

Dr. Jim Berner

2007 Tribal Environmental Health Star Grantee

A Conversation on Climate Change, POPs, Subsistence Food and Alaskan Communities



Bio: Dr. James E. Berner has practiced medicine in the Alaska Native health system since 1974, and is certified in Internal Medicine and Pediatrics. He is the Senior Director for Science in the Division of Community Health, of the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium.

Research: Dr. Berner's current grant (R833705) focuses on the Yupik Alaskan Native (AN) residents in the Yukon-Kuskokwim River Delta (YKD) of Southwestern Alaska. Salmon and seals are the largest component of the subsistence diet for AN in the YKD and climate change has increased the concentration of POPs in these animals. Pregnant Yupik women have POPs levels similar to other Arctic women, with higher toxaphene, brominated flame retardants (PBDEs) and Hg levels than most other Arctic pregnant women. The goal of Dr. Berner's grant is to evaluate whether climate change is affecting the health of the Yupik AN people through its impact on their subsistence lifestyle.

