

# Issues in Dementia Care for Indigenous Populations

Fall 2016

## TEAM 20

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Elder  
**Betty McKenna**

Elder  
**Jerry Otowadjiwan**

**Melissa Blind**  
CRaNHR

## What has Team 20 been up to this summer?

Team 20 was very busy this past summer, taking advantage of the mild weather to get some travel in. Kristen chaired an Indigenous Dementia Symposium at the Alzheimer's Association International Conference in Toronto, opening much needed discussions about this largely ignored area of research, and Karen presented at the same conference.

Kristen also hosted a meeting for the International Indigenous Dementia Research Network ([i-caare.ca/iidrn](http://i-caare.ca/iidrn)) and a meeting for researchers working on culturally safe cognitive screening tools during the conference.



Bill Antoine, Rhonda Trudeau, Janet McElhane, Megan O'Connell, Kate Smith, Jerry Otowadjiwan, Marion McGregor, Jennifer Walker, Kristen Jacklin, Rose Shawanda, Karen Pitawanakwat, Leon Flicker, Jean McGregor Andrews, Melissa Blind, Dina LoGuidice, Rose Linda Peltier, Mary Jo Wabano, and Joe Peltier at Rainbow Ridge Golf Course Restaurant in August.

## Bringing the world to Manitoulin

This summer, our team had the great pleasure of hosting colleagues from all over the world in Sudbury and on Manitoulin Island. Megan O'Connell, who works with us on the RRITE project (see below for details), visited from Saskatchewan. Leon Flicker, Kate Smith, and Dina LoGuidice visited from Australia, where they did the original work creating the Kimberley Indigenous Cognitive Assessment (KICA). A few years ago, Kristen, Wayne, Jennifer, Karen, and Laura had the pleasure of visiting the Australians in their home territory and learning about their traditions, and were delighted to return the favour.

While they were here, our guests stayed in Little Current, attended the powwow in Wikwemikong, spoke with Elders and knowledge carriers in Wiky and AOK, went on a medicine walk, and learned about the history and the culture in this part of the world.



(right): Mary Jo Wabano and Karen Pitawanakwat present to our guests. (above): (left): Joe Pitawanakwat sharing knowledge and (right) Jennifer Walker enjoying the moment during the Medicine Walk.

## The Kind Words Corner

*"Take care of your life as best you can, and always wear a smile."*

Elder Jerry Otowadjiwan



Carrie Bourassa, Neil Henderson, Kristen Jacklin, Kate Smith, and Leon Flicker get ready to present as a panel about dementia in Indigenous communities at the AAIC in July.



## Collaboration with North East BSO

This past summer, Team 20 began working with North East Behavioural Supports Ontario (BSO). BSO provide services and training to long term care homes and home care agencies for older adults all across northeastern Ontario, including Manitoulin. Their focus is working with older adults with responsive behaviours resulting from dementia or other cognitive impairments. The Advisory Group and the Language Group are helping adapt tools that they use in their work with older Indigenous adults and with the creation of their new Aboriginal Strategy.

### What the heck is RRITE? You're spelling that wrong!

The Rural/Remote Indigenous Technology needs Exploration (RRITE) project explores technology for aging in Saskatchewan and Ontario. In ON, with communities on Manitoulin, we are exploring **what technologies make sense to seniors**, and how to make new tech more culturally safe. RRITE is funded by AGE-WELL NCE Inc. ([agewell-nce.ca](http://agewell-nce.ca)). We completed focus groups with health care providers and are starting interviews with seniors all over the island this fall.

## Next Steps: Call for Participants

In the last newsletter, we talked about the Kimberley Indigenous Cognitive Assessment (KICA), which is used with Aboriginal people in Australia. We've been working with our language group to rewrite the KICA for Anishnaabe people who want to be screened for memory loss. **Now we need your help!** We want to see if it feels comfortable and makes sense.

**How does this work?** Karen or another researcher will sit with you and ask you the questions in the new KICA. You don't need to have trouble with remembering—we want to know how it feels for people without memory loss too. We won't be testing your memory, and we won't be diagnosing. We just want to know what you think.

**If you are an older Indigenous adult and want to help us out with this, please get in touch with Melissa or Karen.**

Get in touch...

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## Meet Ashley



Ashley Cornect-Benoit (First Nation, French, and Irish—Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation, Port au Port, Newfoundland) is a Master's of Interdisciplinary Health student at Laurentian University. Ashley's previous education in neuroscience and Indigenous health piqued her interest in traditional medicine and biomedical health care. At the same time, she gained insight into gaps in health care experienced by Indigenous people by visiting with loved ones in Port au Port.

Funded by Team 20, Ashley's research hopes to foster intergenerational relationships in Wikwemikong, and promote healthy brain aging for older adults experiencing memory loss. Through interviews and focus groups with youth and older adults, she will develop a framework for intergenerational programs.

TEAM 20



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