

27th Annual Ethics Speaker Series

January 28th, February 4th and February 11th, 2026

END OF LIFE AND NO-CPR ORDERS: INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES

This speaker series is a collaboration between The Centre for Clinical Ethics and The Indigenous Health Program and explores the experiences of Indigenous patients within hospital settings, with a particular focus on end-of-life care, no-CPR orders, and the process of death and dying. Grounded in perspectives from both Indigenous healthcare providers and non- Indigenous allies, the sessions acknowledge the ongoing impacts of colonialism—including systemic racism, historical trauma, and mistrust of healthcare institutions—that continue to shape Indigenous peoples' experiences in hospitals at the end of life. Through descriptions of lived experiences, Indigenous understandings of death and dying, and the role of ceremony, this series aims to support healthcare providers in developing greater cultural awareness and understanding. The goal is to foster care that is compassionate, culturally safe, and rooted in relationship, so that Indigenous patients and families are treated in a good way during one of the most sacred times of life.

Attendance is free but you need to register using this link:

https://ca01web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_90NoqmoHQqmd2BciAkkmXw

Physicians will be eligible to receive one Section 1 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) credit as certified by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. Links for providing feedback and registering for CPD credit will be available in the live session.

**Please join us for one or more of our free, online lunch time sessions.
See below for more details.**

January 28th, 2026: 12-1pm ZOOM

Session 1: Experiences of Indigenous patients in our healthcare system with a focus on death and dying.

This session will explore the experiences faced by Indigenous patients in our healthcare system with a focus on end of life.

Presenters:

- 1) Michael Anderson
Surgical oncologist and palliative care physician, Strategic Lead for the Indigenous Health Program, University Health Network
- 2) Jessica Demeria
Indigenous Community Engagement Specialist, Unity Health Toronto
- 3) Victoria Manitowabi
Indigenous Patient Navigator, University Health Network

February 4th, 2026: 12-1pm ZOOM

Session 2: Process of death and dying from Indigenous perspectives

Engagement with patients and families in a culturally sensitive way can help us identify what is important to patients so we can provide the right care. Systemic racism faced by Indigenous patients can disempower patients/families to advocate for what they need. Even well-meaning healthcare providers may have gaps in knowledge about different cultural traditions and may not know what to ask. In this session we will explore some Indigenous perspectives on death and dying to help healthcare providers ask the right questions so we can provide better care for our patients.

Presenters:

- 1) Leonard Benoit
Death Doula
Indigenous Health and Partnership Lead, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre
- 2) Leslie Saunders
Manager, Traditional Palliative Care Program, Anishnawbe Health Toronto
- 3) Rod Michano
Casey House

February 11th, 2026: 12-1:30pm ZOOM

Session 3: Ceremony as part of the death and dying process for Indigenous patients

For some Indigenous patients, ceremony plays an important role at the end of life. In this session we will describe the ceremonies of some Indigenous groups and try and identify the right questions for healthcare providers to ask to ensure we are providing culturally sensitive care.

Presenters:

- 1) Ellen Kanikatsitsa Blais
Haudenosaunee Midwife and Co-CEO of Association of Ontario Midwives
- 2) Desiree Lethbridge
Regional Manager, Tungasuvvingat Inuit
- 3) Kahontakwas Diane Longboat, Turtle Clan, Mohawk Nation, Six Nations Grand River Territory
President and Founder, Institute for the Study of Spirit
- 4) Kawennanoron Cindy White
Elder-in-Residence, Women's College Hospital