



**Maliseet Nations Mental Wellness
Team Pilot Project (MNMWTPP)
'Ciw Wolakomiksuwakon
"For Healthy Mind, Body & Spirit"**

Tradition in the Modern Context: Combining Aboriginal & Western Approaches in Mental Health Delivery Services FOR June 24th 2–2:40 pm

12th Canadian Collaborative
Mental Health Care Conference
June 23–25, 2011; Halifax, NS

Charting a new course to better care:
Stronger Links Between Consumers, Families, &
Health Care Providers

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Disclosure of No Financial Interest

The Speakers have no involvement with industry thereby informing the audience that we have nothing to disclose, i.e, cannot identify any potential conflict of interest.

This disclosure is made in accordance with Dalhousie University Continuing Medical Education Accreditation standards.

We, spouse/significant other have not had any relevant financial relationships during the past 12 months.

New Brunswick Wolastoq Communities



Veronica Moonstream WolfEagle Maliseet – Tobique First Nation, NB

- ▶ **RSW, MSW, BFNAC**
- ▶ **Mental Wellness Team Project Coordinator**
- ▶ **CORE Mobile Unit member for the Maliseet Nations Mental Wellness Team Pilot Project**
- ▶ **Mental Health Crisis Counsellor for Health Canada – First Nations and Inuit Health Branch**
- ▶ **Registered Social Worker**
- ▶ **Master of Social Work**
- ▶ **Bachelor First Nations & Aboriginal Counselling**
- ▶ **Four years towards a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering**

TEAMS & SERVICES

- ▶ Bi-monthly **Clinical & Advisory Team Meetings** in the communities. Begin Community meetings with arts & crafts, education, needs determination & working towards priorities.
- ▶ Dr. Sinha provides **psychiatric service** to each community every 5 weeks. **Core Team** meetings are made up of Project Coordinator, Psychiatrist, Mental Health Nurse, Elder/ Cultural & Spiritual Advisor and when available Clinical Psychologist.
- ▶ The Elder / Cultural & Spiritual Advisor offers **counselling & Ceremonies**.

TEAMS & SERVICES (Cont'd)

- ▶ The MNMWTTP serves as a bridge between Mental Health and Addiction services, Horizon Health & Public Health staff and partnering agencies, affiliates and resources.
- ▶ A part of our work will be to provide Cultural Competency / Safety / Sensitivity Training so that Maliseet and First Nation People's can improve accessing Mental Health and Addictions resources in order to strive to end the underutilization of these services.

Objectives

- ▶ Improve treatment outcomes for mental health and addictions problems.
- ▶ Build capacity for mental wellness in Maliseet First Nations communities in New Brunswick.
- ▶ Build partnership to bring Western and Aboriginal approaches together in the design and delivery of mental health and addictions programming

Steering Committee

- ▶ Every six weeks the Steering Committee meets. Members include Community Health Directors; MH&A Director; Horizon Health Executive Director; FNIH General Physician Advisor; FN Health Liaison; Child & Youth MH Clinical Specialist Nurse; Adult Mental Health Prevention & Promotion Programs & Nursing Leadership, Adjunct Professor
– Dalhousie University

Gathering of Maliseet Nations

- ▶ **Plenary Workshop**: April 8/ 2010 – Accomplish Unified Vision & Mission Statements, Goals, Values, Norms, and Operating Principles.
- ▶ **Cultural Plenary**: Nov 1st & 2nd, 2010
“Cultural Competency, Safety & Sensitivity” Training for *100 Staff Members* of Mental Health & Addictions, Horizon Health & Public Health, Jan 12th, 2011

First Nation Community Launches

- ▶ Saint Mary's April 4/2011
- ▶ Tobique April 11 / 2011
- ▶ Woodstock March 28/2011
- ▶ Kingsclear May 16/ 2011
- ▶ Oromocto June 6/ 2011

Theresa Bartlett – Chase Mental Health Nurse

- ▶ 33 years working in the health care field
- ▶ RNA, BA, BN, RN, Certificate Criminology and Mental Health Nursing.
- ▶ Representing Mental Health at the Multicultural Association.
- ▶ Director of Health for non profit organization in my community
- ▶ Member Lions Club in my community
- ▶ Representing Lions Club on Seniors Recreation Committee.

Mental Health Nurse

- ▶ Employment posting from Horizon Health for first year full time position. 1 / 2 time for next year.
- ▶ Advantage: Having personnel from the “system” provides opportunities for the project to teach an open-minded professional cultural sensitivity / safety / competency to reinforce the messages and experiences of First Nation’s people through the community-based project; seeks to convey these pilot goals to management, mental health and addictions staff.

Mental Health Nurse (Cont'd)

- ▶ Being embedded in the Health Care “system” as part of the structure has provided access to intake forms and knowledge of software currently in practice including easy access to other health care professionals.
- ▶ Provides an ease in intake screening process and necessary documentation. My position does the intake for clients as the first contact person.

Health and Addictions

- ▶ Perth–Andover Mental Health and Addictions located close to Tobique First Nations.
- ▶ Woodstock Mental Health and Addictions located close to Woodstock First Nations.
- ▶ Fredericton Mental Health and Addictions located close to Kingsclear, Saint Mary's and Oromocto First Nations.

Education & Training from Project

- ▶ It's been a wonderful, exciting, ongoing learning experience for me as the Mental Health Nurse. I am grateful for all the training.
- ▶ Overview of National Evaluation Framework. Ottawa, ON. May, 2010
- ▶ Atlantic Aboriginal Addictions Training Symposium June 8–10, 2011, Moncton, NB
- ▶ Wellness & Health, “Motivating Men to Change” Sept 17, 2010. Fredericton, NB

Ed & Training from Project (cont'd)

- ▶ “Mental Wellness in First Nations”.
Native Mental Health Association
Annual Assembly, Saskatoon, SK.
Sept 23–25, 2010
- ▶ Atlantic Nursing Conference “First
Nations Community Health Nurses:
How Special Are You?” Moncton
Oct 5–7, 2010.
- ▶ Violence Against Aboriginal Women.
Fredericton Inn, Oct 27–29, 2010.

Ed & Training from Project (cont'd)

- ▶ 5th Annual Addictions and Mental Health Conference, Nov 3 & 4 / 2010 Moncton, NB.
- ▶ “Loss and Grief”, Nov 23 / 2010, Tobique
- ▶ “Why & How to Adapt Western Treatments”, Nov 24 Elsipogtog
- ▶ MWT Overview of National Evaluation Framework. Ottawa. Nov 29 – Dec 3, 2010.
- ▶ “Concurrent Disorders Training”, Tobique, Healing Lodge, 7 Module Series, December → March / 2010 to 2011

Tobique First Nation Community Successes

- ▶ Tobique First Nation (TFN) is the largest community of the 5, a Clinical & Advisory Team are established.
- ▶ Crisis Response Training has been taken and a Crisis Response Team developed.
- ▶ Overlap of professional community staff and members has resulted in a projected streamlining of each person's time so that the Mental Wellness Team will become the primary meeting with other committees eventually becoming agenda items.
- ▶ TFN is responsible for securing the Pilot Project through a previous Research program regarding Mental Health, addictions & youth, an Aboriginal Health Transfer Fund & the resulting MWT.

Tobique First Nation

Community Successes (Cont'd)

- ▶ TFN signed the Contribution Agreement & financial overseer for the project funds
- ▶ TFN is one of the most educated per capita reserves & has been invited to respond to two community Crisis'.
- ▶ TFN has hosted the second political meeting for the reunification of the Maliseet Nations
- ▶ There are multiple active Sweat Lodges, Talking Circles & Traditional people for community support including respected community members & Elders
- ▶ There is a strong church community, treatment center now a Healing Lodge with 12 Step Programs for Gamblers; Alcoholics, Narcotics Anonymous and Alanon; Traditional Ceremonies & Sweat Lodge

Woodstock First Nation Community Successes

- ▶ “From the Womb and Beyond” Program Facilitated by Core Team Member Elder/Cultural & Spiritual Advisor Imelda Perley has resulted in the burying of placentas on riverfront property; creating a community garden in the shape of a Medicine Wheel and Dream Catcher with family members that have feuded for years re-establishing community and family healing; a tipi has been purchased from a respected Elder; a Band Council Resolution is in the process of being sought to designate the land as an ongoing Sacred Site.

Woodstock First Nation Community Successes (Cont'd)

- ▶ The community has increased participation to regular attendance and commitment while developing a combined Clinical and Advisory Team
- ▶ Woodstock has hosted the first political meeting for the reunification of the Maliseet Nations
- ▶ There are active Sweat Lodges available within the community

Kingsclear First Nation Community Successes

- ▶ The community has increased participation to develop a combined Clinical and Advisory Team
- ▶ Gary Sacobie, Social Worker, Fire Department Chief, Critical Incident Stress Management, has extensive training and certification while regularly offering his services to his community and other communities in need
- ▶ Active Sacred Stone People's Sweat Lodge in place. First Elder's Home open to all communities
- ▶ Successful community engagement in programs and services. Many children focused activities.

St. Mary's First Nation Community Successes

- ▶ Community has dedicated professional staff members and community members to make up a combined Clinical and Advisory Team
- ▶ Successful community enterprises result in a Cultural Center for use for several future workshop and training courses planned for the next year for Clinical and Advisory Teams and community members
- ▶ Community has strong Elders / Cultural and Spiritual Advisors that contribute to ongoing Traditional teachings, drumming and personal empowerment

Oromocto First Nation Community Successes

- ▶ A small community that has swung the pendulum from attendance of professional staff to community members to a combination of professional staff and enthusiastic community members
- ▶ Community strongly interested in learning cultural and immediately requested a Sacred Stone People's Sweat Lodge
- ▶ Community members recovering from a high rate of methadone treatment while maintaining willingness to grow as individuals, work for better family relations and community

Oromocto First Nation Community Successes (Cont'd)

- ▶ Dedicated participation has resulted in a combined Clinical and Advisory Team
- ▶ Successful community endeavours results in a Day's Inn Hotel in which our first Plenary where the Five Maliseet communities met to work together on team building exercises for the first time
- ▶ Professional staff members are firmly committed and community members attend regularly & have taken initiative to have community meeting to conduct a community needs assessment & find out priorities.

Circle of Life Teachings: Putting the DSM–IV on the Medicine Wheel, Developing Cultural Appropriate Tools Out of Western Standards

WolfEagle, Veronica Moonstream (2004).

University of Maine, Orono, School of Social Work, Master's Degree Program, SWK 600 – Advanced Integrative Professional Seminar & Social Work Ethics. Tobique First Nation, NB.
Revised September 19, 2010,
Revised June 24, 2010.

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This presentation will denote a culturally relevant Indigenous philosophy of practice for creating an assessment tool for the American Psychiatric Association Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition, DSM-IV by placing the DSM-IV on the Medicine Wheel or Circle of Life Teachings.

- ▶ The evolution of applying generalist social work practice for a Native American Maliseet woman from the Tobique First Nation, NB, Canada involves honoring the Circle of Life Teachings or Medicine Wheel.

- ▶ Generalist practice involves social work skills of applying theory, model and framework for intake, assessment, intervention, interaction and evaluation.
- ▶ The work evolved as a graduate student in the Master's of Social Work program at the University of Maine. The creative project selected involved artwork drawings on two bristle boards which demonstrate the required information necessary for diagnosis according to the DSM-IV.

The Medicine Wheel is based on the 4 cardinal directions of East, South, West and North.

- ▶ In the Center we are one with the Creator and look to the process of Visioning and setting goals for life.
- ▶ Each cardinal direction represents a level of healing. The levels of healing are mental, spiritual, emotional and physical, respectively.
- ▶ The directions may also coincide with the times of day. There is the dawn, noon, sunset and midnight.
- ▶ Correspondingly, there also are the four seasons of spring, summer, fall and winter.

- ▶ The four elements include the air, fire, water and earth.
- ▶ Lastly, the kingdoms of winged ones, crawlers, swimmers and four legged exist.
- ▶ The depth of teachings for the Medicine Wheel and Circle of Life Teachings follow our time of life starting as a babe/child, adolescent/youth, adult and Elder.
- ▶ The levels of teachings expand on and on whereas they are associated as a way of life where one seeks to live balance and harmony while growing as an individual, member of a family/clan, the community and world.

The Levels of Healing artwork piece consists of drawings in each direction.

- ▶ In the East, healing for the mind, dawn, Spring, air and winged ones – the rising sun is depicted over green grass and flowers blooming. An eagle's head looks out on a tornado of air blowing in the wind.
- ▶ In the south, healing for the spirit, noon, Summer, fire, crawlers – a fire is made with glitter glue. A snake sticks her tongue out as a spider web is made in the corner.
- ▶ In the West, healing for the emotions, evening, Fall, water and swimmers – a waterfall flows into a stream and ocean. A lobster is on the bottom of the ocean with rainbow trout and salmon swimming and jumping in the fresh water as rain comes down.

- ▶ In the North, healing for the physical, midnight, Winter, Earth, and four-legged – a wolf howls at the moon and stars. An igloo is made with snow falling from the sky.
- ▶ In the Center, where one stands with the Creator/ the place of choice and goal setting – the place of visioning is a spiral of life swirling inwards.
- ▶ A fire burns for inner strength. A bear print is followed by an eagle's talon, peace sign, moon, grass, claw and star symbolizing the multitude of Medicine or characteristics within and Power throughout which is available to guide us, walk with us on the Sacred Path of oneness with the Creator and all things, life.

A second drawing piece acknowledges in words the Medicine Wheel as an assessment tool for a Philosophy of Practice in Social Work and DSM-IV diagnosis.

- ▶ The Circle of Life Medicine Wheel begins clockwise in the East with a Social Work relationship of theory, model and framework for Intake.
- ▶ Next in the South comes the fire of transformation to develop an assessment from information gained.
- ▶ In the West, our emotions on the river of life create movement so that an intervention is made.

- ▶ The North involves interaction which is a physical process between the person providing services and the one seeking services.
- ▶ Evaluation occurs in the center, the place where choice is made, goals are set and visions to strive for are made.
- ▶ The DSM-IV perspective allows the journey to continue around the Medicine Wheel in a counter-clockwise manner.
- ▶ Axis I – Clinical Disorders and other conditions for focus of clinical attention is in the South and is related to the fire of a person's spirit.

- ▶ Axis II – Personality Disorders and Mental Retardation are in the East, the place for the mind.
- ▶ Axis II – General Medical Conditions are in the North, the place of the physical.
- ▶ Axis IV – Psychosocial and Environmental Problems occur in the West.
- ▶ Axis V – Global Assessment of Functioning is in the Center and place of Vision.
- ▶ When a person is centered, the opportunity to make choices is available thereby affecting how well functioning is occurring in that person's life.

- ▶ The sign for infinity is a clockwise and counter-clockwise manner.
- ▶ We receive in a clockwise manner and let go in a counterclockwise manner.
- ▶ The Medicine Wheel and DSM-IV do a dance between clockwise and counter-clockwise perspectives.
- ▶ Circle of Life Teachings are about seeking balance and harmony in one's life.
- ▶ The need for a diagnosis indicates that there is an imbalance occurring so therefore services are sought to assist a person to find the answer's within and tools to walk the path of life.

The four directions
are also used to denote race.

- ▶ The East is yellow for people of Asian descent.
- ▶ The South is red for Indigenous peoples.
- ▶ The West is black for people of African descent.
- ▶ The North is White for people of European descent.
- ▶ The Center is the place for the rainbow nations and people of mixed ancestry.

The generalist program has provided a number of skills and tools to be used when working with people.

- ▶ Diversity is inherent as people of many cultures may be encountered throughout social work practice.
- ▶ The author has been in recovery from alcohol and drugs since the Fall Equinox, September 21st of 1987.
- ▶ The recovery process is a journey.
- ▶ We journey on our own Medicine Wheel to find balance in our lives.
- ▶ We journey with our clients to work with them to find empowerment and to recognize their own inner strength.

- ▶ We all have our answers within.
- ▶ Sometimes the process of working with one another is just to clear away the muck so the Light can shine through.
- ▶ Recognizing the strength it takes to bring healing into one's life means as practitioners we must clear away our own stuff so we can be a clear channel for the Creator and the client to connect to their own divinity where all healing truly occurs.
- ▶ It is an honor to be a part of the process and to share experience, strength and hope.
- ▶ A part of my job is to lay out tools for the client to try on to find what will work for them as they develop the skills they need to survive the events of life and most importantly to thrive in life.

Naya T. Clifford, a colleague in the MSW program with the author, talked about how the Medicine Wheel combined with the DSM-IV can be seen as part of the “diagnostic cannon”.

“By looking at the use of the Medicine Wheel, it is like seeing the ideas of "air" and East being largely the anxiety spectrum disorders (because of their cognitive elements). Then, the mood disorders & psychotic disorders are as those of the west with the heavy difficult trips into the darkness and the energy of lightning with mania and schizophrenia. That's how I see it or have used it in my own practice.

Addictions can be seen as an imbalance of North. There is not enough grounding, not enough self-nurturance, not enough patience. It is so that the addicting substance fills that void, where really the Medicine of Buffalo or Moose even would be a better "substance" filling the need for nurturing and community instead of seeking substance abuse.

For the South, I see it as the road of grieving and imbalanced grief. Also of 'personality disorders' where we take on the un-done aspects of Ancestors (or generations of grief) so to speak instead of carving out own path with their guidance." (Personal Communication, September 20, 2010).

Veronica Moonstream WolfEagle

- ▶ Thirteen years in the Aerospace Industry as a Development Engineer of Logistics working in Program Management; Technical Support; Contractual Engineering; Proposal Writing; Program & Policy Development including technical writing of Training Manuals; and all client required documentation to commercial, military and industry standards.

Veronica Moonstream WolfEagle is a diverse woman living Tradition in the Modern Context. She is a professional with the clinical skills to combine Western counseling methods with Indigenous Worldviews, Facilitator of Traditional Ceremonies, Healing practices and a Cultural & Spiritual Advisor. Veronica has been in recovery since September of 1987 and brings a wealth of practical experience using a variety of methods to match the holistic healing needs of the people she works with.