

TITLE: Knowledge, beliefs, and health care perceptions of epilepsy in Minnesota's Native American Nations

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Objective: Compare epilepsy knowledge, beliefs and psycho-social responses of Native Americans and Non-Native American non-epilepsy neurology patients in University of Minnesota Neurology clinics and in a Minneapolis Native-American community clinic.

Respondents:

Native American: 33

Non-Native American: 115

Analysis: Comparison across the 4-domain scales between patients with and without epilepsy. Significance was determined utilizing a t-test for scale variables, Chi square with Yates correction of categorical variables

Results- to be presented in table 1,2

Conclusions:

The Native American respondents were significantly lower in age, driving licenses, educational level and household income, but higher in percentage of females and in single status.

Regarding knowledge and beliefs:

- Non-NA scored significantly higher in knowledge (cause of epilepsy and what to do when seizures stop) and had a more positive perception of the health system as a whole.
- No differences were found between the two groups in provider trust, nor in belief of a solely medical etiology.
- NA scored significantly higher in attributing a spiritual dimension to epilepsy and in acceptance of epilepsy in others.

The data suggest the need for:

- 1) Additional education of Native Americans on epilepsy causes, management, and medications issues.
- 2) Education of Non-NA of NA beliefs in a spiritual dimension to the condition; and recognition of a lower level of acceptance of epilepsy in the Non-NA population which may contribute to greater marginalization of people with seizure disorders.