

# Close to the Street: Ethics of Access to Health Care

- Ethnographic methodology
- Informed by social constructionism, critical and feminist theory
- Participant observation/Interviews
  - Approx 200 hours of field work in Three settings (2 CHC's, 1 ED)
  - 24 formal interviews

# Climate of Distrust

- *Reluctance to Access Healthcare*
- *Loss of Faith in the System*
- *Surviving the Streets*
- *Culture of Fixing*



# Enhancing Access to Health Care: Chains of Trust

## *Forging Trust in a Climate of Distrust*

*Forging linkages of trust in a climate of distrust is a central feature of enhancing access to healthcare for those who are street involved.*



# Linkages in the Chain of Trust

- Developing Trusting Relationships Over Time
- Linking to a Climate of Trust
- Extending the Chain of Trust

*Building interpersonal and system trust over time*

# *Developing Trusting Relationships Over Time*

- *Respect*
  - *“I just want a doctor that respects me and treats me like a person”*
- *Accepting without Judging*
  - *“Like you know (the street nurse) accepts the fact that I’m a junkie and I’m going to be a junkie the rest of my life.”*



# Developing Trusting Relationships over Time

- *Outreach/Reaching Out*

- “But we have to do outreach. Because if you don't do outreach, you're missing all these people.”

- *Harm Reduction*

- “You're figuring out who they are, where they're at at moments, and how to work together. So, you meet whatever few little goals you have even if you know, a good night's sleep that night. It's not about telling them what's good for them. And so that definitely is absolutely relevant in my mind about what I think/see as harm reduction everywhere.”

# Linking to a Climate of Trust

- *“So sometimes, just initiating that contact and bringing them down. Then they put a face to [the counselor] if they meet him”*
- *“Everyone who works from the front staff to the [counselor], we all have our own role to play....and the other people to fall back on.”*

# Forging Linkages: Extending the Chain of Trust

*Nurses acted as 'advocates' and helped to facilitate access for individuals by forging linkages with other health care providers, community agencies and hospitals.*

