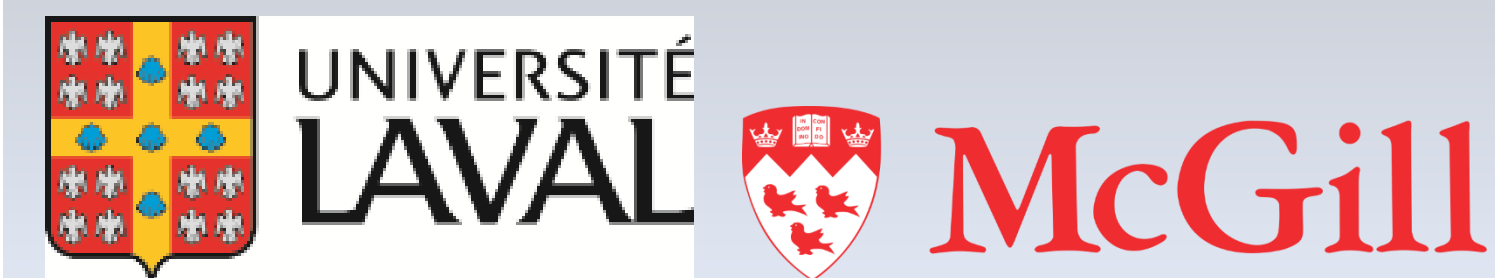


Conceptualisation and operationalisation of a holistic indicator of health for aging Inuit

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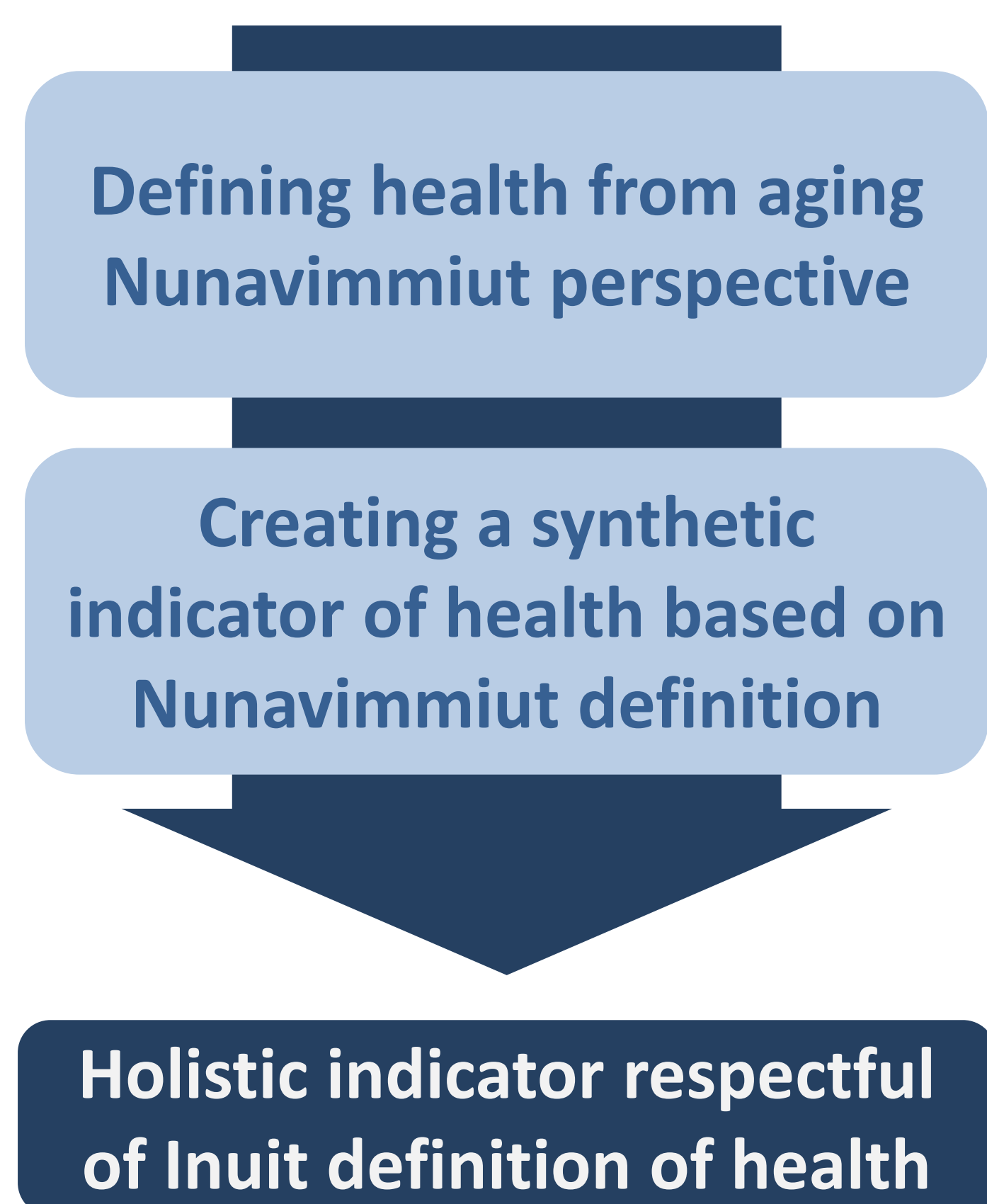
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Context

While still dominated by the young, demographic trends show that the proportion of older Inuit is increasing rapidly. As people age, they face particular health challenges. Understanding aging in the Arctic is important to support the health of this growing segment of the Inuit population. Inuit models of health encompass social, physical, ecological and mental health. Developing indicators of health that reflect Inuit culture is an important objective in health research.

Research objectives



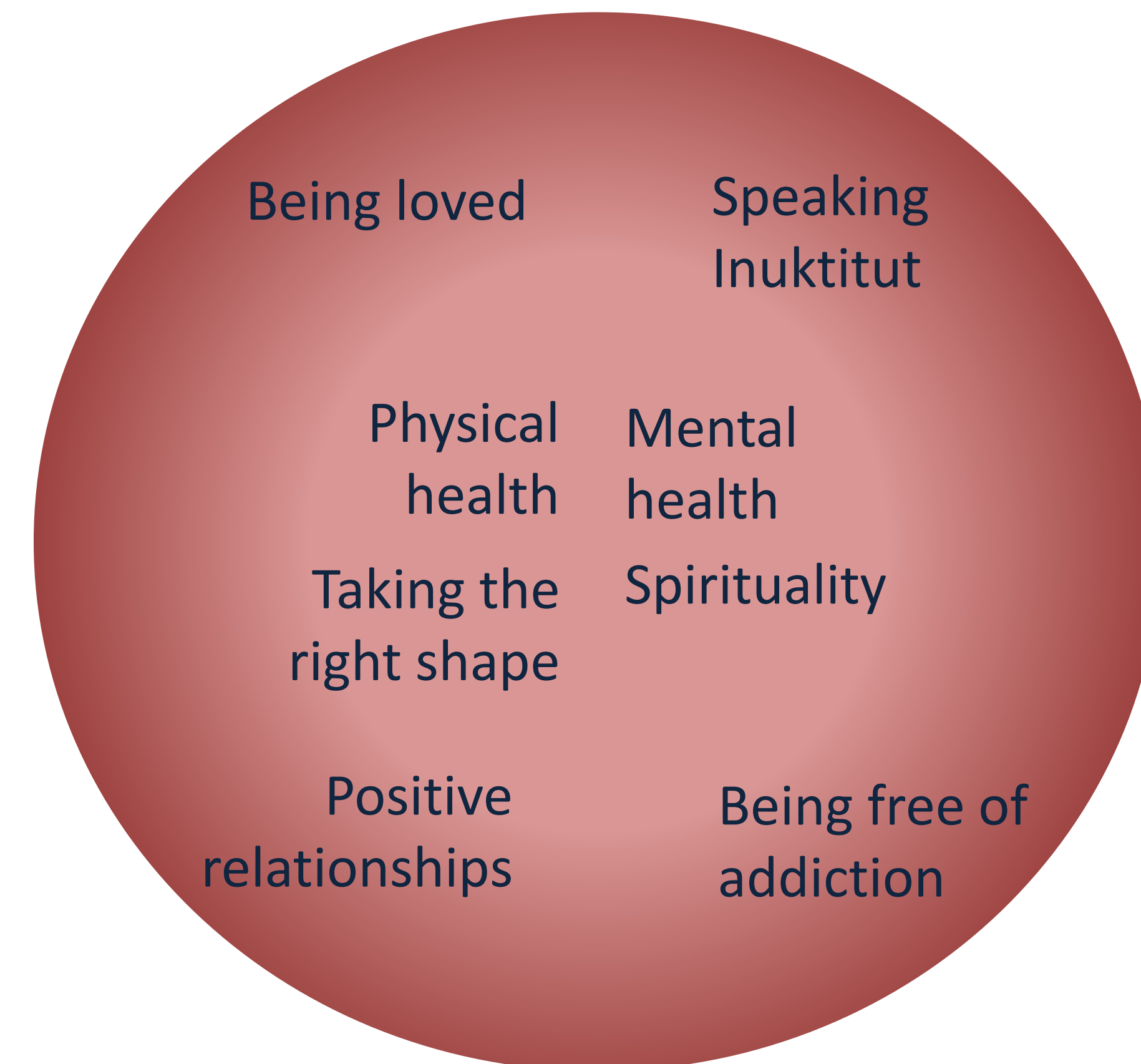
Conceptualisation of health and well-being

Methods

- Data collected in 1.5 day workshops in 2016 in two communities in Nunavik to understand health and well-being from a community perspective. These workshops were part of the Community Component of the *Qanuillirpita?* 2017 Nunavik Health Survey.
- 21 workshop participants, of whom about half were aged 45 years and older
- Secondary analyses of qualitative data, focussing on Nunavik Inuit perceptions of what is health and well-being.
- Results were triangulated with the scientific literature on healthy aging in the Arctic (see references below) and analyses of the community component of the *Qanuillirpita?* survey.

Results

Fig 1. Health and well-being according to Nunavimmiut



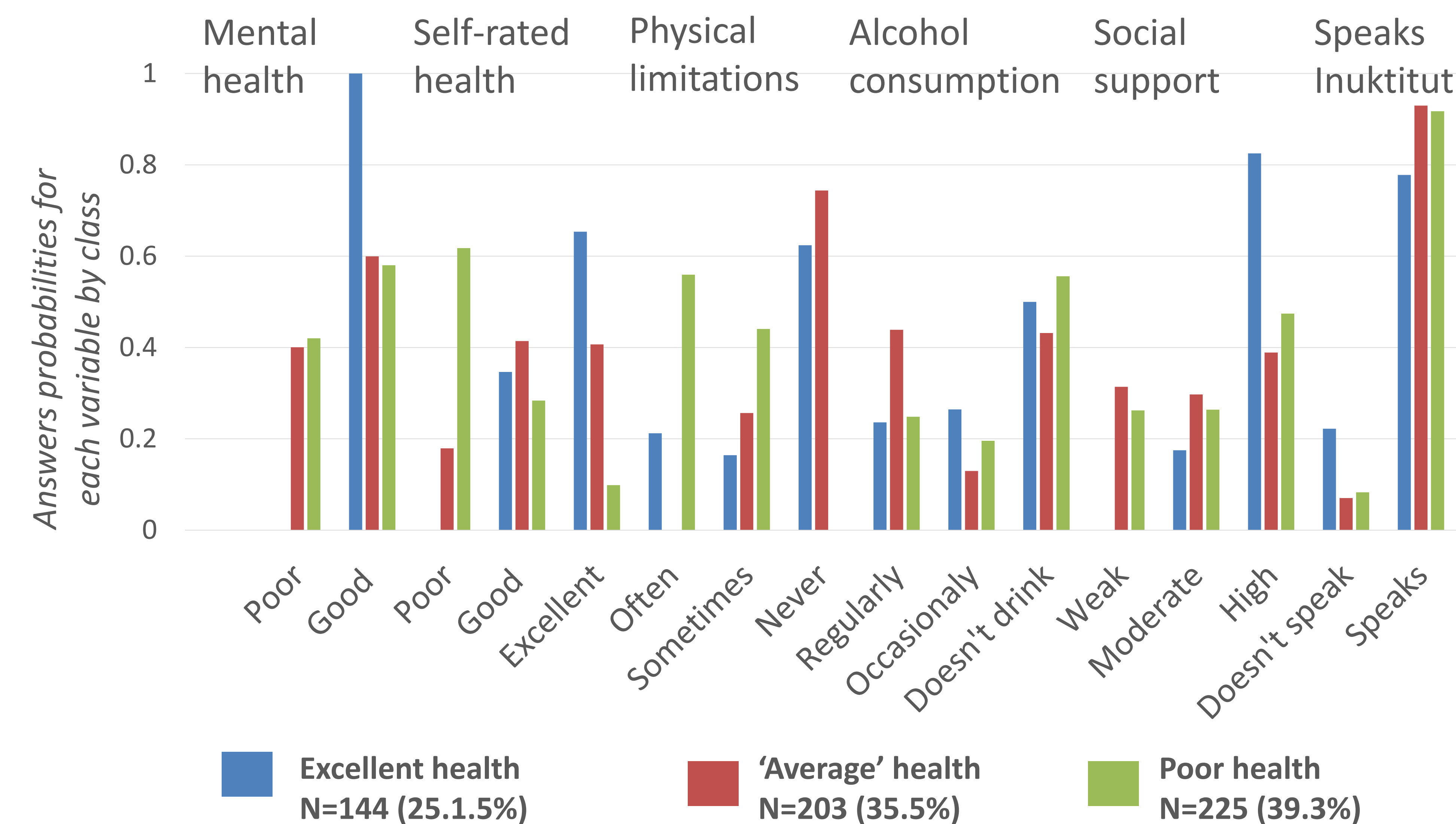
Operationalisation of a holistic definition of health

Methods

- Aboriginal People Survey Public Use Microdata File 2006, N = 572 Inuit ≥ 45 years old
- Health measures: self-rated health, depressive symptoms, physical limitations, emotional social support, positive interactions, frequency of alcohol consumption, ability to speak inuktitut
- We used latent class analyses to categorise participants into *n* health profile groups according to health measures
- The optimal number of health profiles (groups) was identified by goodness of fit statistics and theoretical background.

Results

Fig 2. Model with three-group health profile



Discussion

Using mixed-methods led to the creation of a holistic indicator of health that better captures the complexity of health for aging Inuit, including physical, mental and social health factors. Following validation, this indicator has the potential to be used to uncover factors associated with healthy aging in the Arctic. Although the use of triangulation ensured some validity in the analyses, the breadth of variables included in the APS was limited to operationalise a holistic conception of health.

