



**University
of Victoria**

Graduate Studies

Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Public Health

of

ALEXANDRA KENT

BA with Distinction (University of Victoria, 2014)

**“Indigenous Health Equity as a Priority in BC’s Public Health System:
Pilot Case Study”**

School of Public Health and Social Policy

August 15, 2017

1:00 P.M.

Saunders Annex

Room 130

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Charlotte Loppie, School of Public Health and Social Policy, University of Victoria (Co-Supervisor)

Dr. Bernie Pauly, School of Nursing, UVic (Co-Supervisor)

External Examiner:

Dr. John O’Neil, Faculty of Health Sciences, Simon Fraser University

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Janelle Jenstad, Department of English, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies

Abstract

For her MPH thesis research, Alex Kent conducted secondary analysis of data from the Equity Lens in Public Health (ELPH) research program to explore whether and how Indigenous health equity is prioritized within one regional health authority [HA100] in British Columbia's public health system. Her thesis addresses the question: How has Indigenous health equity been identified and prioritized within HA100 as reflected in core documents and plans as well as interviews with key decision makers in the health authority? Using the Xpey' Relational Environments Framework, a theoretical framework designed by Drs. Charlotte Loppie and Jeannine Carriere, Alex identifies and discusses the physical and theoretical settings where Indigenous health equity is and is not manifested in the public health system. Her findings highlight a number of examples of how HA100 has implemented successful strategies aimed at enhancing Indigenous health equity as well as several areas for improvement across the relational environments. Alex concludes that improving Indigenous health equity through human, non-human and symbolic interactions in institution, system and community settings appears to be a current priority for HA100; whereas reconciling historical relationships and creating equitable social, cultural and political conditions that promote optimal health and wellbeing for Indigenous peoples is positioned as a long-term and indirect goal.