

WHOLISTIC CONVERSATIONS ON THE LIVER AND HEPATITIS C: A VISUAL INDIGENOUS WELLNESS PERSPECTIVE

Wholistic wellness-based media resource brings community together in a traditional way to learn and share

Acknowledgement: Indigenous community members in Alberta, Canada inspired this research by asking for resources for hepatitis C. We began in ceremony and respectfully co-created this film with Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and community members who shared their perspectives and stories. This resource would not be possible without these relationships. Chi Miigwech.

Stigma: "Don't start blaming yourself, or shaming yourself. You can deal with this. And then you just move forward, don't look back. It should be just like going to the doctor for a cold or for a cut on your hand, and this is just another health condition that could be treated."

Bonnie Weasel Moccasin Aahsebiiksaaki
Mother, Grandmother, Registered Nurse

Balance: "We are more successful when we have both our traditional wellness and healing and they complement what western medicine gives us." "We need to focus on that balance-mind, body, spirit, and emotion. We need to prepare ourselves, especially our spirit, so that as we take that journey forward we are able to do it with strength".

Harley Crowshoe Kia'a'yo'pooka
Knowledge Keeper

WINNER AWARD OF MERIT
IMPACT EXPOS AWARDS

WINNER AWARD OF MERIT
ACCOLADE GLOBAL FILM COMPETITION

BEST SHORT
Fort Langley Film Festival 2023

OFFICIAL SELECTION
Vox Popular Media Arts Festival 2023

SEMI-FINALIST DIRECTORS CUT INT'L FILM FESTIVAL 2023

SEMI-FINALIST BEST SHORT FEST 2023

OFFICIAL SELECTION
THREE FIRES INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL 2023

OFFICIAL SELECTION
INTERNATIONAL MULTICULTURAL FILM FESTIVAL 2023

OFFICIAL SELECTION
DIVERSITY ETHICS & INCLUSION AWARDS 2023

WHOLISTIC CONVERSATIONS ON LIVER WELLNESS: AN INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVE

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RIFFA

COCREATED AND PRODUCED WITH FIRST NATION AND METIS COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN ALBERTA

Purpose: Hepatitis C disproportionately impacts Indigenous People of all ages in Canada, and a gap in culturally connected resources may be a barrier to awareness and engagement in screening and treatment.

Methods: Relationship-based conversational interviews and feedback loops with eight Knowledge Keepers from Cree, Metis, Stoney Nakoda and Blackfoot communities in Alberta Canada shaped the script. Co-design with Knowledge Keepers and Indigenous community members incorporates story paired with land-based visuals and modern media.

Results: This co-created 23-minute DocuStory film shares wholistic perspectives on the importance of the liver, awareness of hepatitis C transmission risks, and the availability of treatment toward cure, while sharing the importance of balance in mental, spiritual, emotional and physical health as a wellness story. Audiences have been inspired to follow up with hepatitis C screening, ask questions and engage in care pathways.

Conclusions: This innovative connection to cultural and wholistic wellness perspectives inspires action, decreases stigma, and has relevance to a wide range of health-related topics and settings increasing health literacy in harm-reduction programs, diagnostic screening events, schools, family, Elder and routine health programming.

Reference: Dunn, K. (2023). *Bringing Life to Liver Wellness Through Wisdom Seeking Conversations: Conceptualizations of Liver Health with Indigenous Communities* (Doctoral dissertation, Royal Roads University) <https://viurrspace.ca/handle/10613/26358>

JOIN THE
CONVERSATION
WATCH THE FILM



Healing Journey: "Telling my story has been part of that full circle and now I'm telling them that its ok, I had it to and you don't have to be ashamed. Just getting that understanding that you can get better and it is curable, and it's not the end of the world."

Mercedes Russell Nioksaisssoaykii
Daughter, Sister, Aunty, Friend,
Community Service Worker

Living Well: "I really try to share with youth that your ancestors were well people, wellness was really just rooted in their traditional cultures and their traditional ways of life ... and that's in your bloodline to live well."

Kendra Jessie Rosychuk
Wellness Advocate, Dancer, Athlete



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