



**WELLESLEY INSTITUTE**  
advancing urban health

Enabling Grant Research Report

# Racialized People's Perceptions of and Responses to Differential Health Care

## Introduction

The challenges and barriers facing racialized communities in accessing health care in Ontario as well as their negative impact on the health of such vulnerable populations have been well documented in literature. However, relatively little is known about the perceptions, experiences and responses to differential care received by racialized communities. Our research group set out to conduct background research and community engagement in order to develop a community driven research framework to effectively address these issues. With the support of the enabling grant from the Wellesley Institute, we have been able to conduct an in-depth literature review on “racialized disparities in access to health care and quality of care”; recruited and set up a community reference group of diverse racialized community members, and engaged additional academic and community service partners to develop a comprehensive research framework and research proposal on the subject. The resulting research proposal: “Racialized People’s Perceptions of and Responses to Differential Health Care”, has been developed and we are now in the process of seeking funding partners for implementing the project activities.

## Project Overview

We have been able to complete all the project deliverables as outlined in our enabling grant proposal:

- A comprehensive literature review on Racialized disparities in access to quality health care. The literature review covers the following key areas:
  - Inequalities in access and quality of health care
  - Perceptions amongst Racialized groups on access and quality health care
  - Existing client complaint mechanisms within healthcare providers
  - Models of Patient Empowerment strategies and anti-racism policies
  - Gaps in research and proposed future research directions
- A community reference group consisting of diverse representation of Racialized group service users were recruited and established
- Key research agenda and questions were identified through a collaborative process involving the research team and community members

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- Outreach and consultation with some key stakeholders to provide further insights on the issues related to the research topic and to explore partnership interest
- A full research framework and project proposal has been developed for submission to potential funding partners. The research framework consists of 6 components with the following specific objectives:
  - To document racialized health care consumers' perceptions of and responses to differential health care (Component 1)
  - To document health providers' awareness of and responses to differential health care (Component 2)
  - To identify existing complaint mechanisms & hospital policies to address differential health care (Component 3)
  - To enhance knowledge, awareness and responses to differential health care among racialized health care consumers (Component 4)
  - To enhance knowledge & skills of health care providers (Component 5)
  - To advancing the integration of research, policy and practice with respect to the elimination of differential health care (Component 6)

## Reflections

We encountered several challenges during the project developmental process:

A major challenge encountered early in our developmental process was the unwillingness of some institutional partners with ombudsman or complaint handling mandates to engage in collaboration. Reasons cited include major workload backlog as well as explicit unwillingness to engage in any activities that may result in increasing public's awareness and utilization of their complaint systems. While this reality itself illustrated the need and importance of our project to promote access, it made our work in engaging institutional partners more difficult in the planning process. It also discouraged community partners to realize that there is little institutional will to be accountable and accessible to the public.

Another major challenge was the difficulty encountered by the research staff in conducting the literature review due to the complexity of the issues and dimensions involved that needed to address through the literature review. Eventually alternate researchers were engaged to complete the literature review with extensive input and support from the investigating team members.

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As a result of these challenges, the progress of completion of the project was delayed.

Currently the challenge we face is the lack of dedicated staffing to assist with the continual engagement of research partners and funding partners in order to find funding support necessary for the implementation of our fully developed research framework.

## Next Steps

The research team has finalized the research proposal and is planning several community dissemination activities to report back to relevant stakeholders and further engage research partners to plan implementation of the project. These include planned meeting with the full research team and the community reference group, requested meetings with different funding partners; and additional meetings with other interested staff and service users from partner agencies as well as key informants previously consulted through the project.

In the short term, the project will benefit from having a project coordinator to further engage research partners and funding partners and to assist with grant submission processes. We are currently exploring different funding partners for various components of our project, including Wellesley Institute, CIHR, Atkinson Foundation, Canadian Race Relation Foundation and Trillium Foundation.