

# Indigenous Health: The Mysteries and Myths of the HIV Crisis in Saskatchewan



Canadian Academy of Health Sciences  
Académie canadienne des sciences de la santé

May 4, 2018  
Exeter Room, Marquis Hall  
University of Saskatchewan  
Saskatoon, SK

# Program

## **Registration & Breakfast**

## **Welcome from co-chairs**

Dr. Jay Kalra & Dr. Caroline Tait

## **Elder Prayer and Remarks**

Elder Louise Halfe

## **Greetings**

Dr. Jacqueline Ottmann, University of Saskatchewan

Mr. Patrick Odnokon, Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation

Dr. Kishor Wasan, Canadian Academy Health Sciences

## **Setting the Stage**

Dr. Jay Kalra

## **Speakers**

Ms. Lynn Thompson,

*Voice of HIV lived experience*

Dr. Carrie Bourassa,

*Digging Deep: Examining the Root Causes of HIV/AIDS Among  
Aboriginal Women*

Dr. JoLee Sasakamoose,

*Indigenous Healing and Wellbeing*

## **Break**

Dr. Alexandra King,

*Researching ourselves back to life ... wellness*

## **Q&A with speakers**

## **Open Discussion**

## **Closing Remarks & Wrap-up**

Mr. Patrick Odnokon & Dr. Kishor Wasan

## **Elder Reflections**

Elder Louise Halfe

## **Lunch & Networking**



### **Dr. Jawahar (Jay) Kalra**

Dr. Jay Kalra is a Professor of Pathology at the University of Saskatchewan. He has served as Head of the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine and currently serves on the Board of Governors at the University of Saskatchewan and Council of Canadian Academies (CCA). Dr. Kalra is a dedicated physician who has gained international acclaim for his role in laboratory medicine reorganization, and has contributed globally in the area of Quality care and Patient safety, including medical error and disclosure policies. He is recognized for his many contributions as a clinical scientist, academic leader and health system administrator. He has served as a national president of numerous medical associations and scientific societies. He has published extensively and is the author of the book "Medical Errors and Patient Safety: Strategies to reduce and disclose medical errors and improve patient safety."



### **Dr. Caroline Tait**

Dr. Caroline Tait holds a PhD in medical anthropology from McGill University. She co-leads with Dr. William Mussell, First Peoples First Person, a national research network under the umbrella of the Canadian Depression Research and Intervention Network. In their research, policy and intervention work, First Peoples First Person privileges the lived experience of Indigenous people living with mental illness and addictions. Dr. Tait is the nominated principal investigator of the CIHR funded, Saskatchewan Indigenous Mentorship Network. She is Métis from MacDowall, Saskatchewan and a member of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan.



### **Elder Lousie Halfe**

Louise Bernice Halfe is a First Nations poet and author. Her books focus on her childhood experiences while being forced to attend residential school.

Her given name is Louise but she is also known as Sky Dancer as this is her name in Cree. She was born in Two Hills, Alberta, and raised on the Saddle Lake Indian Reserve.

Louise Halfe has won many prestigious awards and has earned positive recognition as an independent Canadian author and Saskatchewan's Poet Laureate. She is currently acting Elder at the University of Saskatchewan, Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre, where she plays an important role in providing cultural guidance to students and staff.



### **Dr. Jacqueline Ottmann**

Dr. Jacqueline Ottmann is Anishinaabe (Saulteaux), former elementary and high school teacher and principal, now a scholar. While at the University of Calgary, she was Coordinator of the First Nations, Métis, Inuit undergraduate teacher education program, and Director of Indigenous Education Initiatives within the Werklund School of Education (WSE). She also co-chaired the WSE Indigenous Strategy, and alongside the Provost, the university-wide Indigenous Strategy.

As of October 1, 2017, Jacqueline became Professor and Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement at the University of Saskatchewan. Ottmann has been recognized as an international researcher, advocate, and change-maker whose purpose is to transform practices inclusive of Indigenous leadership, methodologies and pedagogies. Jacqueline is driven to create schools and communities that foster a deeper sense of belonging and appreciation for Indigenous peoples - their histories, stories, ways of knowing and being.



### **Patrick Odnokon**

As CEO of Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation (SHRF), Patrick works with the SHRF Board and staff to engage the research community on capacity building initiatives. He also works collaboratively with provincial stakeholders on developing a common vision for attaining collective impact through research. In addition, Patrick works closely with government to determine how Saskatchewan's world-class research environment can best respond to a transformed health system and be leveraged into the province's innovation agenda.

Patrick joined SHRF in October 2007 as the Director of Impact and Evaluation before becoming CEO in 2017. As director, Patrick played a key role in monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the progress and impact of SHRF's work in advancing health research and innovation in Saskatchewan. His work has established SHRF as a leader nationally in research evaluation and impact assessment. He has represented SHRF most recently as co-chair of the Impact Analysis Group for the National Alliance of Provincial Health Research Organizations and is a Certified ROI Professional through the ROI Institute of Canada.



### **Dr. Kishor Wasan**

Dr. Wasan was appointed Dean of the College of Pharmacy and Nutrition in August 2014. He has published over 520 peer-reviewed articles and abstracts in the area of lipid-based drug delivery and lipoprotein-drug interactions. Dr. Wasan completed his undergraduate degree in Pharmacy at the University of Texas at Austin and his Ph.D. at the University of Texas Medical Center in Houston at MD Anderson Cancer Center in Cellular and Molecular Pharmacology. After completing a postdoctoral fellowship in Cell Biology at the Cleveland Clinic, Dr. Wasan joined the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences at UBC until 2014. Dr. Wasan was one of the recipients of the 1993 American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists (AAPS) Graduate Student Awards for Excellence in Graduate Research in Drug Delivery, the 2001 AAPS New Investigator Award/Grant in Pharmaceutics and Pharmaceutics Technologies, the 2002 Association of Faculties of Pharmacy of Canada New Investigator Research Award and was named an AAPS fellow in 2006. In addition, Dr. Wasan was awarded a Canadian Institutes of Health Research University-Industry Research Chair in Pharmaceutical Development (2003-2008), was named a University Distinguished Scholar in April 2004, received the 2007 AAPS Award for Outstanding Research in Lipid-Based Drug Delivery, and the 2008 AFPC-Pfizer Research Career Award. In 2009, Dr. Wasan was named CIHR/iCo Therapeutics Research Chair in Drug Delivery for Neglected Global Diseases and in 2010, Dr. Wasan was named a Fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences. In 2011, Dr. Wasan was awarded the Canadian Society of Pharmaceutical Sciences Leadership award for outstanding contributions to Pharmaceutical Sciences in Canada.



### **Lynn Thompson**

Lynn Thompson is from Saskatoon, SK. Originally from Pine Creek First Nations Manitoba, Lynn has lived and worked in the Saskatoon area for the last 17 years as a HIV positive woman. During these years, Lynn has been able to educate, advocate, advise and do public speaking. Lynn has just finished a movie that was produced by Goldelox Productions and The Canadian Legal AIDS Network on HIV and Criminalization. Lynn has chosen to put a face to HIV/AIDS & HEP C in hopes to reduce stigma and discrimination. Lynn has spent years educating her fellow First Nations Communities in Saskatchewan and Northern Manitoba in how to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS & HEP C. Lynn continues to be a representative for Aboriginal positive women in Canada and especially for Saskatchewan.

Her hopes and dreams are to prevent one person from contracting HIV or Hep C!



### **Dr. Carrie Bourassa**

Carrie Bourassa is a Chair in Indigenous & Northern Health and Senior Scientist at Health Sciences North Research Institute in Sudbury, Ontario and the Scientific Director of the Institute of Aboriginal Peoples' Health at the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. Prior to taking the Chair position in October 2016 and the Scientific Director Position in February 2017, she served her communities as a Professor of Indigenous Health Studies at First Nations University of Canada for fifteen years.

Dr. Bourassa is an Indigenous community-based researcher and is proud to be the successful Nominated Principal Investigator on two Canada Foundation for Innovation Grants that funded the Indigenous Community-based Health Research Lab in 2010 (re-named Morningstar Lodge) and most recently in April 2016 the Cultural Safety Evaluation, Training and Research Lab (renamed Thunderbird Medicine Lodge) in Sudbury. She is a member of the College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists of the Royal Society of Canada and is a public member of the College Council, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. Carrie's research interests include the impacts of colonization on the health of Indigenous people; creating culturally safe care in health service delivery; Indigenous community-based health research methodology; HIV/AIDS, HCV among Indigenous people; end-of-life care among Indigenous people; dementia among Indigenous people, Indigenous Water Governance and Indigenous women's health.

Carrie is Métis, belonging to the Regina Riel Métis Council #34.



### **Dr. JoLee Sasakamoose**

Dr. JoLee Sasakamoose is an Anishinabe (Ojibwe) from the Three Fires Confederacy in Michigan and Ontario with membership in M'Chigeeng First Nation and is an active citizen of Ahtahkakoop Cree Nation. In 2018, JoLee was appointed the Director of the Indigenous Peoples' Health Research Centre (IPHRC) with the Universities of Regina and Saskatchewan. She is an Associate Professor in Educational Psychology and Counselling at the University of Regina. JoLee serves as the founding Director of the Health Advocacy and Research Training (HART) program and is a methodologist with the Saskatchewan Centre for Patient Oriented Research (SCPOR). In partnership with the First Nations communities of Saskatchewan, JoLee authored the Indigenous Cultural Responsiveness Theory (ICRT), a theoretical framework to guide research that improves the health of Indigenous peoples in Saskatchewan. JoLee has received funding from the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation, the Community Initiatives Fund, the Saskatchewan Instructional Development and Research Unit, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Canadian Heritage Foundation. She teaches Group Counselling, Counselling Girls and Women, Counselling Children and Youth, Indigenous Family Therapies, and Decolonizing Research Methodologies.



### **Dr. Alexandra King**

As the inaugural Cameco Chair in Indigenous Health and Wellness, she combines her expertise in Indigenous health and wellness research, along with her training as an Internal Medicine Specialist, to approach complex issues using both Two-eyed Seeing and Ethical Space. This provides an innovative springboard from which a complementary exploration of underlying health determinants, intersectionality and end-manifestations can be undertaken. Her work promotes reconciliation, healing, wellness, wholistic care and self-determination, at the individual, family, community and nation levels.

She is a Principal Investigator on several CIHR and other grants related to Indigenous people and wellness in the context of drug use, HIV, HCV and co-infections. Other research interests include Indigenous wellness, land-based and culture-based healing, Indigenous research ethics, rural/remote health services, peer navigation/support, and various end-manifestations of the trauma of colonization (e.g., suicide prevention, AMR governance, TB, heart failure). In addition to a passion for Indigenous health and wellness research, Dr. King consults clinically in HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C (HCV) and HIV/HCV co-infections. She has co-created shared models of care and focuses on improving healthcare access and utilization for those under-served by the system (e.g., rural/remote communities, inner cities, Indigenous women). She is also highly invested in teaching and mentorship. She does both, formally and informally, creating safe learning environments for multi-directional capacity strengthening. This includes curriculum development, course design and delivery, and learner supervision (both student and community). She serves on many local and national initiatives, including the Heart & Stroke Heart Failure Council, CanHepC, CTN Health for People Who Use Drugs Working Group (co-lead), and CIHR-CHARAC.

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