



“There Are Still a Lot of Things that I Need”: A Qualitative Study Exploring Opportunities to Improve the Health Outcomes of First Nations People with Arthritis seen at an On-reserve Outreach Rheumatology Clinic

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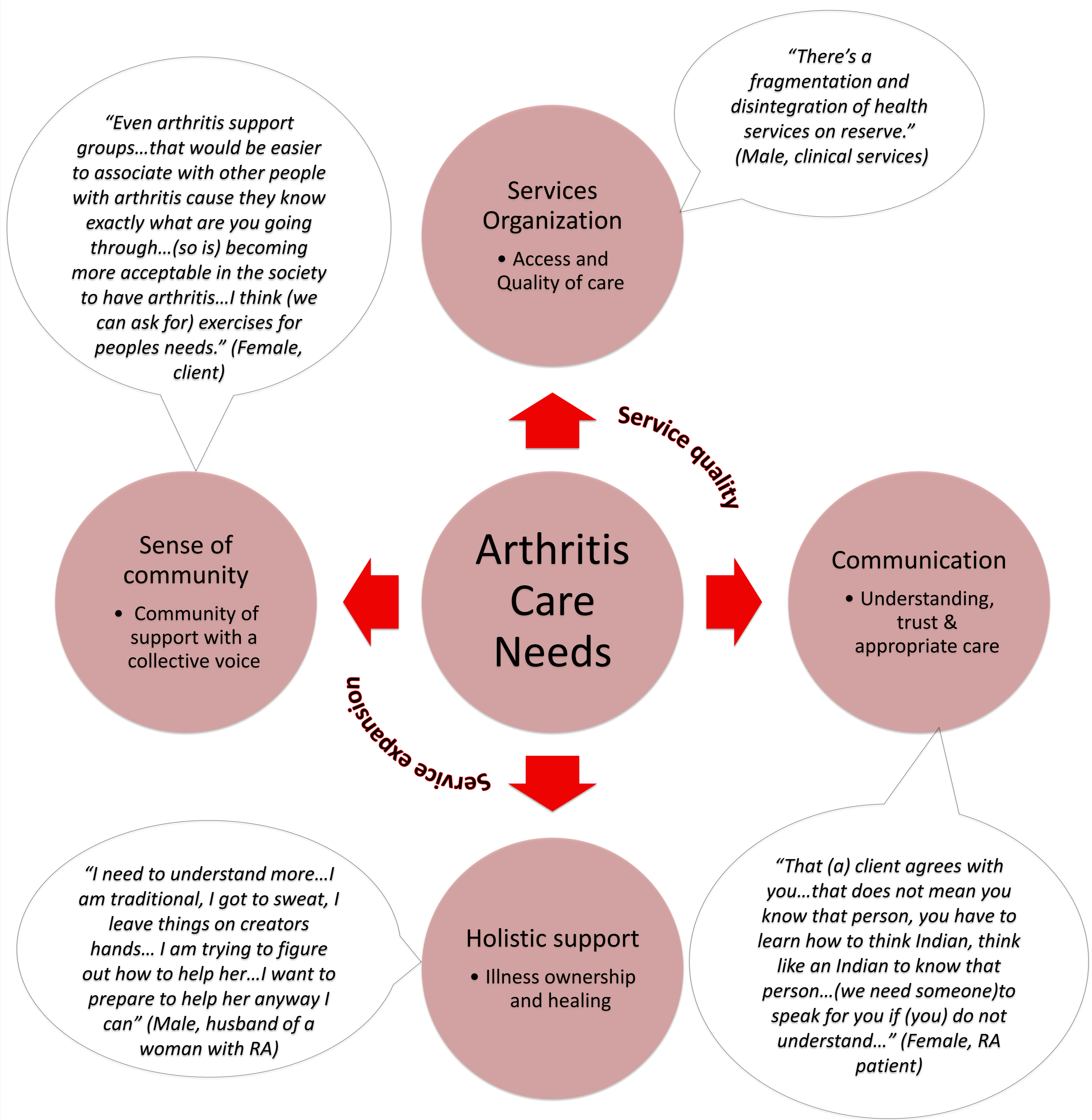
Background & Objective

- Arthritis is among the most prevalent chronic diseases in the Indigenous population of Canada (1) and its disabling effects are greater in Indigenous than in non-Indigenous people, which is evidence of health outcomes inequities (2).
- A rheumatology specialty clinic embedded in a primary health care center on a First Nations reserve was established six years ago to reduce arthritis outcome inequities and even though it has proved successful to achieve physician-derived disease control targets, 24-month follow-up data showed that patient-reported pain, disease severity and physical function did not significantly improve (3).
- The objective of this study was to explore remaining care needs from patient and provider perspectives, to inform enhancements to the model of care in this clinic.

Methods

- Constructivist narrative-based qualitative study:
- 34 in-depth interviews were conducted to reach thematic saturation:
 - 10 clinic users (9 patients with rheumatoid arthritis and 1 family member)
 - 22 service providers (14 clinical, 8 administrative)
 - Analysis was conducted in two steps:
 - Step 1- content analysis of service providers’ narratives & synthesis using the logic framework “need-purpose-function-role”.
 - Step 2- dialogic analysis comparing step 1 synthesis with clinic users’ narratives.
 - Results’ interpretation was facilitated by “service quality” and “cultural competency” frameworks that helped identifying actions and corresponding goals.

Results



Interpretations / Conclusions

In order to enhance the clinic model of care and thereby reduce arthritis-related health inequities in this community, it is important to:

- Improve existing services:

Action	Goal
Enhance communication among health and social services	Improve services integration, access and quality of care
Cultural training for health professionals	Enhance understanding between patients and providers
Enhance communication between patients and providers	Increase trust
Clinical quality monitoring	Provide appropriate care through achieving outcome goals

- Expand arthritis services to include:

Action	Goal
System navigation	Support access to needed resources and services, increasing illness ownership
Cultural support	Facilitate cultural reconnection, favoring healing
Social support	Build a community of support with a collective voice to advocate their needs

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References

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