

## Development of a Women's Health and Well-Being Track at the 14th International Congress on Circumpolar Health in Yellowknife, NWT July 2009

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**Abstract:**

The Women's Health and Well-Being Working Group (WHWWG) of the International Union of Circumpolar Health (IUCH) reactivated at the 13th International Congress of Circumpolar Health in Novosibirsk in June 2006. Participants initially identified at least four areas of mutual interest, including but not limited to 1) perinatal health systems and challenges, 2) infectious disease, particularly HPV and new vaccine; 3) interpersonal violence prevention and 4) health communication and health literacy. A WHWG listserve was begun in summer 2006 to facilitate communication among the group. To date, this listserve includes over 65 names and is coordinated by WHWWG Co-Chair, Dr. Rhonda Johnson of the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA). This increased communication assisted in the development of Women's Health track at the International Network of Circumpolar Health Researchers meeting in Banff, AB in April 2007, including at least one presentation in each of the four areas of general interest. The membership confirmed interest in developing a Women's Health and Well-Being track at the 14th International Congress of Circumpolar Health to be held in Yellowknife, NWT in summer 2009. Subcommittees were formed in Banff and work is underway. Collaborative research between workgroup members is actively encouraged.

**Project Status:** Active

**Project Progress:**

Updates as of January 2009:

- Women's and Family Health and Well-Being is included as an explicit theme of the 14<sup>th</sup> ICCH, and several working group (WG) members will be involved in both abstract review and session moderation.
- Several WG members participated in the first bi-national meeting in Anchorage April 16-17, 2008 focused on "Sexually Transmitted Diseases among Alaska Native & Inuit/First Nations/Métis in Canada: Discovering Opportunities for Collaboration" and also in the International Network for Circumpolar Health Researchers (INCHR) meeting in Tromsø, Norway in May, 2008.
- Several WG members are actively involved in a Canadian-funded, International Polar Year (IPY) health communication project called 'Qanuqtuurniq-Finding the Balance' that will highlight promising community stories and research about Inuit youth and coping, Inuit men's health and Inuit maternity care in Alaska, Canada and Greenland through TV series, webcast and interactive media. See <http://www.naho.ca/inuit/e/TVseries/>