

Issues in Dementia Care for Indigenous Populations

Spring 2016

TEAM 20

What has Team 20 been up to this winter?

Despite the cold weather, Team 20 has been busy in the past few months. Our work has been approved by each community, the Manitoulin Anishnaabek Research Review Committee, and the Laurentian University Research Ethics Board. We have begun work with our Advisory Group and Language Group, and launched **I-CAARE** (keep reading for more).

We have also attended a number of conferences to increase awareness around memory loss in Indigenous communities, including the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics Conference, the Canadian Conference on Dementia, and a joint research symposium of the Chiefs of Ontario and the Institute for Clinical Evaluative Sciences.

What is the KICA and what are we doing with it?

The **Kimberley Indigenous Cognitive Assessment (KICA)** is a screening tool that was developed for the Aboriginal population in Australia. It was designed to address the lack of culturally appropriate ways to detect dementia in Australia. The KICA works; it's cultural relevant *and* accurate.

Right now, Team 20 is working with health professionals as well as the Language Group and the Advisory Group to adapt the KICA for use with Anishnaabe people who want to be screened for memory loss. Most assessments currently in use are not appropriate for use with Indigenous seniors because they are not culturally informed and may violate traditional ethics. The assessment developed within this research will be designed and evaluated *with*, and not *for*, Anishnaabe communities.

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Who are the Advisory Group?

The advisory group are community members, Elders, and health professionals from all over Manitoulin who guide the research process. They have suggested important changes to the work that make it more meaningful and useful to their communities and loved ones. The research team meets with them monthly and will keep doing this until the research is finished and results are brought back to the communities.



Members of the research team with the Advisory Group in Wikwemikong. Not all Advisory Group members were present for the photo. Front (L-R): Melissa Blind, Monica Pheasant, Jean McGregor Andrews, Karen Pitawanakwat, Kristen Jacklin. Back (L-R): Jules Osawamick, Roseanne Debassige, Bonita Bebamash, Bill Antoine.

The Language Group

The Language Group are an essential part of adapting the KICA for use with Anishnaabe people. They are making sure that the KICA will work in Anishnaabemowin. Here they are in Wikwemikong with members of the research team: Front row (L-R): Evelyn Roy, Rosella Kinoshameg, Marion McGregor. Middle (L-R): Melissa Blind, Jean McGregor Andrews, Karen Pitawanakwat. Back (L-R): Bill Antoine, Edward Osawamick, Malcolm Simon.



I-CAARE.ca is here

In January, the web welcomed a new resource for Indigenous cognition and aging awareness. Led by Kristen, the Indigenous Cognition and Aging Awareness Research Exchange (**I-CAARE**) is a hub for Team 20's projects, as well as other research and resources concerning Indigenous cognition and aging. At i-caare.ca, you will find information on current and past projects as well as our latest publications. There are resources about Alzheimer's disease and other dementias available, and even a short video about our work.



Next Steps and Upcoming Events

In the next couple of months, we will be conducting focus groups with community members and health care providers to revise the KICA. We will also be talking to health care providers about what kinds of needs Aboriginal seniors have as they age. In April, we will be starting the process of interviewing and collecting stories with Traditional Knowledge Keepers about original Anishnaabe values, ways of knowing, and activities to support healthy aging.

Some **upcoming events** include:

- **April 20** Peter Whitehouse, pioneer in the field of intergenerational work for memory loss care, will be in Wikwemikong
- **May 19** Northern Ontario School of Medicine TENTalk by Kristen Jacklin and Karen Pitawanakwat
- **July 22-28** Alzheimer Association International Conference, Toronto, ON
- **July 29-Aug 2** Our Australian research partners will be visiting the island

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Meet Sharlene



Sharlene Webkamigad is an Anishnaabe-Kwe from Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve. As a registered nurse, Sharlene has provided care for Aboriginal people from birth to end of life.

As a student with Team 20, Sharlene has helped develop factsheets about dementia. She presented this work at the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics Conference in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in October 2015.

Sharlene is currently pursuing a Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Health at Laurentian University. Her research is funded by the Canadian Nurses Foundation, The Alzheimer Society, and the CCNA, and addresses the lack of Aboriginal specific Alzheimer's disease and related dementia health promotion materials.

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www.i-caare.ca