

## Meet the Speaker: Jennifer Shea, PhD & Kathy Michelin

Scientist Speakers - Public Conference on Cancer

Oct 15, 2022



**Title of the talk:** Exploring the pre-diagnosis journey for Indigenous patients in Labrador

**Who is Dr. Jennifer Shea?** Dr. Jennifer Shea is an Assistant Professor in the Division of Community Health and Humanities. Prior to her academic appointment, she worked within the provincial health care system for eight years, including the Cancer Care Program NL. Her research is community-based and driven by the community's needs. Her approach is 'with' and 'for' the community, and they are partners from start to finish. Her interests include the study of chronic health conditions (cancer, TB and mental wellness) from a strength-based perspective celebrating resilience and community-identified solutions.

**Who is Kathy Michelin?** Kathy Michelin is a beneficiary of the Nunatsiavut Government and was the project manager for the Labrador cancer project – Courage, Compassion & Connection. Kathy worked as a Senior Policy Analyst with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Labrador Affairs division for 13 years. Kathy graduated from Mount Saint Vincent University with a Bachelor's of Science degree. Kathy has a keen interest in research and analysis with a focus on policy and program development at the community level.

**What will Dr. Shea and Kathy Michelin talk about?** Cancer is a chronic disease that has become increasingly prevalent in First Nations, Inuit and Métis populations within recent decades in Canada. As a result, it is one of the leading causes of death for Indigenous peoples. Many risk factors contribute to this increase in diagnosis for Indigenous Peoples, including a long history of colonialism, loss of culture, and dispossession of land. Additionally, Indigenous peoples in the country present with later-stage cancers, which results in a high mortality rate from cancers that could be prevented or effectively treated. We will share our personal experience with the initiative Courage, Compassion and Connection: A Journey to Healing (funded by CPAC). The initiative was led by the Nunatsiavut Government, in collaboration the NunatuKavut Community Council; Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation; and the Mushuau Innu First Nation and Memorial University. Our project explored the pre-diagnosis journey for Indigenous communities in Labrador. Through sharing circles we gathered insight from patients, family, caregivers, health care staff and community members.