Expanding Health Research with Native Americans: Pharmacogenomics Research and Bioethics

Presented by Katrina Claw (Navajo), Postdoctoral Research Fellow

Department of Pharmaceutics-University of Washington
Northwest-Alaska Pharmacogenomics Research Network

Dr. Katrina Claw is a postdoctoral research fellow at the University of Washington in the Department of Pharmaceutics. She also works with the Northwest-Alaska Pharmacogenomics Research Network. She is a 2015 Ford Foundation Postdoctoral Fellow. Her research interests include human genetics and genomics, pharmacogenomics, health disparities, and the ethical and social implications of genomic research relating to Native American and other indigenous populations around the world.

The Northwest-Alaska Pharmacogenomics Research Network (PGRN) and the Center for Genomics and Healthcare Equality (CGHE) are the results of long-term partnerships between multiple American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) tribes and institutions, and is founded upon a community-based participatory research approach. With PGRN, genetic variation in warfarin disposition and response genes was studied in AI/AN people and novel variants in multiple genes related to warfarin sensitivity were found. Yet there still remain unknown factors that account for interindividual variation in warfarin drug response. Moving beyond genomics, assessing community perceptions of genomics research and research priorities are essential moving forward in the genomic era.

Dr. Claw is Diné (Navajo) and grew up on the Navajo Nation in Many Farms, Arizona. She obtained her BS in biology and BA in anthropology at Arizona State University; her PhD in genome sciences at the University of Washington in Seattle, WA in 2013, where she was also a National Science Foundation predoctoral fellow.