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Indigenous concepts of health and healing in Andean populations. How to model health beliefs and practices for the development of equitable health policies relevant to refugee, migrant and First Nations peoples

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The recent global migrant and refugee crisis complements a longer term intractable problem of aboriginal and First Nations peoples surviving as marginal populations in territories once their tribal heartlands, with multiple social and health problems largely unmet by modern systems of health and welfare. These peoples share many similar experiences and innovative models are therefore required to adequately and equitably address their social and health care needs in a manner that fully respects them as independent peoples and the bearers of alternative life ways, cultures and belief systems. The study examines indigenous concepts of health and healing from the ethnic Andean perspective, employing a framework of interdisciplinary methods which integrates archaeologicalhistorical, ethnographic and modern health sciences approaches to construct a model of their health beliefs and practices and how these have changed across time. A conceptual bridge will be developed from the study population to generate a transcultural model for use with contemporary peoples from migrant, refugee or First Nations populations. This will reconcile inter-cultural health and social care provision with equitable access to modern health and social care and inform good practice for the integration of a people's traditional beliefs and practices. Drawn from indigenous populations with historical experience of socio-cultural displacement and trauma, the generation of the transcultural model and transferable 'policy tools' offers an innovative approach and methodology in contemporary global population displacement scenarios as well as with marginalised First Nations peoples.

Innovative methods are described for the construction of health policy initiatives, drawn from a study of indigenous Andeans whose autochthonous beliefs and practices were forcibly adapted to alien European paradigms. Transcultural health beliefs models can be used to develop policies sensitive to indigenous and migrant people's social and health needs.