



Waniska Newsletter | April 2022

WANISKA RETREAT MARCH 2022

Members of the *pewaseskwan* (the Indigenous Wellness Research Group) team and All Nations Hope Network gathered at the end of March at the Dakota Dunes Resort on Treaty 6 Territory and the Traditional Homeland of the Métis for our waniska retreat. During our retreat we immersed ourselves in ceremony, strategic planning, beading, reflecting and collaborating. The future priorities and directions of waniska were considered and it was determined that self-testing and data storage are high-priority research tasks for the Saskatchewan team. We are planning an upcoming Manitoba retreat to have the opportunity to spend valuable time with our Manitoba community partners.



Current Career Opportunities

Communications/Grant Writer at the University of Saskatchewan. The writer will assist our grant writing team and work with the *pewaseskwan* communications team writing, editing, updating websites, helping with event organization and other work for the research team. Visit careers.usask.ca for more information or to apply for this position.

Indigenous Peer Researchers in Saskatoon and Regina. The peer researchers will have knowledge and connections in the inner-city communities and assist with the collection of data for our self-testing project. Contact saydi.harlton@usask.ca for more information.

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WANISKA AT CONFERENCES



CAHR 2022 (Canadian Association for HIV Research), April 27-29, 2022 (Virtual)

Poster Presentation: *Mâmâvîbitovin* (Gathering of people): Capacity strengthening within HIV research for Indigenous people in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Authors: Dallas Montpetit, Melissa Morris, Rebecca Zagozewski and Alexandra King

Visit cahr-acrv.ca for more information.

CAAN Wise Practices & Skills Building Gathering, May 17-19, 2022 (Winnipeg, MB)

Leaders and management of the Feast Centre for Indigenous STBBI Research and the *waniska* Indigenous Centre are hosting a session at the CAAN Wise Practices & Skills Building Gathering in Winnipeg, MB on May 18-20, 2022. Feast and *waniska* are hosting an interactive arts-based session in which the importance of Indigenous arts-based practices in Indigenous STBBI research is discussed. Many *waniska* personnel will be participating in the conference.

Visit caan.ca for more information.

9th International Indigenous Pre-conference on HIV and AIDS, July 27-28, 2022 (Montreal, QC) & 24th International AIDS Conference 2022 July 29–Aug 2, 2022 (Montreal, QC)

Jaida Beaudin will be a speaker at this conference. They will be presenting, *Atotitum* ~ Becoming of Age: Inspiring sexuality and promoting wellness among Indigenous youth in Saskatchewan. *Waniska* will be sending a delegation to the Indigenous pre-conference and will include Melissa Morris, who has attained a full scholarship to partake both conferences.

Visit aids2022.org for more information.





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UPCOMING CONFERENCES



WIPCVH
WORLD INDIGENOUS PEOPLES'
CONFERENCE ON VIRAL HEPATITIS

**Pre-conference workshops
on hepatitis C (HCV) and self-testing**

The WIPCVH is partnering with the *waniska* Indigenous Centre and CATIE to host a virtual workshop in June (date TBD) and an in person workshop (limited to 25 people) on June 22 in Saskatoon. These events are aimed at people with lived and living experience of HCV, community leaders and other frontline service providers who play a role in HCV prevention, testing, treatment and support in their communities and who will engage in the WIPCVH (Saskatoon, June 22-24).

- increase your knowledge of HCV basics (Western biomedical)
- learn about HCV testing options and opportunities in Saskatchewan
- have a dialogue on the social and structural factors that lead to disproportionate burden of HCV among Indigenous communities
- learn how Indigenous-led approaches and ways are addressing HCV and leading HCV testing opportunities in Canada
- learn about the objectives of the WIPCVH and how leaders may engage in the event and development of the recommendations
- build skills to support self-administered testing for HCV, HIV, syphilis and COVID-19




Canada's source for
HIV and hepatitis C
information

To learn more about the workshops and conference, visit:
<https://wipcvh.org/>

WIPCVH Pre Conference Event, June 22, 2022 (Sheraton Hotel, Saskatoon, SK)

In partnership with CATIE, *waniska* is hosting a pre-conference workshop on June 22 for the World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Viral Hepatitis (WIPCVH), which will be held in Saskatoon June 22-24, 2022. The workshop will focus on participants' lived/living experience of hepatitis C (HCV), HCV basics, community-led approaches to addressing HCV and feature Dr. John Kim who will provide self-testing training and demonstrations on dried blood spot testing. Visit wipcvh.org for more information.




WIPCVH
WORLD INDIGENOUS PEOPLES'
CONFERENCE ON VIRAL HEPATITIS

Register Now!

2022 World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Viral Hepatitis
June 22-25, Saskatoon, Canada

- In-person and virtual options
- Indigenous-led and Indigenous-focused
- Scientific developments in viral hepatitis
 - Testing, treatment and care
 - Cultural approaches to wellness
 - Ceremony and sharing circles
- Land- and culture-based activities

<https://wipcvh.org/registration/>

WIPCVH (World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Viral Hepatitis), June 22-24, 2022 (Sheraton Hotel, Saskatoon, SK)

The *pewaseskwan* team (which includes the *waniska* team) is organizing this conference. The conference will feature leading hepatitis experts and Indigenous leaders in health and wellness, the latest medical and frontline developments in hepatitis testing, treatment and care, the wisdom and knowledge of Elders, safe spaces to share lived and living experiences of hepatitis, and Indigenous cultural and land-based activities. It will feature Elders, doctors, nurses and peer navigators, people working with Indigenous health and community organizations, experts on Indigenous perspectives of gender, students, artists, dancers and more. Visit wipcvh.org for more information.



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Second International

Indigenous DOHaD Gathering 2022

xʷməθkʷəy̓əm • Skwxwú7mesh • səlilwataʔt
(Musqueam) • (Squamish) • (Tsleil-Waututh)
Vancouver BC Canada

YOU ARE INVITED

AUGUST 24 - 26, 2022

Join us for a gathering about Indigenous perspectives on intergenerational wellness, centring on mothers, pregnancy, infants and their support circles (grandmothers, midwives, communities).

To learn more about the gathering visit:
<https://indigenousandhadgathering.org>

ilhenaylhs chet s7elji (Nourishing Our Ancestors' Dreams) Indigenous DOHaD Gathering, August 24-26, 2022 (Vancouver BC)

The second International Indigenous DOHaD Gathering will bring together Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Holders, community members, parents, midwives and doulas, health and social services practitioners, and academic researchers to share what people are learning and doing to revitalize cultural teachings, practices and traditions, and establish new ways of supporting moms, babies and families in communities. The gathering will be held in Vancouver, BC from August 24 - 26, 2022.

Visit indigenousandhadgathering.org for more information.

EVENTS & CEREMONIES

Pewaseskwan Strategic Planning

In March, the *pewaseskwan* research team and community partner organizations gathered for two days at the University of Saskatchewan on Treaty 6 Territory for a strategic planning session. There were discussions on the vision, mission and goals of what *pewaseskwan*'s future should encompass. We concluded the event with a meal and a fire ceremony led by Elders Sharon Jinkerson-Brass, Harvey Thunderchild and Ralph Morin.



1 - Elders Sharon Brass and Harvey Thunderchild at *pewaseskwan* strategy planning in March 2022





WANISKA COUNCIL NAMING CEREMONY

Nîs-ôhtēwak

A pipe ceremony to name *waniska's* multi-generational council was held on April 19. Elder Harvey Thunderchild gifted the name *nîsôhtēwak*, which means "they walk together" and "walking with two hearts." This perfectly encompasses the work we hope continues with the council, which is having our Elders and youth coming together to learn valued skills, knowledge and identity.

The pipe ceremony was held as a hybrid model with in person gatherings at All Nations Hope Network in Regina and Ka Ni Kanichihk in Winnipeg, and over zoom for those who were located elsewhere in Canada. Thank you to everyone who was present.

UPCOMING PROJECTS



NÂNÂTAWIHISŌWIN

“To bring about wellness for yourself.”

Taiwo Ametepee is a member of the *waniska* team who will be embarking on a practicum for his Master of Public Health this coming up summer. He will be looking at the practicality and acceptability of self-sampling in inner-city communities. Working with two Indigenous peer researchers, Taiwo will gather data from inner-city participants in Saskatoon and Regina, in partnership with All Nations Hope Network. Participants will engage in a short survey and then be able to provide saliva and/or dry blood spot sample to be tested. They will be connected with avenues of care and resources following the results.



RESEARCH UPDATES



RESEARCH PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY WANISKA

Atotitum ~ Becoming of Age: Inspiring Healthy Sexuality and Wellness through "Identity Healing" to Prevent, Reduce and Eliminate HIV/HCV/STBBI Inequities among Indigenous Youth in Saskatchewan

This greatly anticipated project, led by Amanda Froehlich-Chow, was awarded CIHR funding and is now underway. Dr. Froehlich-Chow is currently searching for a Research Coordinator to organize a Community Guiding Circle for the project. Please see the link above, under "Positions Available," for more information. We look forward to replicating this project in other regions.

CanHepC Prairie Region Roadmap

The Prairie Roadmap team has been working on the Roadmap Development Plan on the implementation of strategies for the elimination of hepatitis C and care for people with the virus. Alexandra King and Carrielynn Lund co-lead this Roadmap. We have been joined by the Taylor Bassingthwaite (TB) Consulting Group and seek guidance from the the Advisory Committee. Data collection, by means of sharing circles and interviews, will commence this summer. The project is funded by the CanHepC Network.

CanHepC National Indigenous Roadmap

The National Indigenous Roadmap team, co-led by Alexandra King and Renée Masching, will create guiding principles to inform the approach for the implementation of strategies with Indigenous people in Canada for hepatitis C. We have connected with the Ontario Roadmap team and specifically reached out to the Indigenous Working Group for the Roadmap to begin relationship building. This project will be brought in-house and therefore coordinated by *waniska* and CAAN. This project is funded by the CanHepC Network.

Feast Community Fellowship Grant

A proposal to the Feast Centre for Indigenous STBBI Research for a Community Fellowship Grant, led by John Schellenberg (University of Manitoba) and in partnership with Ka Ni Kanichihk, Sunshine House and *waniska* was successful! They will be using these funds for Melissa Morris's professional development and to support research on Indigenous acceptability of self-testing/sampling via Elder-led sharing circles. Along with Elders and Knowledge Holders, Ka NI Kanichihk will oversee the project to ensure that it follows Indigenous protocols.



Gigii-bapiimin: Exploring Resilience and The Impacts of COVID-19 on the Health and Wellbeing of Indigenous People Living with HIV/AIDS in Manitoba and Saskatchewan

Rusty Souleymanov (NPI) will lead this CIHR-funded project that focuses on the experiences of SK and MB Indigenous people living with HIV/AIDS during the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic reinforced health inequities among this population in MB and SK. *Gigii-bapiimin* is an Ojibwe term that reflects survival, resilience and overcoming adversity, translating to "we survived." It is a community-based participatory research study grounded in an Indigenized ethical space, and using *eptuaptmumk* (Two-eyed Seeing), which will interweave Indigenous and Western ways of knowing, being and doing using a systems approach, to respond to current and pressing knowledge gaps about the impacts of the pandemic on the health and wellness of Indigenous people living with HIV/AIDS in MB and SK.

We have submitted and are currently working on multiple grant applications to various institutions that are Indigenous community-led and built. These research proposals were created alongside many community partners and member nations, as well as university scholars.

Do you have ideas for research projects?

We are always looking for guidance on community-based, Indigenous-led research projects that help individuals at risk, or with lived experience, of HIV, hepatitis C or other STBBI. We want to prioritize land-based research that promotes healing and wellness for Indigenous communities. Please contact Jaida at jaida.beaudin@usask.ca if you would like to work with us to develop a research project.

ABOUT WANISKA



Waniska is a command used in the Cree and Saulteaux languages, which means wake up, or arise. It is a concept filled with optimism for the new day, which we greet with renewed energy and passion. It is a verb, reflecting that as Indigenous people, our knowledge is action oriented.

'Wake up': a command, a call to action, a name





The *waniska* Indigenous Centre for HIV, HCV and STBBI Inequities will develop partnerships with communities and community-based organizations that will help tackle HIV/HCV/STBBI inequities using *etuaptmumk* (a Two-eyed Seeing approach). *Etuptmumk* brings together Indigenous and Western world views or forms of knowledge; we privilege Indigenous ways and interweave relevant Western ways and ensure that the best practices from both cultures are employed.

WANISKA GUIDING OVERSIGHT COUNCIL

Alexandra King, Chair, Cameco Chair in Indigenous Health and Wellness, USask
Malcolm King, Saskatchewan Centre for Patient-Oriented Research, USask
Laverne Gervais, Ka Ni Kanichihk, MB
John Kim, Public Health Agency of Canada, MB
Alexandria Wilson, Aboriginal Education Research Centre, USask
Linda Larcombe, Manitoba HIV-STBBI Collective Impact Network, UofM
Albert McLeod, Two-Spirited People of Manitoba, MB
Mike Payne, Nine Circles Community Health Centre, MB
Margaret Kisikaw-Piyesis, All Nations Hope Network, SK
Leona Tootoosis, All Nations Hope Network, SK
Jaqueline Flett, Sisters of Fire, MB
James Whitehawk, Cote First Nation, SK

OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

All Nations Hope Network (ANHN) (www.allnationshope.ca)
Ka Ni Kanichihk (www.kanikanichihk.ca)

RESEARCH TEAM

Rebecca Zagozewski, Research Manager, USask
Saydi Harlton, Research Coordinator, USask
Cara Spence, Research Coordinator, USask
Jaida Beaudin, Grant Coordinator, USask
Melissa Morris, Community Coordinator for
Ka Ni Kanichihk, MB
Sarah MacDonald, Communications Officer,
USask
Harvey Thunderchild, Project Officer, USask
Kehinde Ametepee, Project Officer, USask
Taiwo Ametepee, Research Associate, USask



Hello and Goodbye

Saydi Harlton, Research Coordinator, recently joined our team. Her focus will be on leading our *mamanibitowin* project and assisting the team with the many other projects we are working on. Saydi is a white settler from Treaty 6 Territory and Homeland of the Metis. She has an MSc from Community Health & Epidemiology where she worked with First Nation communities on housing and lung health wellness.





Cara Spence, Research Coordinator, joined our team at the end of April. Cara brings a plethora of research experience and will be a great addition to our team. She will be assisting on the many projects *waniska* currently has on the go such as CanHepC, self-sampling, and data systems.

Cydney Leibel, Clerical Assistant, is leaving our team to pursue a career in real estate. We are excited about the new opportunities ahead of her and wish her the best of luck. We appreciate the work Cydney has done with our team over the years and will notice her absence.

Creeden Martell, Communications Assistant, is leaving our team to join the Regina Leader Post as their newest journalist. Creeden is following his passion for journalism and news reporting and we know he will do an outstanding job. We appreciate all the hard work Creeden put into editing and writing for our team and his smiling face will be missed in our meetings.

OUR PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

Manitoba HIV Collective Impact Network (CIN), Winnipeg, MB
National HIV and Retrovirology Laboratories, Winnipeg, MB
Communities Alliances And Networks (CAAN), Fort Qu'Appelle, SK
Two-Spirited People of Manitoba, Winnipeg, MB
Institute for Global Public Health, University of Manitoba, MB
Ongomiizwin Indigenous Institute of Health and Healing, University of Manitoba, MB
Canadian Network on Hepatitis C (CanHepC), Montreal, QC
Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN), Saskatoon, SK
The Canadian Association for HIV Research (CAHR), Ottawa, ON
Canadian HIV/AIDS Treatment Information Exchange (CATIE), Toronto, ON
Canadian Research Initiative in Substance Misuse (CRISM), Edmonton, AB
Central Urban Métis Federation Inc. (CUMFI), Saskatoon, SK
Canadian Observational Cohort Centre (CANOC), Vancouver, BC



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