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Overview of the Native Investigator Development



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Since American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) researchers have conducted few studies of the health of Native elders in the US, a primary objective of the RCMAR is the training of Native Investigators. The purpose of the RCMAR's Native Investigator Development Core is to improve the research capabilities and skills of AI/ANs from the social, behavioral, and health sciences, there by increasing the number of such individuals who are able to design, secure external support for, and conduct research in the following areas of inquiry at the interface of aging, health and cultural dynamics:

- a) Identifying and implementing culturally acceptable, relevant activities that will promote the health and well being of Native elders. Examples include, but are not limited to, obesity reduction, cardiovascular fitness, nutritional balance, mood enhancement, and increased mastery of health behaviors;
- b) Developing and testing culturally acceptable, relevant strategies to improve the application of well accepted disease prevention measures. Examples include, but are not limited to, mammography, vaccination, smoking cessation, comprehensive medication management, early detection of maltreatment, and screening for depression and alcohol abuse among older AI/AN adults; and
- c) Creating and piloting culturally acceptable, relevant instruments, and interventions that will promote more effective clinical practice, resulting in, for example, documentation of

appropriate treatment recommendations, and greater provider compliance with practice guidelines.

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Thus, promotion, prevention, and practice comprise the major areas of inquiry supported by the Native Investigator Development Core across a variety of focal points (e.g., individual patient, family, provider, delivery system, or community) and in a range of settings (e.g., hospital, out-patient clinic, home, or community).

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