Major depressive disorder (MDD) is a common and serious mood disorder that can severely affect emotions, thoughts, and performance of daily activities. A high burden of mental illness has been documented in Indigenous communities in Canada (Tjepkema, 2002). Specifically, epidemiological studies show a greater burden of mental health morbidity in many Indigenous communities across Canada, with prevalence rates of mental health conditions up to twice as high as those of neighbouring non-Indigenous communities (Kirmayer, Brass, & Tait, 2000).

Various psychological studies have identified potential risk and protective factors for MDD. However, most studies tend to use Caucasian participants and do not consider racial or cultural differences. The purpose of this study is to identify the risk and protective factors that are associated with MDD, within the adult Indigenous community living in Toronto. Analyses will be based on the Our Health Counts Toronto Study, which used respondent-driven sampling (RDS) to recruit 918 adult participants in Toronto. Key variables that will be considered include social determinants of health and relationships to culture and cultural resources. This study will be completed in partnership with Seventh Generation Midwives Toronto, which retains full ownership and control over all data in accordance with the project's academic-community partnership agreements and OCAP principles.

Given the complexity of RDS data, the proposed regression models must account for both the unequal sampling probabilities and clustering within the data. These advanced statistical models will allow us to determine the associations between MDD and the explanatory variables. Appropriate confounders, including age and gender, will be controlled for. With the support of our community partners, we hope to improve our understanding of factors associated with MDD and identify those community members who may be at risk.