

HARM REDUCTION CONFERENCE 2024

FORWARD TOGETHER | Leading the Harm Reduction Movement



THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2024
Italian Cultural Centre
Thunder Bay, Ontario



Presented by the **Thunder Bay District Health Unit** with the support of
the **Thunder Bay Drug Strategy**



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All sessions are in Eastern Standard Time (EST)

Wednesday, October 16 – Zoom

6:30 pm – 9:00 pm	A Sobering Story VIRTUAL Film Screening	Q&A with Directors/Producers Ryan La Via & Ryan Hill
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Thursday, October 17 – Italian Cultural Centre

9:00 am – 9:30 am	Opening Prayer Land Acknowledgement Opening Remarks	Elder Linda Barkman Kandace Belanger MC Kari Chiappetta
9:30 am – 10:30 am	Bridging the Gaps Between Harm Reduction and Recovery	Keynote Presenter: Guy Felicella
10:30 am – 10:45 am	Break	
10:45 am – 11:20 am	Harm Reduction Housing: Community Pathway to Care	Elizabeth Fry Society NWO: L Martin & Bonnie Aggamway
11:20 am – 11:55 am	Building Connections: The Full Spectrum of Substance Use Healthcare	NorWest Community Health Centres: Nicole Fieduna & Tonya Muchano
11:55 am – 12:45 pm	Lunch	
12:45 pm – 1:45 pm	Forward Together: Stories from the Field Panel Discussion	Métis Nation of Ontario, Jackii Raynard Ontario Native Women's Association, Taylor Adair Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre, Katie Bortolin
1:45 pm – 3:00 pm	More Than Just a Band-Aid: Expanding Harm Reduction Horizons – A Networking Table Exercise	MC Kari Chiappetta
3:00 pm – 3:15 pm	Break	
3:15 pm – 4:15 pm	Opioid Agonist Treatment in the Fentanyl Era	Dr. Greg Carfagnini
4:15 pm – 4:30 pm	Closing Remarks Closing Prayer	Rilee Willianen & MC Kari Chiappetta Elder Linda Barkman



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Session Summaries & Biographies

Opening & Closing Prayer

Elder Linda Barkman

My name is **Linda Barkman**, and I've been an Elder for Elevate NWO and OAHAS for several years. Stepping into this role was a decision I made after careful consideration of both the challenges and the rewards it would bring. Fortunately my experience has been overwhelmingly positive. It has been, and always will be, my pleasure to support and accompany my peers and extended family, whose numbers continue to grow. I cherish the love and peace that this community brings into my life.

Master of Ceremonies

Kari Chiappetta

As an Emcee and session facilitator **Kari Chiappetta**'s authentic and engaging personality enables her to connect with audiences on a personal level. She is known for her high-energy presentations and her ability to keep audiences engaged and entertained throughout her speeches. Her use of humor, personal anecdotes, and interactive exercises helps to create a positive and dynamic atmosphere, making her presentations memorable and impactful.





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Thurs. Oct. 17
9:30 – 10:30 am

KEYNOTE PRESENTER
GUY FELICELLA

**Bridging the Gaps
Between
Harm Reduction and
Recovery**

SESSION SUMMARY

Up until now the conversation has been harm reduction OR recovery, both sides fighting for their funding and recognition of importance.

I'm here to say both are equal parts to the same pie. Without harm reduction substance users are not staying alive to make it to treatment or recovery.

Without recovery substance users are not given an opportunity to live a life free from the chains of addiction. Both sides need to work together to be effective in changing people's lives.



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KEYNOTE PRESENTER

GUY FELICELLA BIOGRAPHY

Guy Felicella grew up in a middle class home in Richmond but fell into addiction at a young age. Guy spent 30 years in the repeated cycle of gangs, addiction, treatment, and jail. He spent nearly 20 years residing in the two block radius in the Downtown Eastside and using many resources, including harm reduction, to keep himself alive.

Guy spent three decades living in the grips of addiction and homelessness, surviving multiple life-threatening infections, several public health crises, and six overdoses. Today Guy has escaped the grips of the turmoil that kept him suffering. He resides with his wife and three young children and has multiple years of recovery and sobriety under his belt.

Guy is passionate about advocating for the vulnerable people who still suffer from addiction, and educating communities on harm reduction to eliminate the stigma that exists around it. Currently Guy works for Vancouver Coastal Health, the Ministry of Mental Health and Addiction, and the BC Centre on Substance Use. Guy spent nearly his entire life suffering in addiction and now he is using his experience to change the hearts and minds of people to the idea that recovery is harm reduction and harm reduction is recovery. Gone are the days when it's either harm reduction or recovery; it's both!

Guy has been featured in the media including, but not limited to, The Today Show on NBC, CTV Vancouver, and two TEDx Talks. Guy currently speaks at conferences, symposiums, and workshops for different organizations as a harm reduction advocate, addiction specialist and inspirational speaker.

Guy is on a mission to bring new awareness to help treat mental health, addictions, homelessness, and harm reduction as social welfare and health issues; to negate self harm and blame on those who suffer from challenging circumstances related to trauma.



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Thurs. Oct. 17

10:45 am – 11:20 am

ELIZABETH FRY SOCIETY NWO

Harm Reduction Housing: Community Pathway to Care

SESSION SUMMARY

The **Elizabeth Fry Society of Northwestern Ontario (EFSNWO)** has been operating harm reduction housing in Thunder Bay for women and gender diverse people.

L Martin & Bonnie Aggamway will be talking about how this program started, and how it has been running for the past few years, and the effects it has had on the community at large.

ABOUT EFSNWO

EFSNWO was established as the first and only organization in Thunder Bay with an exclusive mandate to support women and gender-diverse individuals involved in the criminal justice system. EFSNWO is a non-profit organization that supports and advocates for women, Two-Spirit, non-binary and gender-diverse people in prison, those transitioning back into the community, and those at risk of criminalization.





ELIZABETH FRY SOCIETY NWO BIOGRAPHIES

Harm Reduction Housing: Community Pathway to Care



BONNIE AGGAMWAY

Bonnie Aggamway is an Ojibway woman from Long Lake #58 living off reserve in Thunder Bay. As a 60's scoop survivor who struggled with addiction and mental health issues for many years, the path to recovery has not been easy. A solid harm reduction approach was ultimately what led to eventual long-term success, coming full circle in order to help others experiencing the same things today.

Bonnie is a mother of two and a dog lover, and is working as a Systems Navigator at the Elizabeth Fry Society in Harm Reduction Housing.

Her beliefs are grounded in the seven grandfather teachings and being of service to others, aiming to decolonize herself and her work as much as possible everyday- within the systems that often go against those beliefs. She is a true champion for change and for what is possible when people have the right community support and resources.





ELIZABETH FRY SOCIETY NWO BIOGRAPHIES

Harm Reduction Housing: Community Pathway to Care



L MARTIN

Lindsay (L) Martin-(they \ them \ ils) is a dedicated advocate for social justice and empowerment. L is currently serving as the Executive Director and Systemic Advocate of the Elizabeth Fry Society NWO, the President of The Council of Elizabeth Fry Societies on Ontario (CEFSO), is a lead Provincial Advocate, as well as part of the National Advocacy Team for Ontario.

L is a disrupter of systems that force people into poverty and incarceration, and brings a wealth of experience to their role.

Under L's leadership, the Elizabeth Fry Society NWO has expanded its programs and services, providing vital support to individuals impacted by poverty, incarceration, and systemic inequality.

L is known for their collaborative approach, forging partnerships with other organizations, government agencies, and community stakeholders to maximize impact and create lasting change.

Outside of their work with the Elizabeth Fry Society NWO, L is actively involved in various community initiatives and volunteer efforts including the Ontario Human Rights Advisory Committee. They are committed to making a positive difference in the lives of those they serve, and strive to create a more just and compassionate society for all.





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Thurs. Oct. 17

11:20 am – 11:55 am

NORWEST COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES

Building Connections: The Full Spectrum of Substance Use Healthcare

SESSION SUMMARY

NorWest Community Health Centres' (NWCHC) presentation will explore the comprehensive spectrum of substance use healthcare, emphasizing the necessity of offering a range of programs from harm reduction to abstinence-based approaches. We will highlight the importance of providing fluid pathways that allow individuals to move seamlessly along this spectrum, ensuring that we meet people where they are in their journey toward recovery.

ABOUT NWCHC

NWCHC is a leading healthcare provider among over 100 similar organizations across Ontario. With a strong presence through four main sites in Thunder Bay, Armstrong, Longlac, and Kakabeka, as well as Mobile Health Services, NorWest CHC has been dedicated to serving the District of Thunder Bay since 1999.

At NorWest CHC, we strive to enhance the health and well-being of our communities through a comprehensive and integrated care model. Our approach combines exceptional primary health care services with proactive health promotion and illness prevention initiatives. What sets CHCs apart is our unwavering commitment to community development. We go beyond individual and family health by creating programs that tackle the social, economic, and environmental challenges that impact people's well-being. Through community leadership, advocacy, and partnerships, we work to build the capacity for health within local communities and respond effectively to their needs.

Our mission extends to achieving health equity by continuously improving our practices and addressing systemic issues in collaboration with partner organizations and the broader community. At NorWest CHC we are dedicated to fostering a healthier, more equitable future for all.



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NORWEST COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES BIOGRAPHIES

Building Connections: The Full Spectrum of Substance Use Healthcare



Nicole Fieduna is the Manager of the Safer Supply program and Coordinator for the Path 525 Consumption and Treatment Site. Since joining Norwest CHC in 2023 Nicole has been dedicated to advancing harm reduction initiatives within the community.

With a background as a Registered Nurse, she brings experience from both the acute and community healthcare setting.

NICOLE FIEDUNA





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NORWEST COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES BIOGRAPHIES

Building Connections: The Full Spectrum of Substance Use Healthcare



TONYA MUCHANO

Tonya Muchano currently works at NorWest Community Health Centres as the Rapid Access Addiction Medicine (RAAM) Program Coordinator for the Thunder Bay, Fort William First Nation, and Longlac RAAM sites. She has been working in harm reduction and with vulnerable populations in Thunder Bay since 2016.

In a previous life Tonya worked in Southern Africa developing edutainment radio programming and other media that aimed to raise awareness of prevalent health and social issues including HIV, LGBTQ+ rights, human trafficking, and xenophobia.





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Leading the Harm Reduction Movement

Thurs. Oct. 17

12:45 pm – 1:45 pm

Forward Together: Stories from the Field *Panel Discussion*

Métis Nation
of Ontario 

**JACKIE
RAYNARD**

Métis
Nation of
Ontario

SESSION SUMMARY

In this **panel discussion** we will hear about three innovative harm reduction outreach work initiatives from Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA), Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre (TBIFC), and the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO).



**KATIE
BORTOLIN**

Thunder Bay
Indigenous
Friendship
Centre

These panelists will then share about their combined efforts on the Indigenous Youth Transition House and how collaboration played a role in moving this project forward.



**TAYLOR
ADAIR**

Ontario Native
Women's
Association



Thurs. Oct. 17

12:45 pm – 1:45 pm

Forward Together: Stories from the Field *Panel Discussion*

MÉTIS NATION OF ONTARIO BIOGRAPHIES

Métis Nation
of Ontario 



JACKII RAYNARD

Jackii Raynard is a dedicated and experienced professional with over 5 years of service with the Métis Nation of Ontario. As the supervisor for the Youth Services Outreach Program in Thunder Bay, Jackii has demonstrated exceptional leadership and deep commitment to the well-being for the community.

Holding an Honours Bachelor in Social Work, Jackii combines academic excellence with practical expertise to create impactful programs and support services. Her work continues to inspire and make a positive difference in the lives of many individuals.

ABOUT MNO

In 1993, the **MNO** was established through the will of Métis people and their communities coming together throughout Ontario to create a Métis-specific, democratic, province-wide governance structure. The MNO represents and advocates on behalf of its citizens who are rights-bearing members of Métis communities that collectively hold rights, interests, and outstanding claims protected by Sections 25 and 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, including, but not limited to, the right of self-government. Ontario is home to the 2003 Powley decision, in which the Supreme Court of Canada recognized the existence of the Métis right to harvest for food that is protected by Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution. Powley was—and remains—the only Supreme Court of Canada (“SCC”) decision affirming Métis rights protected by Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982.



Thurs. Oct. 17

12:45 pm – 1:45 pm

Forward Together: Stories from the Field Panel Discussion

THUNDER BAY INDIGENOUS FRIENDSHIP CENTRE BIOGRAPHIES



Katie Bortolin brings 16 years of frontline and management experience in the homelessness sector to the Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre (TBIFC). She is currently the Director of Housing and TBIFC's lead on the Indigenous Youth Transition House and the Dibinawaang "Shelter from the Wind" Outreach Program.

Her work is marked by her commitment to challenging outdated systems that push people to the margins and creating new sustainable pathways out of homelessness.

KATIE BORTOLIN

She is an advocate for harm reduction, 'rights over rules' approaches, and two-eyed seeing practices in housing policy development.

Combined with lived experience with substance misuse and incarceration, Katie holds a Social Service Worker diploma, an Arts Degree, and a Post-Graduate Human Resources Management Certificate. She is registered with the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers.





Thurs. Oct. 17

12:45 pm – 1:45 pm

Forward Together: Stories from the Field *Panel Discussion*

THUNDER BAY INDIGENOUS FRIENDSHIP CENTRE **ABOUT TBIFC**

TBIFC was formed in 1964. At that time many Indigenous youth were sent to Thunder Bay for high school. For many it was the first time away from their communities and families. With Xavier Michon's guidance and leadership, the youth began meeting in church basements and halls to create a community. They were eventually able to rent an old tar-paper shack on the corner of Cumberland and Clavet streets in what was then Port Arthur. This shack became a home away from home to at least 500 Indigenous youth and is now the main office of TBIFC.

Sixty years later TBIFC is still dedicated to strengthening the lives of urban Indigenous people. By delivering holistic programs and providing support, TBIFC addresses distinct needs in the areas of: justice, wellness, child and family support, education and employment, and transitional housing and outreach. A progressive and inclusive organization, TBIFC continues to uplift the urban Indigenous community and continues to advocate and participate in community initiatives and partnership developments that promote cultural diversity with both Indigenous and non-Indigenous systems.





Thurs. Oct. 17

12:45 pm – 1:45 pm

Forward Together: Stories from the Field *Panel Discussion*

ONTARIO NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION BIOGRAPHIES



TAYLOR ADAIR

Taylor Adair, Branch Manager at Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA), started her career in Alberta supporting Housing First practices for individuals to gain successful housing and move through the systemic barriers within homelessness. She then returned to her home community of Thunder Bay where she continued her career in housing at ONWA. She was instrumental in the development of the Nihdawin program which translates to "My home" in Ojibway.

Taylor continues to prioritize the unique needs of Indigenous women and their families who are facing complex needs such as homelessness, violence, justice involvement, and mental health and addiction.

Taylor has worked within the housing and homeless sector for over 10 years, and is now the manager of the largest Indigenous women's Housing first framework provincially.

Taylor is a proud member of Pays Plat First Nation, and through her work she has found passion in helping Indigenous women to regain their leadership roles in community. She continues to build her career and prioritize the safety and stability of Indigenous woman and their families for generations to come.





Thurs. Oct. 17

12:45 pm – 1:45 pm

Forward Together: Stories from the Field *Panel Discussion*

ABOUT ONWA

At **ONWA**, we celebrate and honour the safety and healing of Indigenous women and girls as they take up their leadership roles in the family, community, and internationally, for generations to come.

ONWA is the largest and oldest Indigenous women's organization in Canada, with over 50 years of experience and expertise in amplifying Indigenous women's voices and advocating for solutions created and led by Indigenous women.

ONWA was established in 1971 to empower and support all Indigenous women and their families, regardless of their status or locality, through research, advocacy, policy development and programs.

ONWA is both an association with 14 Chapters (incorporated Indigenous women's organizations providing front-line services) and 23 Councils (grassroots Indigenous women's groups supporting community development models) and a direct, front-line service provider delivering over 66 culturally grounded services, programs, and projects for Indigenous women and their families.

The safety of Indigenous women is central to ONWA's advocacy, policy, and program development.

ONWA focuses on nine strategic issues identified by Indigenous women as integral to their safety: Mother Earth, Family Violence, Sexual Violence, Child Welfare, Human Trafficking, MMIWG, Housing and Homelessness, Justice, and Health.

Learn more about ONWA at: <https://www.onwa.ca/>





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Thurs. Oct. 17

1:45 pm – 3:00 pm

More Than Just a Band-Aid: Expanding Harm Reduction Horizons *A Networking Table Exercise*

FACILIATED BY MC KARI CHIAPPETTA
SESSION SUMMARY

Join us for **More Than Just a Band-Aid: Expanding Harm Reduction Horizons** – an interactive networking session exploring innovative approaches to harm reduction beyond traditional methods.

Engage in collaborative discussions with professionals from diverse fields to challenge paradigms and discover effective strategies in public health, advocacy, and policy.





Thurs. Oct. 17

3:15 pm – 4:15 pm



Dr. Greg Carfagnini
MD CCFP(EM)(AM)
Medical Professional Corp.

Opioid Agonist Treatment in the Fentanyl Era

DR. GREG CARFAGNINI

SESSION SUMMARY

In this presentation attendees will learn about how Addiction Medicine providers have adjusted and modernized previous Opioid Agonist Treatment (OAT) practices in order to meet the needs of today's opioid users.

BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Carfagnini completed medical school at University of Manitoba in 2006, Family Medicine residency through McMaster in Thunder Bay in 2008, Emergency Medicine training through NOSM in 2009, and received the CCFP addiction medicine certification in 2019.

Dr. Carfagnini has been practicing addiction medicine for over 10 years and he has been involved in the development of addiction medicine services in Thunder Bay and Northwestern Ontario. Dr. Carfagnini has held the position of RAAM lead physician and has been involved in RAAM clinic development throughout Northwestern Ontario. Dr. Carfagnini is passionate about increasing access to high quality addiction medicine services and training future providers to take on the work of caring for those struggling with substance abuse.

Currently Dr. Carfagnini is the Medical Director for Addiction Services at St. Joseph's Care Group in Thunder Bay and the clinical lead for substance use disorders for Ontario Health North West. Dr. Carfagnini's current work involves addiction medicine system development as well as providing addiction medicine and mental health care to Thunder Bay and Northwestern Ontario.



DR. GREG CARFAGNINI



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