

WBIIH WEBINAR SERIES 2021

Dr. Michael Anderson and Mr. Leonard Benoit

January 26, 2021

4 pm to 5 pm via Zoom (link provided upon Eventbrite registration)

Registration: [HERE](#)

Healing Medicine: (Re) Discovering Ceremony at the End Of Life



Dr. Michael Anderson is part of the urban Indigenous community in Toronto. He is Mohawk (Bear Clan)/English with family roots in Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory. He practices surgical oncology and palliative care medicine in addition to serving as the Indigenous cancer lead in the Toronto regional cancer program. At the Waakebiness-Bryce Institute for Indigenous Health in the Dalla Lana School of Public Health (U of T), he is a PhD candidate and senior researcher with interests in Indigenous epistemologies, Indigenous approaches to implementation science, community engagement, dialogue, and Indigenous conceptualizations of death and dying.



Leonard is Qalipu Mi'Kmag First Nations from the territory of Newfoundland and Labrador. His spirit name is Circling Wolf, and he is Wolf Clan. He has a valid Ontario Nursing license and has been practicing for the last 21 year. He also holds certification in Community Services Worker Program, he has completed Palliative Care Certification through Seneca College, and he is also a Death Doula. Currently he is finishing a Thanatology program at Centennial College. Leonard has been employed as the Indigenous Patient Navigator with Toronto Region Cancer Program since December 2017.

Ceremony is an integral form of medicine for many Indigenous people. In an effort to eradicate Indigenous peoples from Turtle Island, ceremonies were prohibited and criminalized by colonial governments. This impacted a vital aspect of Indigenous people's identity and restricted access to the healing medicine of ceremony. Relationships with ceremony have been variable throughout many Indigenous peoples lives. The desire to practice ceremonies at the end of one's life journey is strong not only in Indigenous people who have lived with ceremony but also in those that have not. I will share stories and experiences facilitating access to ceremony at the end of life for Indigenous people who have profoundly different life experiences.