

## **2020 CANSW Virtual Conference - Speaker line-up:**

**DAY 1 – November 18, 2020 1200 EST**

**Jag Gill, MD, FRCP (C)**

Nephrologist, St. Paul's Hospital, Vancouver BC

**“Reducing Barriers to Transplant for Indigenous patients”**

Dr. Gill’s research project is intended to become a new model of renal care in BC for Indigenous patients. He is working on increasing accessibility of live donor transplants for Indigenous patients. He has conducted interviews with patients and Elders, and from that feedback, is developing a new culturally competent model of care for patients, starting at the beginning of their kidney failure, through dialysis and transplant, which will include Indigenous patient liaisons, who will work with SW and patients along the way. It is expected to be a 4-5 year project which will have pilot test sites, be evaluated by Indigenous patients and providers, amended and improved and then gradually offered across BC.

**DAY 1 – November 18, 2020 1530 (3:30) EST**

**Dorothee Chopamba, MSW, RSW**

**“Allyship: Turning Privilege into Change”**

Dorothee Chopamba is a Clinical Social Worker with a specialization in Mental health, Couple, and Family Therapy. She is also an Adjunct Lecturer at the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work at the University of Toronto. She has over 15 years of experience working with individuals, families, and couples with relationship problems or who suffer from a variety of mental illnesses. She also has expertise in working with caregivers of children and adults with neurodevelopmental disabilities. Most of her work has primarily focused on working with immigrants and refugees. Dorothee strives to bring an effective blend of experience and clarity to the discussion of Allyship which she views as a tool that can be used to heal and build bridges.

## **DAY 2 - November 19, 2020 1200 EST**

### **Rachelle Bensoussan, M.A., CT. (She/Her)**

Being Here Human

#### **Level 1 Grief Literacy Training Workshop (Condensed)**

Rachelle Bensoussan is the co-founder and managing director of Being Here, Human.

She holds a master's degree in Thanatology, is a certified Thanatologist with the Association of Death Education and Counselling and has spent the last ten years building community-based bereavement programs for hospices across Southern Ontario.

Rachelle holds a faculty appointment at McMaster University in the department of family medicine, division of palliative care. She is a longitudinal facilitator at the Michael G. DeGroot School of Medicine and a guest lecturer in many of McMaster's undergraduate programs. Rachelle is also a faculty member at Western University in the department of Thanatology.

Rachelle is a queer-identified woman of North-African & Middle Eastern descent and is a fierce believer that grief is our birthright.

## **DAY 2 - November 19, 2020 1400 (2:00) EST**

### **Heather O-Neale, MSW, RSW**

**“Canadian Healthcare and Racism: How the long and buried history impacts people of color today”**

Heather O'Neale, MSW, RSW, has worked in the social services field in Manitoba for over 16 years in the areas of crisis intervention, adult and adolescent psychiatry, non-profit community counseling and community development.

Today, Heather is a private practice therapist working with adults and couples with an emphasis on trauma, anxiety, depression, and relational issues. She is also an instructor at the University of Manitoba, teaching Counselling Skills, Counselling Theories, Working with Families, and Understanding Family Violence.

Heather is multiethnic and multicultural, which provides her with a unique experiencing of culture and ethnicity and a strong interest in promoting discussion in these areas.

Heather is a mom and partner within a blended, multiethnic family and she universally believes that laughter is a necessary component of healing.

**DAY 3 - November 20, 2020 1200 EST**

**Mitch Bourbonniere, M.S.W., M.S.M., C.M.H.W. (C/A)**

**“Understanding Addictions and Mental Health through an Indigenous Lens”**

Mitch Bourbonniere volunteers with Mama Bear Clan, Got Bannock, and Drag the Red. Mama Bear Clan walks the neighbourhood of North Point Douglas and Winnipeg's Main Street spreading warmth, cheer, and love through greeting Winnipeg's homeless brothers and sisters with hugs, conversation, and donations of clothing and food.

Got Bannock serves the same community with twice a month outdoor gatherings where people in our village are fed, loved, and looked after. Drag the Red spends countless hours on Winnipeg's Red River searching for missing people. Mitch has joined others in adorning Winnipeg's bridges with red cloth in the cold of winter to remember missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. Mitch also helped start a men's healing group out of the North Point Douglas Women's Centre.

Mitch works with Winnipeg's most vulnerable people who suffer with homelessness, post-traumatic stress, addiction, mental health issues, domestic violence, gang involvement, and sexual exploitation through the Ojijiita Pimatiswin Kinamatwin (OPK), Whistling Winds Action Therapy programs and the Manitoba Youth Justice system. He visits the institutions and supports people as they leave prison and gang life.

Mitch developed a program called Lateral Empathy where with groups of young volunteers, donations of clothing, food, furniture, and household goods are picked up and delivered to those in need. They also volunteer at the First Nations pavilion at Folklorama, the Teddy Bears picnic, and many other worthy events. This group of young people also volunteer at Indigenous ceremonies all across southern Manitoba during Sundance season.

On September 7, 2014 Mitch diffused a situation by which a young man had drawn a handgun on another young man in a playground filled with children. On December 4, 2016 Mitch swam out into the not yet frozen waters of the river to help a girl out who had made a suicide attempt. Mitch was recognized in the Manitoba Legislature for this, as well as receiving the Royal Canadian Humane Association's Bronze Medal for Bravery. Mitch was recently awarded the Governor General's Meritorious Service Medal and the Winnipeg Police Service's Honoured Citizen Award in recognition of outstanding support and commitment to public safety.

Mitch is a pipe carrier and a 28 year Sundancer. He provides Elder services to Urban Circle, Rossbrook House, Metis Child and Family Services, North Point Douglas Women's Centre, Dakota Ojibway Child and Family Services, Animikii Ozoson Child and Family Services, CEDA Pathways, Ndinawe Youth Centre, and many other

organizations.

Mitch has a master's degree in Social Work and teaches at the universities of Manitoba, Winnipeg, and St Boniface. Mitch is a social worker in the Louis Riel School Division.

### **DAY 3 - November 20, 2020 1400 (2:00) EST**

#### **Donna Alexander, MSW, RSW**

##### **“Racial Trauma and Implications for Clinical Practice”**

Donna Alexander is a Social Worker with a specialisation in addiction and mental health. She currently serves on the Equity & Inclusion Council at the Department of Psychiatry and is also an Adjunct Lecturer at the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work at the University of Toronto.

Donna currently serves as Vice Chair of Black Mental Health Canada and serves as an Advisor on the Pathways to Care Project for Black youth. She previously served as Vice President of Black Health Alliance and was a member of the Black Experiences in Health Care Initiative at Sinai Health Systems.

She facilitates training for staff at community-based agencies on factors relating to concurrent disorders and cultural safety in clinical practice.

She holds a Master of Social work from the University of Toronto and currently works at the Centre for Addiction & Mental Health.