**LIVING WITH HEPATITIS C – IS THERE HOPE?**

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**Background:** Saskatchewanhas the second highest incidence of hepatitis C cases in Canada, with 70 cases per 100,000 people. The national average for hepatitis C incidence is 35/100,000. Newly diagnosed cases of hepatitis C continue to be high in Saskatchewan with 600-700 new cases identified annually. The estimated rates for Hepatitis C are higher among Inuit and First Nations (1%-18%) compared to other Canadians (0.5%-2%).

Individuals living with Hepatitis C become isolated due to the stigma associated with the illness and addiction; community support plays a crucial role in helping individuals. Treatment is available therefore cure is obtainable. Leona has personal experience living with Hepatitis C (while pregnant). She is currently the Program Director for All Nations Hope where she provides Hepatitis C workshops to treatment centres and Indigenous communities.

**Methods:** oral presentation

**Results:** Sharing knowledge of working with Indigenous people living with Hepatitis C. Showing strength by protecting and supporting the most vulnerable. Leona promotes health and well-being in her community, leads by example, there is hope. It is possible cure hepatitis C.

**Conclusion:** It is essential for community engagement and education: participants will gain an insight on what it is like to be Hepatitis C positive, addicted, pregnant and Indigenous. They will learn how to address multi-faceted issues, how to provide realistic options that set people up to succeed rather than fail. The tools learned will empower clients, thereby helping individuals be responsible and accountable. This leads people into a healthy holistic lifestyle. The lessons learned help provide opportunity for people to participate in their well-being and obtain a cure for hepatitis C with hope. Leona Quewezance works for a non-profit organization no pharmaceutical grants were received in the development of this study.