

Indicator development for improved monitoring and surveillance of the social determinants of health impacts related to resource development across British Columbia, Canada

Project collaborators: Northern Health, Provincial Health Services Authority

Funder(s): UNBC/Provincial Health Services Authority/Northern Health Seed Grant

Project status: Final report draft under external review (February 2018)

Project description: This project aims to develop a better understanding of the health benefits and risks associated with resource development activities in northern British Columbia, within the service area of Northern Health. Both historically and today, the economies of many communities in northern BC have been closely tied to multiple forms of resource development including mining, oil and gas, forestry, commercial fishing, industrial agriculture and livestock, renewable energy and tourism. It is well known that for the regions in which resource extraction and development occurs, there are both direct and indirect environmental, community, economic, and human health impacts. The relationships between physical exposure and the socioeconomic determinants of health, however, are complex and context-specific. Tracking the positive and negative impacts of these activities on human health and well-being has proven challenging in both formal regulatory processes (e.g. Environmental Assessment (EA)) and through third-party monitoring initiatives. This has partly been a result of limited clarity on suitable indicator development for impacts to health and the social determinants of health. Through a review of existing EA indicators and international best practices, this project responds to the lack of definable and measurable indicators for social and health impacts in the EA process.

Role of the CIRC: CIRC staff have undertaken this research in collaboration with members of the UNBC Health Research Institute, Northern Health, and the Provincial Health Services Authority.

Key Deliverables: The primary goal of this project is to define measurable indicators for the social determinants of health related to resource development activities in northern BC. Importantly, this research seeks to make public health data more accessible, robust, and relevant to the needs of northern communities and health authorities.

Publications:

Buse CG, Cornish K, Parkes MW, Harder H, Fumerton R, Rasali D, Li C, Oke B, Loewen D, Aalhus M. (2017). *Towards more robust and locally meaningful indicators for monitoring the social determinants of health related to resource development across Northern BC*. Report prepared for Northern Health. Prince George, BC: University of Northern British Columbia.