - Stanton Territorial Health Authority
 Munday, Rachel - Aklavik Health Centre
 Seaman, Leah - Beaufort-Delta Health & Social Services

PhD Students

Carraher, Sally - McMaster University
 Colquhoun, Amy - University of Alberta
 Geary, Janis - University of Alberta
 LeFebvre, Megan - University of Alberta

Masters Students

Aplin, Laura - University of Alberta
Cheung, Justin - University of Alberta
Fagan-Garcia, Katherine - University of Alberta
Tweedie, Katie - Simon Fraser University
Wynne, Ashley - University of Alberta

Honours Undergraduate Students

Keng, Alvin - McMaster University

Project Staff

Morse, Amy - University of Alberta

Partners

Canadian North
Nasivvik Centre for Inuit Health and Changing Environments