

Global Wound Care Congress

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CIRCUMPOLAR HEALTH AMONG INDIGENOUS INUIT POPULATION

Health in the Arctic among the indigenous circumpolar Inuit population is a serious concern. The Inuit span across four nations. They were descendants from human migrations across the Beringia land bridge 5,000 years ago. There are 167,000 Inuit in Greenland, Denmark, Alaska, Canada and Russia. The research conducted in these regions among this population is unique and directly related to geographic and genetic factors. Geographic remoteness, limited gene pool, and underdeveloped human resources have impacted the health systems and practices.

Chronic diseases as heart disease and diabetes are called “diseases of modernization”. They tend to increase in traditional societies undergoing rapid changes in diet and physical activity. Diabetes, alcoholism, and frostbite are a few concerns of the World Health Organization in reference to global health in the Arctic. Neuropathy leads to foot ulcers, wounds, and amputations are increasing exponentially. Though diabetes is considered a new disease among the Inuit, over the last 2-3 decade glucose tolerance surveys among the Inuit have shown to increase in prevalence.

Global health initiatives have historically excluded indigenous circumpolar concerns. There is much to share from one another. The population of many nations genetically linked over 5,000 years is a priceless resource for learning.

Biography

Michele Burdette-Taylor has completed her PhD at the University of San Diego in California. She is an assistant professor at the University of Alaska Anchorage. She teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in community health, foot care, and wound care for the college of health, school of nursing and physician assistant program. She has published numerous skin, wound, pressure ulcer and foot care articles. Her most recent publication was a chapter for the new Wound Ostomy Continence Nurses Core Curriculum for Wound Care for entitled Foot and Nail Care.

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