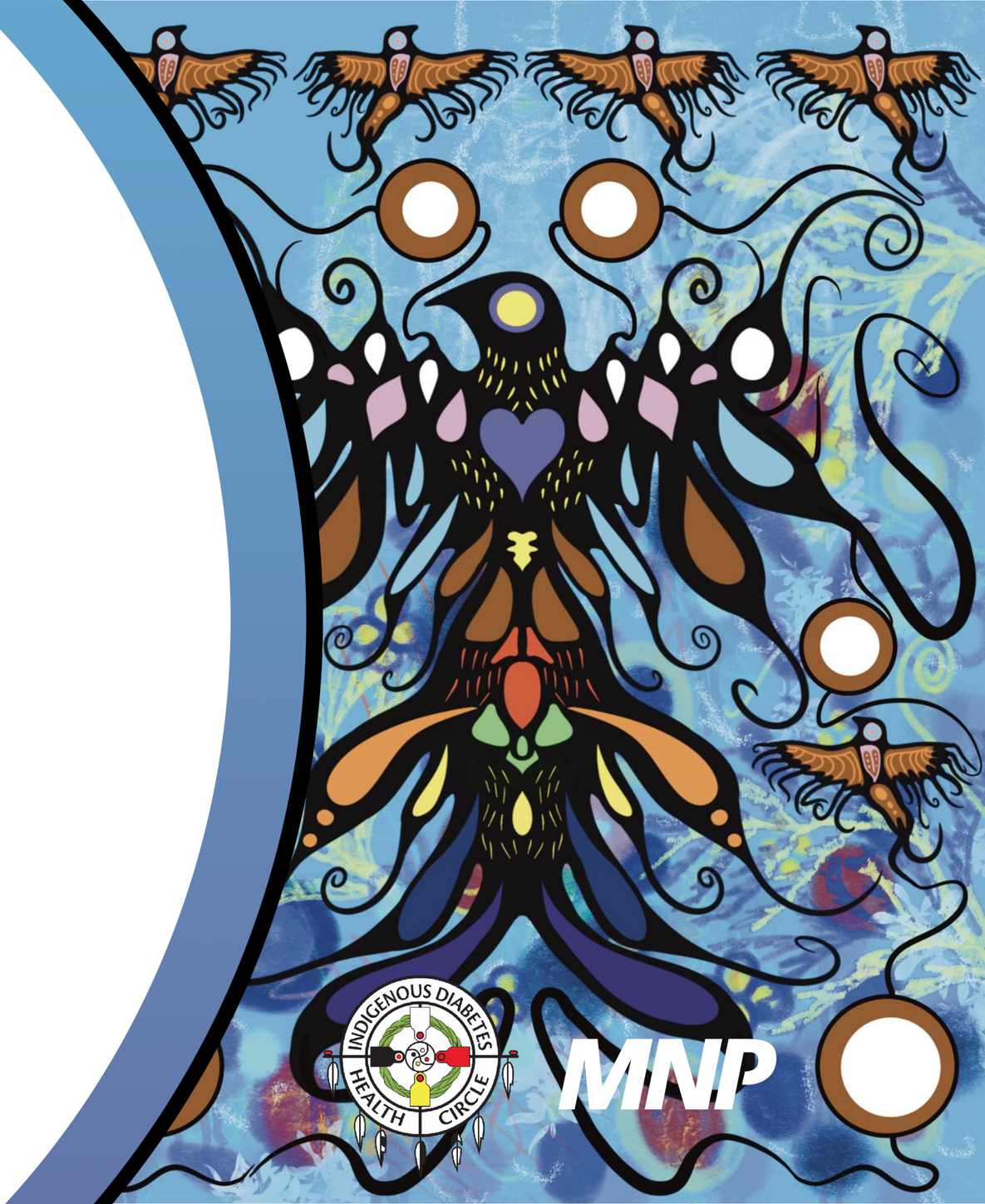
2024 FNHMA Conference

From Evidence to Action: Shaping Health Policy Through Indigenous-Led Research

Agenda

- Introductions
- Understanding Research
- Researching Informing Policy
- Shaping Policy
- Kariwahstha
- Activity 1 – Policy Stories
- The Policy Process
- Activity 2 – Policy Networks



Introductions

Dr. Clint Abbott

MNP, Consulting Services

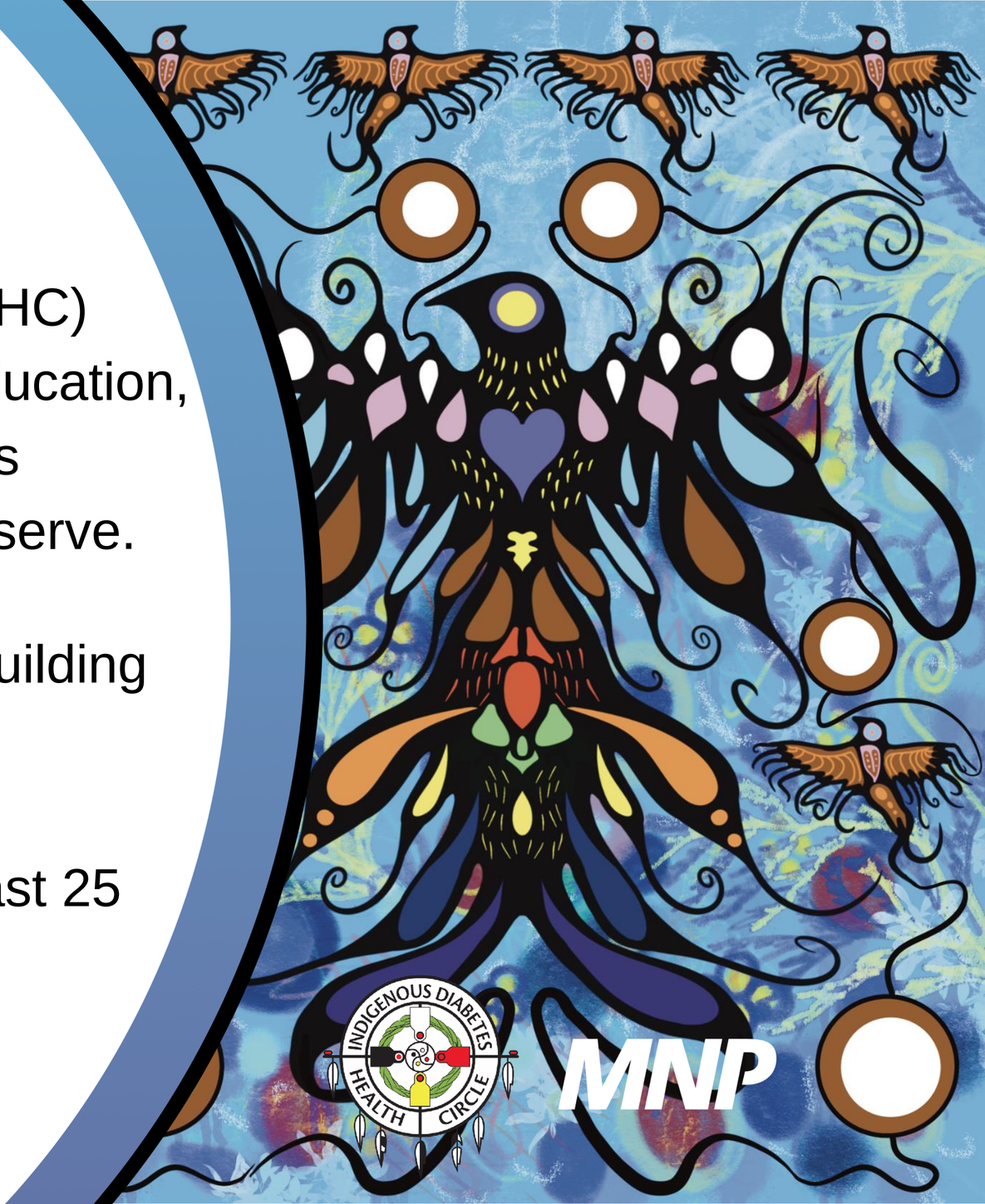
Roslynn Baird

Indigenous Diabetes Health Circle (IDHC), CEO

Who is the IDHC?

The Indigenous Diabetes Health Circle (IDHC) provides programs focused on diabetes education, prevention, and management in Indigenous communities in Ontario, both on and off-reserve.

Facilitating community capacity-building, building upon traditional strengths, and supporting community-driven programming has been foundational to the work of IDHC for the past 25 years.

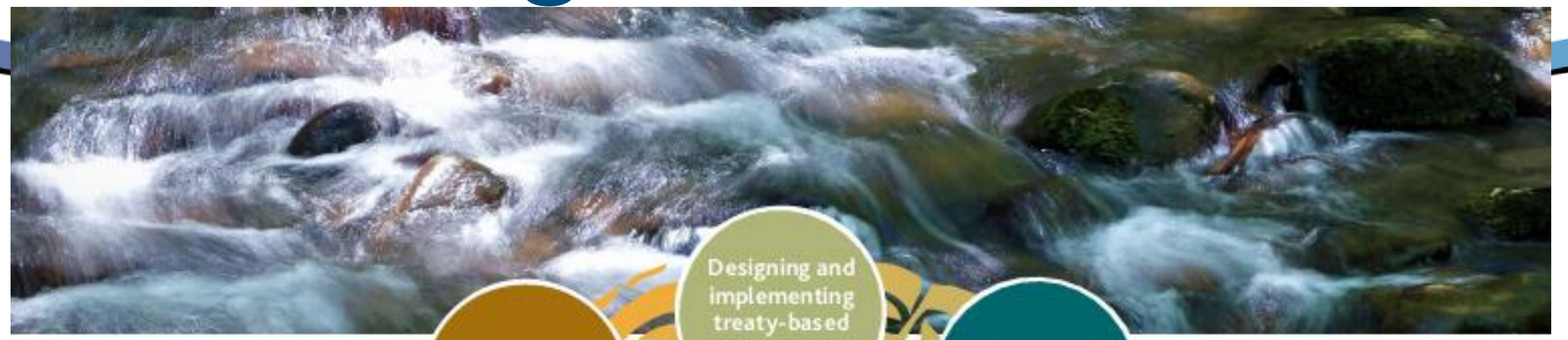


2024 National Public Policy Circle Gathering

The 2024 National Public Policy Circle Gathering, held in Victoria brought together a diverse group of Indigenous leaders, healthcare professionals, policymakers, and community advocates who work in the fields of Indigenous diabetes and Indigenous Health.

Through a shared commitment to improving the health outcomes of Indigenous peoples, participants engaged in collaborative discussions focused on systemic change, capacity building, and advancing culturally relevant policies

MNP Indigenous Health Services



Services

MNP's Indigenous Health Sector Services team provides insights and advice to help governments, health authorities, non-profit organizations and community leaders optimize service delivery and improve the outcomes from Indigenous healthcare programs.

Key areas we support include:

Understanding Research

Understanding Research

Research is a way to find out new information or understand things better. It involves looking at different sources and materials to learn more about a topic.

Research can look like:

- Community Storytelling
- Interviews
- Surveys
- Sharing Circles or Focus Groups

Examples of Health Research Activities

Collecting and sharing community stories to understand different perspectives.

Reviewing existing literature to understand what is already known.

Conducting surveys to gather perspectives from community members.

Applying research findings to enact change on health policies, practices, or programs

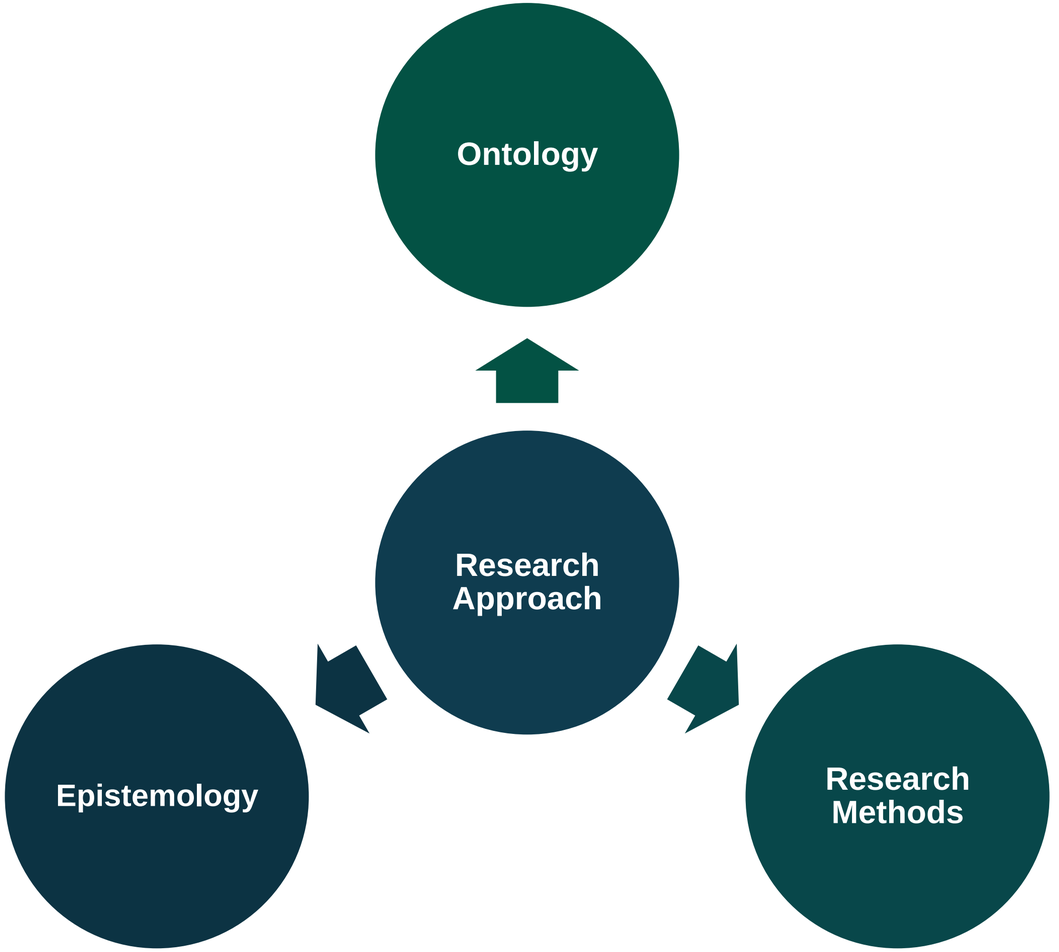
Research Approaches *(Research Paradigms)*

The research approach (paradigm) is a method, model, or pattern for conducting research. It is supported by three main pillars:

1. **Ontology:** This refers to the nature of reality and what can be known about it . It answers the question: “What is reality?”

2. **Epistemology:** This is the study of knowledge and how it can be acquired. It answers the question: “How is it possible to know reality?”

3. **Research Methods:** This involves the specific methods and techniques used to collect and analyze data. It answers the question: “How do we go about discovering the answer or reality?”



Research Approaches *(Research Paradigms)*

Each research approach offers a unique perspective on how to approach and understand research.

	Positivism	Critical Realism	Relativism (interpretivism/social constructionism)	Indigenous
Ontology ***What is real?***	Realist; one knowable reality	Critical realist; one reality, but only within probability	Relativist; multiple, socially constructed realities	Relativist, relational; multiple, socially constructed realities, mutual reality based on multitude of relationships
Epistemology ***What is true?***	Objectivist, empirical; research findings are true	Objectivist, empirical, findings are probably true	Subjectivist, experiential; truth lies within the human experience	Intersubjective; experiential, knowledge is relational
Research Methodology/ Methods ***How do I examine what's real?***	Quantitative (e.g., surveys, experimental research, statistical analysis, etc.)	Quantitative (e.g., surveys, experimental research, statistical analysis, etc.)	Often Qualitative and/or Quantitative	Participatory, liberatory, transformative; positioned in Indigenous knowledge systems

MNP

Indigenous Research Approaches

Several Indigenous scholars and research have developed models of research approaches (paradigms) that reflect Indigenous worldviews and ways of knowing, which differ significantly from Western approaches. Some of the accepted models and frameworks include:

1. **The Four R's of Indigenous Research**
2. **Relational Paradigm**
3. **Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being**
4. **Two-Eyed Seeing**
5. **Indigenous Storywork**
6. **Ceremony and Protocol**

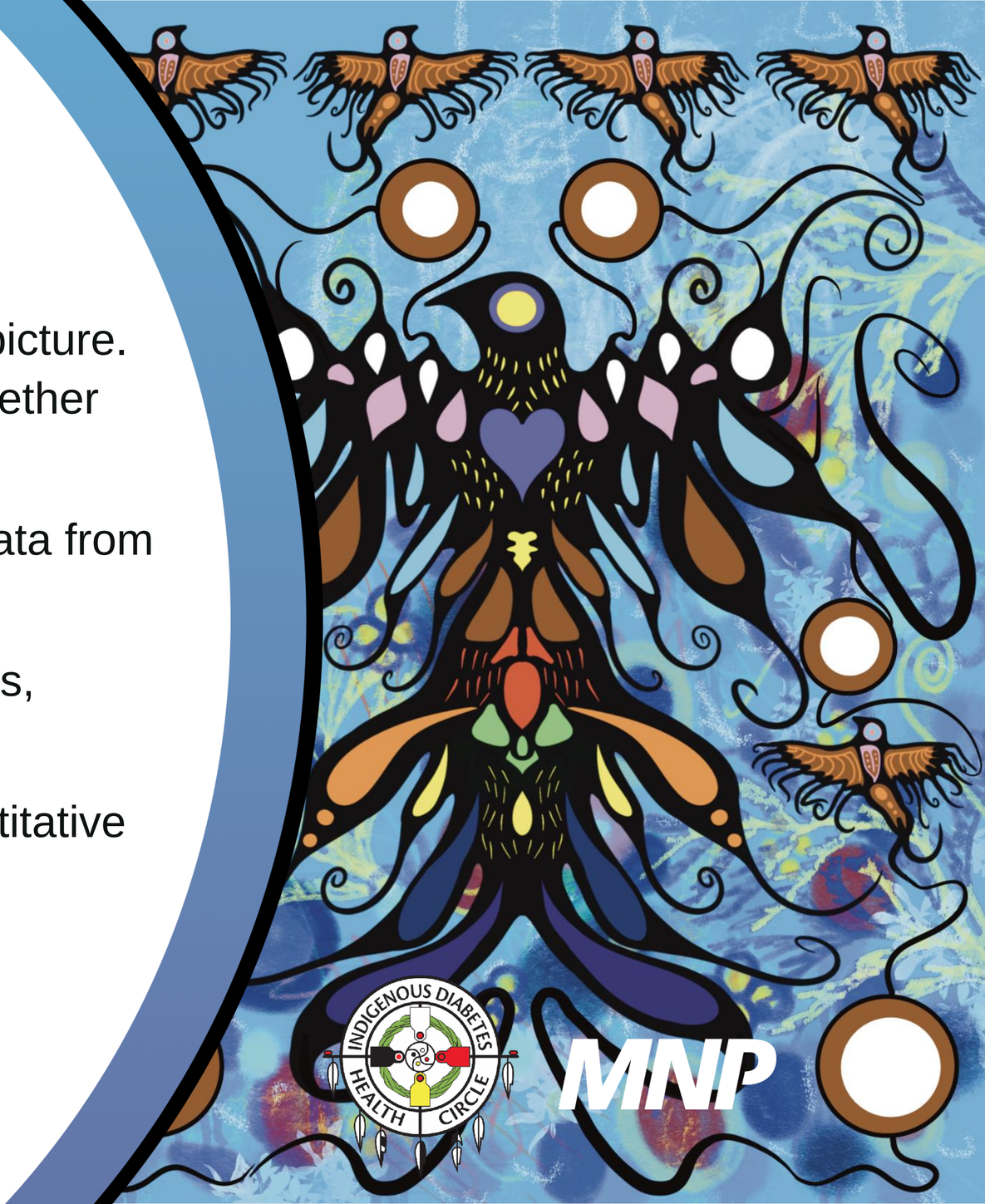
OCAP Principles: Indigenous Data Sovereignty

- OCAP stands for **Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession.** These principles assert that Indigenous communities have the right to own, protect, and control how their data is used.
- By following OCAP, data collection and use respect community self-determination, ensuring that information reflects their values and priorities.

- **Ownership:** Indigenous communities own their data and decide how it is used.
- **Control:** They control all aspects of data collection, analysis, and dissemination.
- **Access:** Communities have the right to access their data and decide who else can access it.
- **Possession:** Physical custody of data to protect it from misuse.

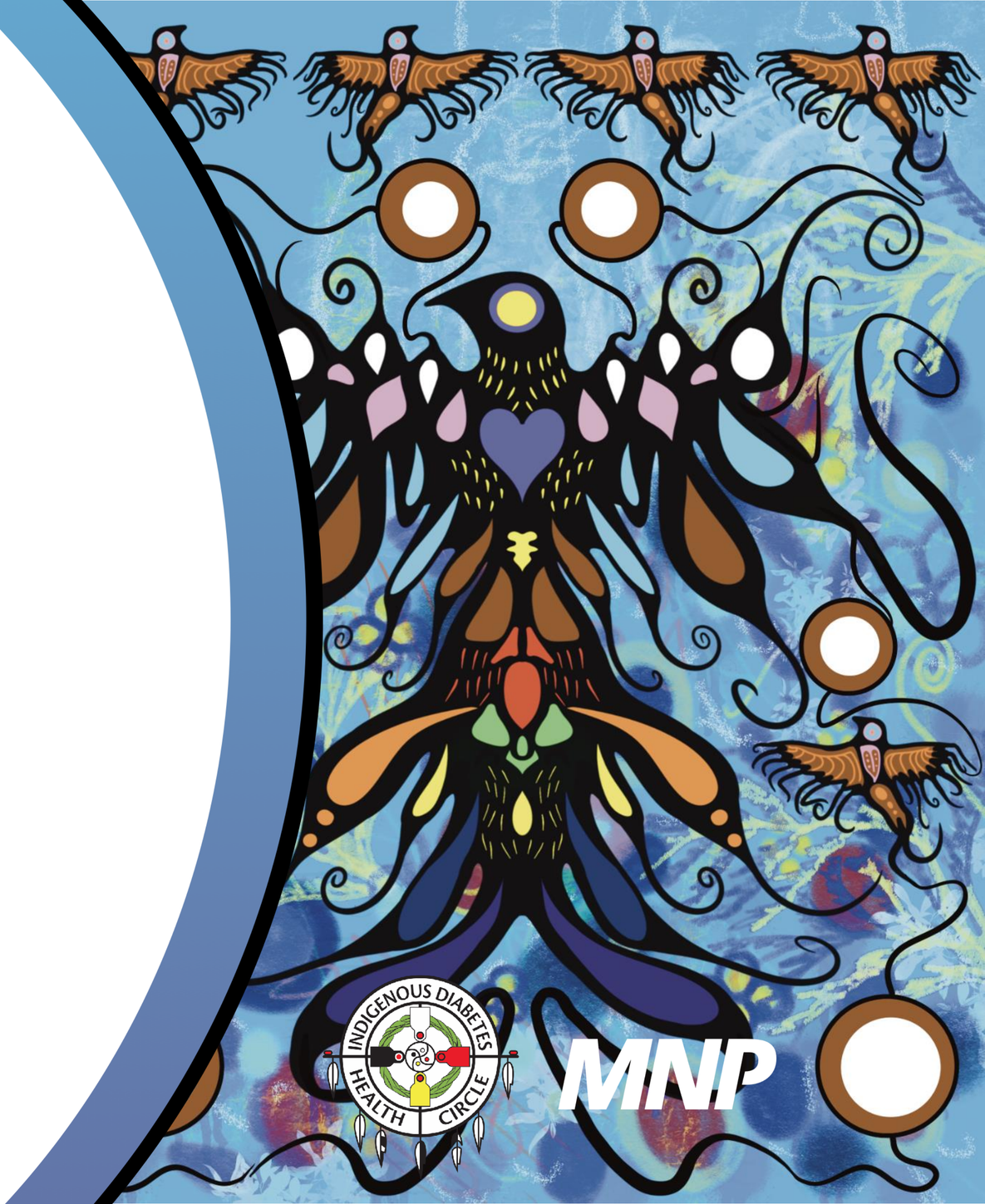
Analyzing Information

- Different types of information help us capture a fuller picture. Using both qualitative and quantitative information together can strengthen research and storytelling.
- **Qualitative:** Non-numerical, descriptive information/data from interviews, observations, and stories.
- **Quantitative:** Numerical information/data from surveys, statistics, measurable outcomes.
- **Mixed Methods:** Combines both qualitative and quantitative information to provide a fuller picture.



Information Sources

- Traditional Knowledge
- Community Member Data and Stories
- Academic Literature
- Grey Literature
- Census and Administrative Data
- Surveys and Program Evaluations
- Environmental Data
- Historical and Policy Documents
- Others?



Knowledge Sharing

- Sharing knowledge is important for building shared understanding, promoting collaboration, and building culturally relevant solutions.
- There are several forms of knowledge sharing, which can include:
  - **Gatherings and conferences**
  - **Accelerators and incubators**
  - **Knowledge hubs and networks**

Why it Matters:

- Building collective wisdom
- Inspiring innovation
- Supporting policy development and advocacy
- Honouring and integrating traditional knowledge

Shaping Policy

What is “Policy”?

A policy is a set of statements of principles, values, and intent that outlines expectations and provides a basis for consistent decision-making and resource allocation in respect to a specific issue.

Policies can look like:

- Legislation
- Regulations
- Guidelines
- Statements

Examples of Health Policies

Scope of practice for nurses established by ON Nurses Assoc.

Clinical Practice Guidelines established by Diabetes Canada.

Transportation policies that encourage healthy activities.

School lunch policies that educate youth and encourage healthy nutrition.

Research Informing Policy

Research can influence policy, in the following ways:

1. Identifying needs
2. Researching the benefits and harms of policy solutions
3. Supporting long-term planning
4. Guiding decision-making
5. Evaluating policy impact or outcomes

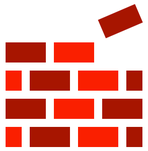
From Information to Insights

- The information provided helps to understand important issues, the pros and cons of possible policies, and the outcomes of policy ideas.
- Insights and findings may be shared to influence local/community, provincial/territorial, and federal policies, including:
  - **Local/Community:** Community leaders and local government officials who can implement changes at the grassroots level.
  - **Provincial/Regional**: Provincial or regional health authorities and policymakers who can enact broader health policies.
  - **Federal**: National policymakers and government bodies responsible for overarching health policies and funding

National Public Policy Circle Key Priorities

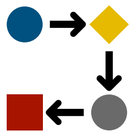
Flexible to Meet the Unique Needs of Indigenous People

Indigenous Led and Informed Policy Making



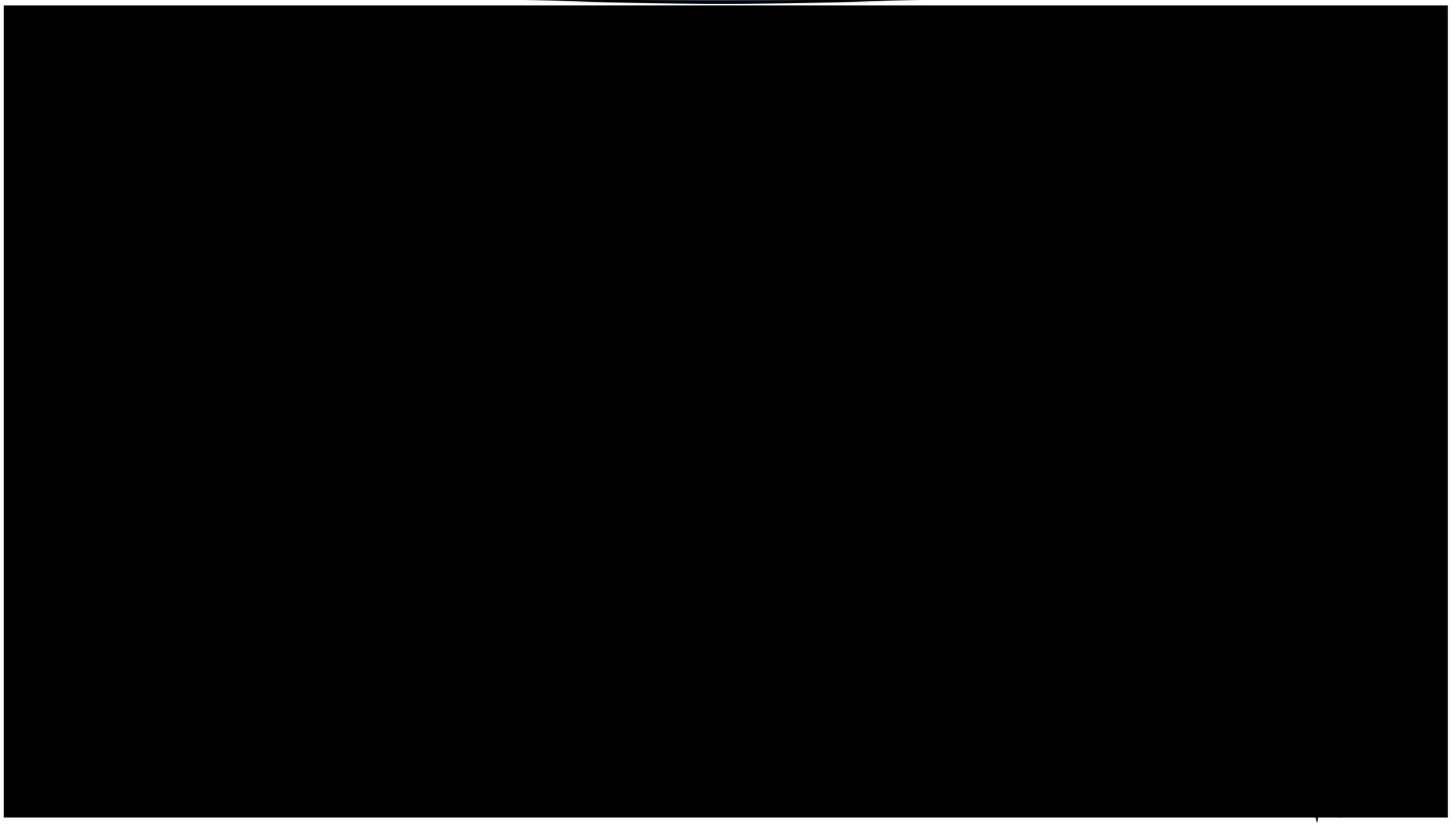
Ensure Policies Promote and Respect Cultural Safety

Build and Maintain Relationships with Indigenous Communities



Understanding how to Navigate Different Jurisdictions

2024 National Public Policy Circle Gathering Video

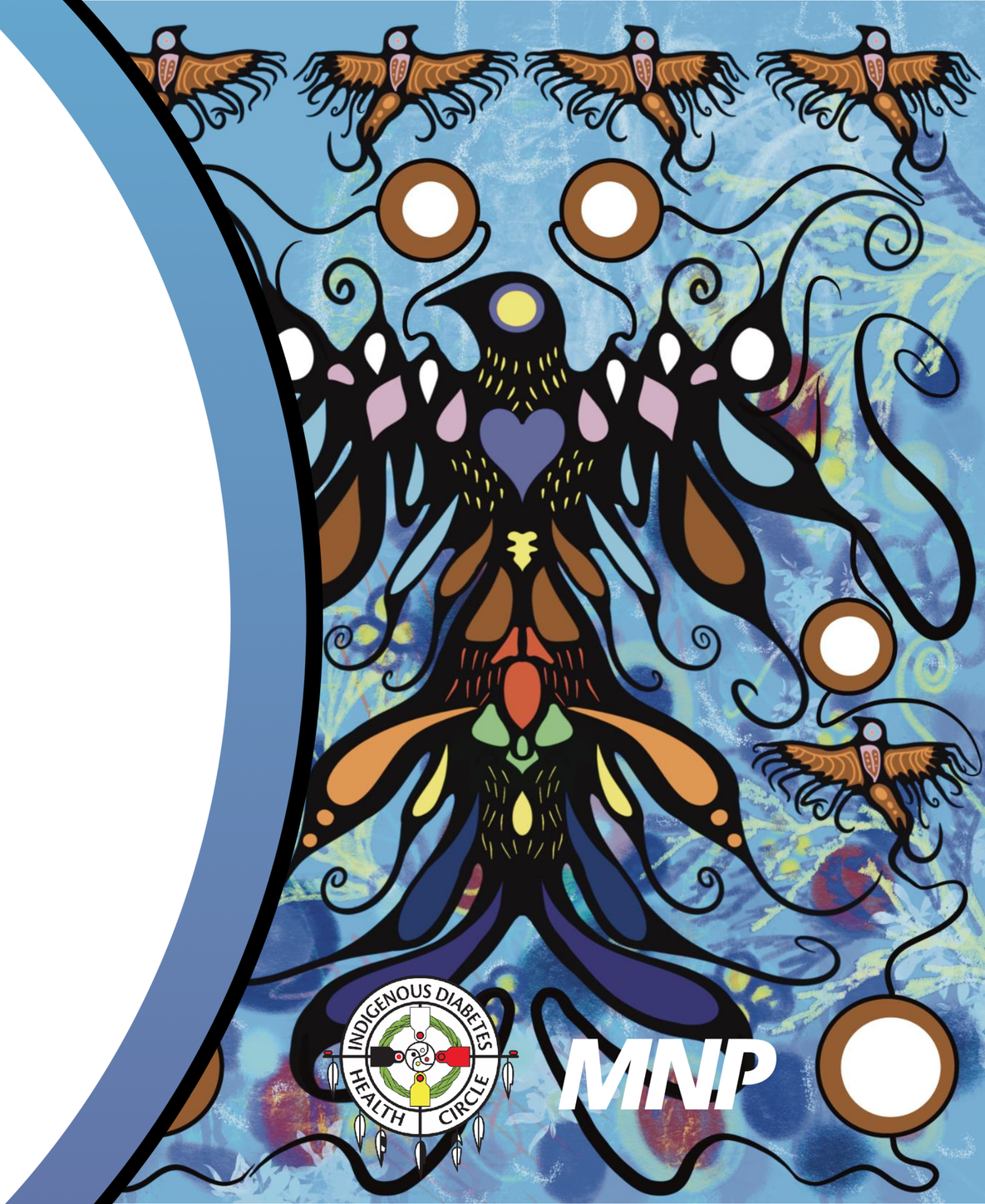


Activity – Stories About Informing Policy

Share a story of your work in helping to shape or inform policies at any level (local, regional, national or other).

Telling Your Story

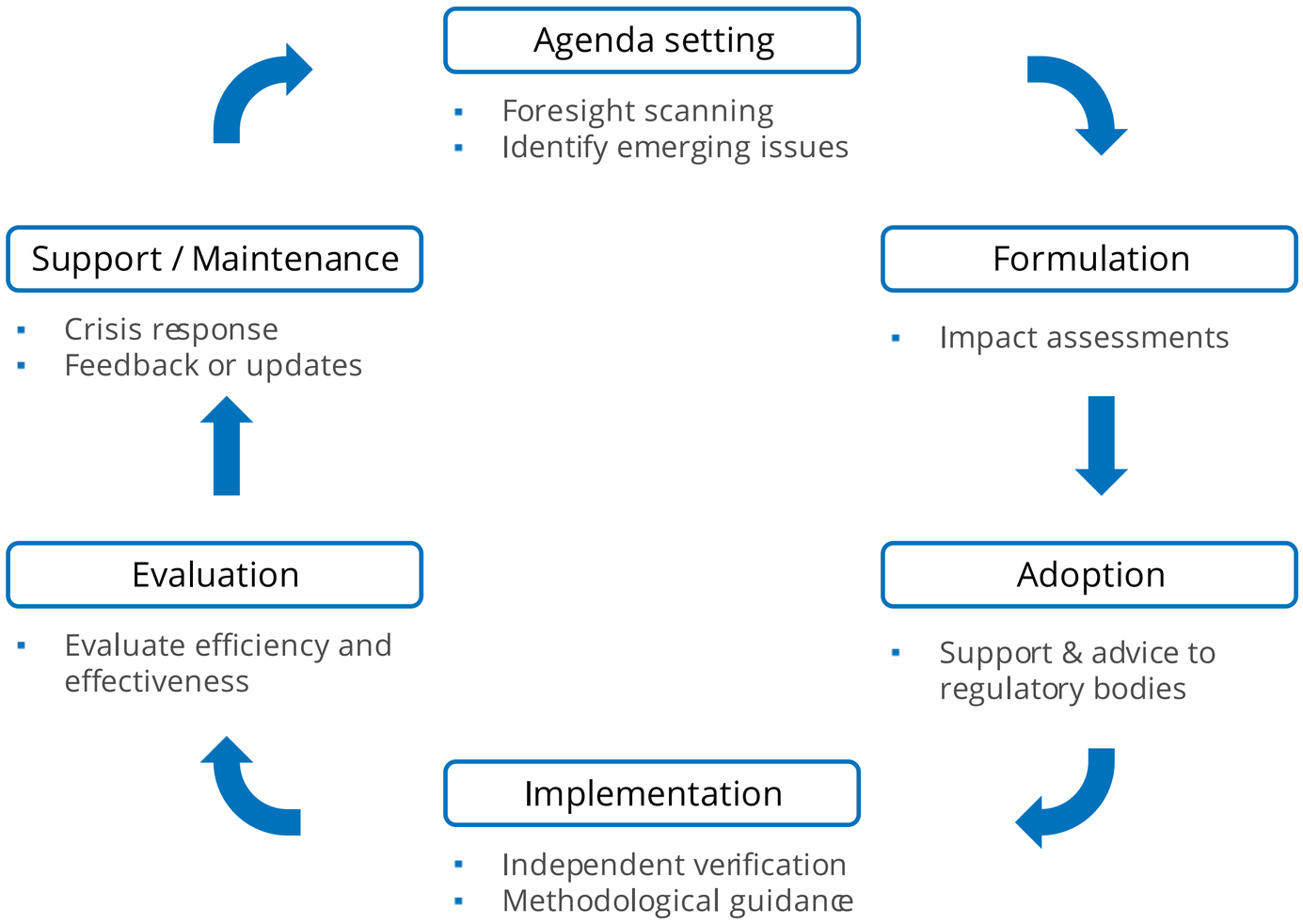
- Know Your Audience
- Use Clear and Simple Language
- Visualize Your Information
- Tell a Story
- Engage Your Audience



How Policy is Shaped (and re-shaped)

Who is involved?

- Knowledge Keepers
- Designers
- Experts
- Specific Interest Groups
- Private Sector
- Decision-Makers
- The Public
- Others?



Being A Part of the Policy-Making Process

As you begin to think about being a part of the policy-making process, it's important to have a plan. The steps to take can be broken down as follows:

Issues/Goals

What is the outcome that we want to achieve?

Strategies

How do we intend to achieve our goals?

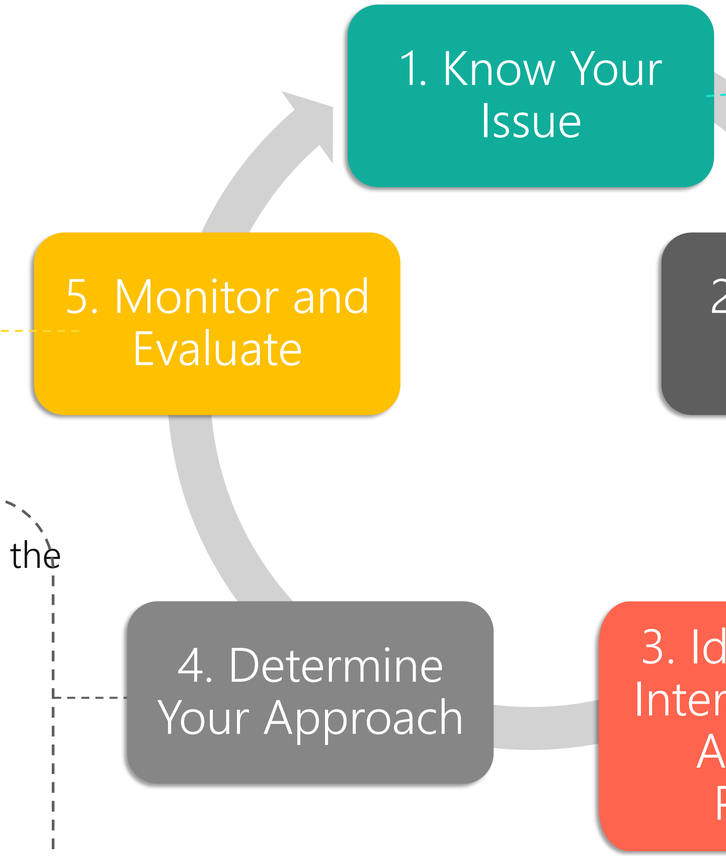
Actions

What specific steps need to be taken to implement the strategies?

Results

How will we review our progress and assure our goals have been achieved?

Influence and Involvement



- What is the problem you are trying to solve? (who? What? When? Where?)
- Possible regulations
- Mitigation strategies
- What jurisdiction does it fall under?

- How do you propose the problem will be solved?
- What are you trying to accomplish?
- What is your ask?

- Who can support the change you are looking for?
- Who might the challengers be and what might they say?

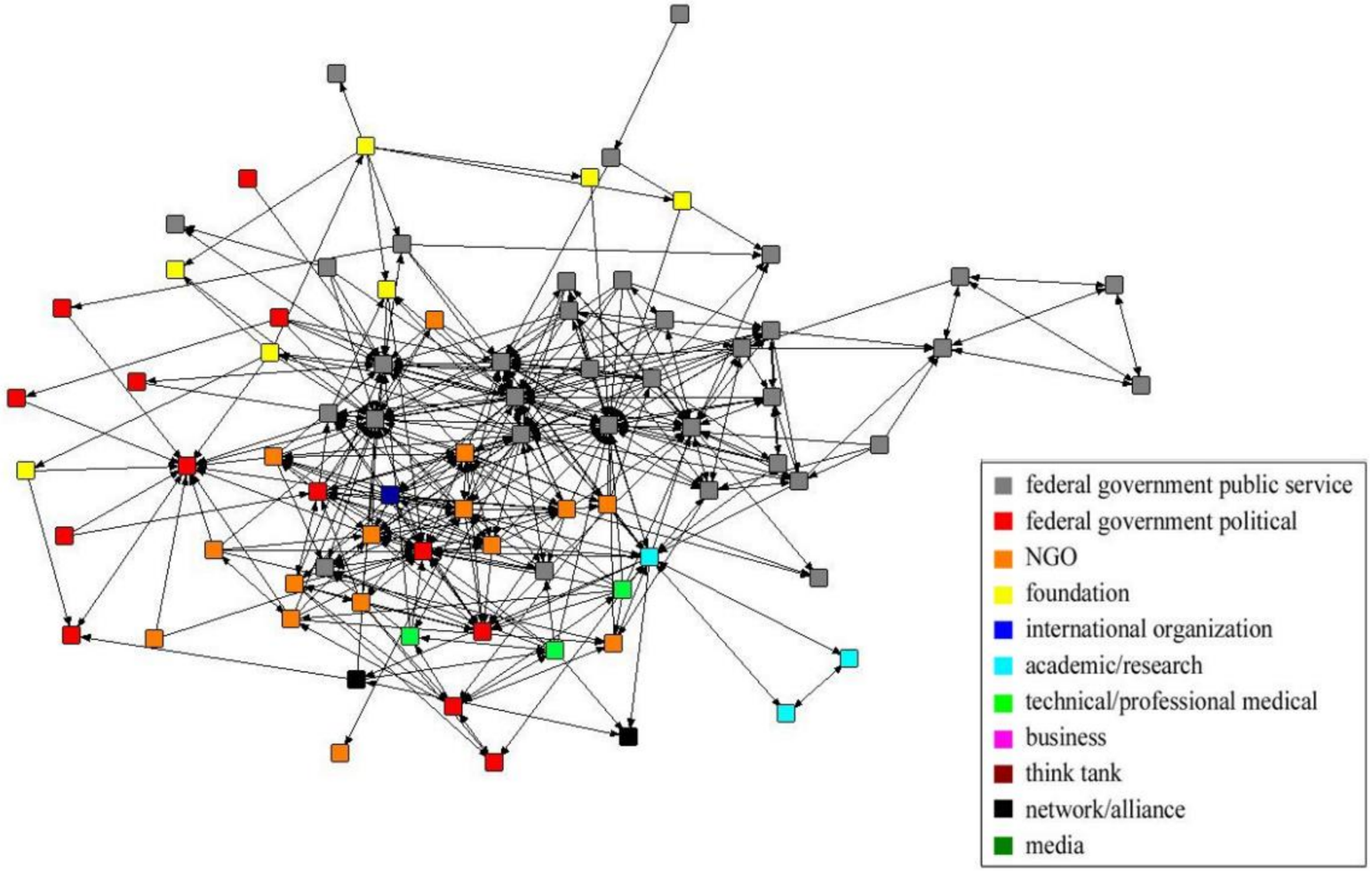
- Consider your audience – who is the ultimate decision-maker?
- Address Pushback
- How to deliver your message
  - Face to face meetings
  - Letters
  - Social Media
- Be clear on your ask

- Did it work?
  - Is it working?
- What adjustments are required?
  - Did stakeholders change?
  - New variables

The Complex Reality – Networked Governance

It is important to understand who is involved, how they connect, and what influence they have.

For example, the most efficient way to advance your policy goal may not be going right to a minister.



Activity – Your Policy Networks

At your table, choose one relevant issue or challenge (keep it broad) and using a large sheet start to map out the various connections to that issue.

1. **Identify key actors** by writing down organizations, groups, governments, agencies, organizations, institutions, advocates, etc. Space them out on your sheet. Try to use different colours for different types of actors.

2. **Map and label relationships** between the different actors using arrows and lines to show who influences whom, who collaborates, who provides resources or information. Label the type of relationship (e.g., funding, advice, collaboration, advocacy, etc.)

3. **Observe** where you see strong connections and where they are gaps. Consider how these relationships impact the policy process. Discuss your observations as a group.