

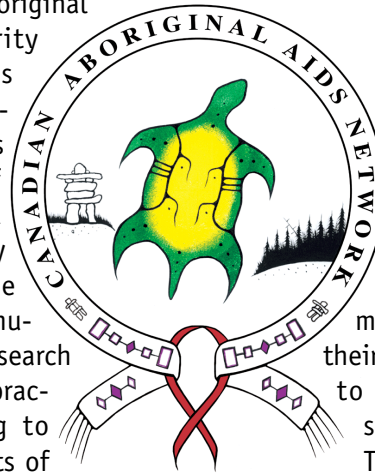
## OCAP: Ownership, Control, Access and Possession

Ownership control access and possession (OCAP) is a political term that is being used by Aboriginal Peoples to highlight the right to self-determination in the area of HIV/AIDS research. As Aboriginal communities and organizations increase their capacity to conduct their own research these principles will become increasingly visible.

OCAP is an important term in HIV/AIDS research in Aboriginal communities. It indicates that Aboriginal people have relinquished the notion of "being researched," and have taken up the call to become active participants in the research process. In HIV/AIDS research, these initiatives must be taken seriously as Aboriginal people are disproportionately affected by social, economic and behavioural factors which greatly increase the risk of HIV infection. For example, Health Canada reports that, "The proportion of AIDS cases attributed to Aboriginal persons has declined since 1999, yet the proportion of positive HIV test reports ...continue to increase" and that, "Injecting drug use is the main exposure category among Aboriginal HIV/AIDS cases." Finally, "A high proportion of HIV-infected pregnant women are Aboriginal." (HIV/AIDS Epi Update, April 2002). We as Aboriginal people should take responsibility and claim ownership over areas of research relevant to our people such as HIV/AIDS.

### What do we mean by ownership?

By ownership we mean, Aboriginal people will have authority over the research process as well as the products of research. Ownership extends to programs, the results of programs, and intellectual property which are not only unique but exclusive to the Aboriginal HIV/AIDS community. Ownership implies research that is conceptually and practically defined according to cultural values and contexts of Aboriginal communities. In so doing, we as Aboriginal communities feel that the research process and findings belong to us and that we are able to exercise all the rights that



go along with the proprietorship over the process and product.

### What do we mean by control?

By control we mean that, Aboriginal people are in charge of the process. This means that Aboriginal communities and organizations must develop and enhance their capacity and responsibility to make decisions at every stage of the research process. This includes decision-making regarding defining research objectives, outlining research questions, and about how data should be collected and analysed, and about reporting of findings.

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By control we mean that Aboriginal people have the right to direct and to regulate research. This includes seeking and taking advantage of training, if necessary, to better effect that control. Aboriginal people need to understand the research process well enough in order to ensure that research is carried out in a culturally appropriate, ethical, methodologically sound, and useful manner.

#### **What do we mean by access?**

By access we mean, not only do we as Aboriginal people know our audience best, but that we have the RIGHT to access and use information. Access means that the research findings will be shared and used by the community where the research is done, to help improve programming and policy in the research area. This involves the translation of research instruments and results into Aboriginal languages as desired and required, and interpretation

of research and HIV/AIDS terminology into terms understandable to our communities. Access also includes the idea of making raw data from a research project available to Aboriginal researchers who may want to do their own analysis of a set of data. Furthermore, acknowledging Aboriginal cultures in the research methodology will facilitate the gathering of information thereby improving access.

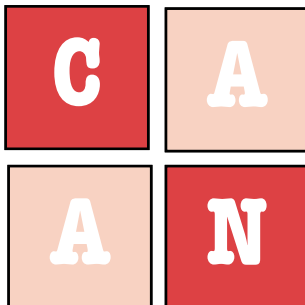
#### **What do we mean by possession?**

Possession is the activity of managing or exerting control over something. Possession means the actual holding with or without rightful ownership. Possession is also having, holding, or detention of property in one's power or command; actual seizing or occupancy; ownership, whether rightful or wrong. Aboriginal people have the right to self-determination and this includes the right to possess the findings of research.

### **Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Community Based Capacity Building Initiative in Canada**

Research data and results are the property of the Aboriginal community and therefore communities have the right to decide what is done with them. How does your community define possession? How does your community define access? How does your community define control? How does your community define ownership?

This fact sheet is meant to be used as a guideline to developing your own ideas around OCAP and how it relates to Aboriginal HIV/AIDS community-based research. The Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network's Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Community-Based Research Capacity-Building Initiative in Canada is intended to build and strengthen the skills and experiences required to ensure that Aboriginal ownership, control, access and possession are part of the research process in the development and carrying out of HIV/AIDS research initiatives in Canada.



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