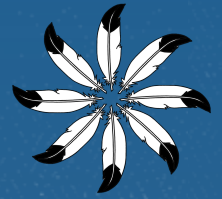




Lakehead  
UNIVERSITY

Centre for  
Education and Research  
on Aging & Health



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# Palliative Care for Front-line Workers in Indigenous Communities

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## CONTACT

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*"Participating in this training really helped Maamwesying North Shore Community Health Services enhance their services to the community by adding palliative care. The palliative care program that we developed is called "Creator's Care." We would not be able to develop this program if we didn't have this training. It really helped us understand what the community needs are."*

**Joanna Vautour, Serpent River First Nation**

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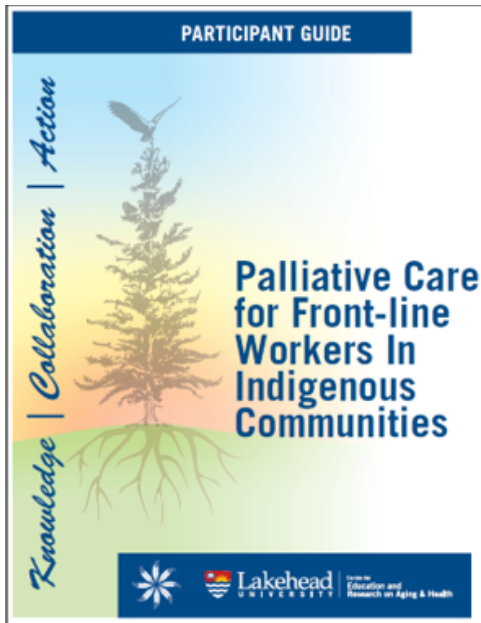
In 2006, in response to the need for culturally relevant palliative care education for Indigenous people, CERAH developed the *Palliative Care for Front-line Workers in Indigenous Communities* curriculum in collaboration with Indigenous communities. The curriculum is designed to provide palliative care education to Indigenous health and social service providers in communities that have identified a need for training. This curriculum is one step in a larger process of the development of comprehensive palliative care services in Indigenous communities. Foundational to this work is the Improving End-of-Life Care in First Nations Communities research project (EOLFN) that was funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. This curriculum uses the lessons learned from the EOLFN project to enhance the information presented.

The training recognizes the diversity of Indigenous communities' experiences, knowledge, and cultural teachings regarding death and dying. As a result, the content of the workshop is not grounded in any one community's particular traditions, values, and beliefs. Rather, the curriculum uses the holistic teaching concepts of the Indigenous Wellness Framework that focuses on health and balance, and combines this with the holistic focus of palliative care.

This 15-hour course is intended to be at an introductory level, providing an overview of key palliative care concepts, tools, and resources. The curriculum utilizes the following resources to enhance the material covered in this program:

- Preparing for the Journey: Caring for Indigenous People who are Seriously Ill, Centre for Education and Research on Aging & Health (CERAH), Lakehead University
- Developing Palliative Care Programs in First Nations Communities: A Workbook, Improving End-of-Life Care in First Nations Communities Project, Centre for Education and Research on Aging & Health (CERAH), Lakehead University
- Cancer Care Ontario Practice Guidelines
- A Caregiver's Guide: Handbook about End-of-Life Care. The Order of Saint Lazarus and the Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association
- A Model to Guide Hospice Palliative Care, Canadian Hospice Palliative Care Association
- Indigenous Voices: Stories of Serious Illness and Grief, Canadian Virtual Hospice
- Local tools and resources as identified in collaboration with communities/organizations

# CURRICULUM



***Palliative Care for Front-line Workers in Indigenous Communities*** is grounded in the Indigenous Wellness Framework and consists of 8 modules:

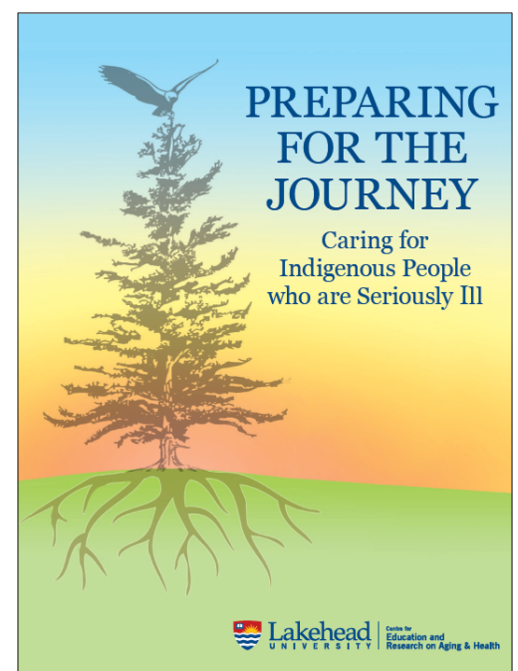
- 1 Understanding the Palliative Approach to Care
- 2 Working with Individuals and Families
- 3 Advance Care Planning
- 4 Pain and Other Symptoms
- 5 Last Days and Hours of Living in an Expected Death
- 6 Grief and Loss
- 7 Helping Relationships and Self-Care
- 8 Community Care Teams

This curriculum explores the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of the palliative approach to care in an Indigenous context. Participants will learn the definition of the palliative approach to care and how it is demonstrated in Indigenous communities. They will better understand the perspective of family and community members as well as the importance of self-care. They will walk through the steps of effective advance care planning and identifying substitute decision makers. They will be introduced to the physiological changes and medical interventions, including pain management, experienced at end of life. Participants will also explore the importance of effective communication and discuss assembling community care teams.

***Preparing for the Journey: Caring for Indigenous People who are Seriously Ill*** is a resource manual for use at the bedside that accompanies the curriculum.

- The purpose of this manual is to provide Indigenous health and social care providers, family, and community members with practical guidance and support on caring for people with serious illnesses.
- The manual is grounded in the Indigenous Wellness Framework and provides teachings and best practices around the palliative approach to care, making your wishes known, developing a care plan, last days and hours of life in an expected death, as well as emotional, mental, and physical wellness for the caregiver.
- The manual also contains many additional relevant and applicable resources.

## RESOURCE MANUAL



# WORKSHOP DELIVERY

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## Pre-workshop Planning

Before the workshop is delivered the CERAH education team meets with the community/organization lead(s) to have an in-depth discussion about the community/organization's strengths, challenges, and needs. This engagement focuses on introducing the education team to the community/organization as well as situating the training within the context of the larger goal of enhancing capacity. These meetings provide the communities/organizations with the opportunity to discuss values, cultural and spiritual beliefs and practices, and educational needs as well as any additional resources, tools, and strategies that could be used to tailor the education to respond to unique community/organization needs.

## Workshop Overview

The maximum number of participants for each workshop is limited to 25 participants due to the nature of the content, the sensitivity of the sharing, and the complicated grief emotions that often arise during the delivery of the curriculum. The delivery format includes culturally appropriate ceremonies performed by a local Elder/Knowledge Carrier, slideshows, discussion questions, sharing circles, videos, and small and large group activities.

## Facilitators

The curriculum is delivered by a team of four facilitators including one registered nurse, one psychosocial care provider, such as a social worker (who all have experience in clinical palliative care) along with a local Elder or Knowledge Carrier. The facilitators deliver the education in a "tag team" format allowing for each to present content based on their strengths.

## Elder/Knowledge Carrier

The community/organization will arrange to have an Elder/Knowledge Carrier present throughout the workshop. Based on local community practices, this individual could offer a prayer or blessing for the education, facilitate any practices the group could utilize, facilitate opening and closing circles, and be available to provide support to the participants as needed. The Elder's/Knowledge Carrier's participation is recognized through financial compensation and local/traditional gifting practices.

## Videos

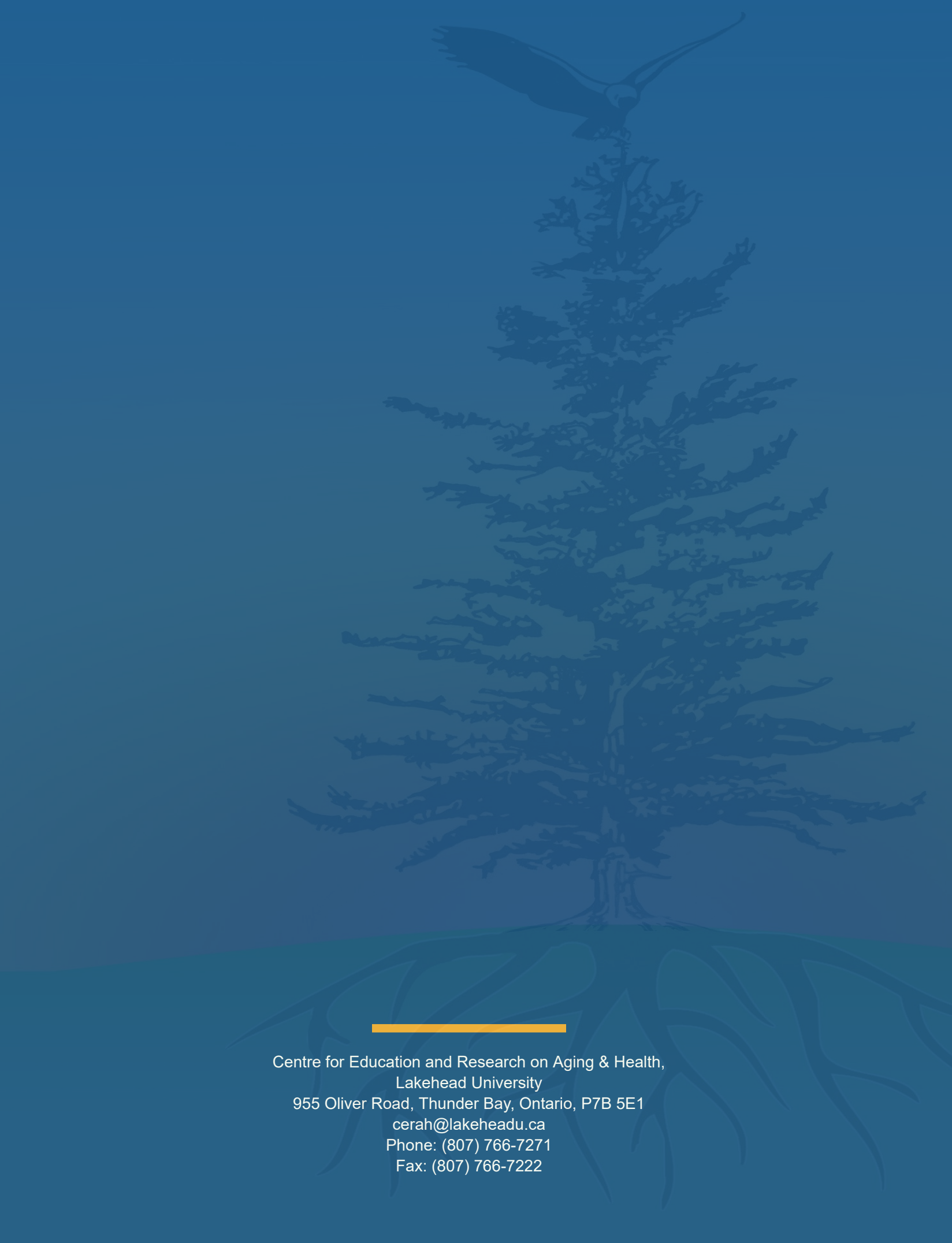
Throughout the workshop, Canadian Virtual Hospice videos "Indigenous Voices: Stories of Serious Illness and Grief" are presented. This series features individuals from First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities across Canada speaking about their experiences with palliative care at end of life.

# CONTACT INFORMATION

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If your community or organization would like to schedule a workshop, or receive more information about this training, please contact CERAH at (807) 766-7271 or [cerah@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:cerah@lakeheadu.ca)





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