

Sharing our lessons and knowledge from

# Weaving our Wisdoms

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# WEAVING OUR WISDOMS

**Weaving our Wisdoms (WoW)** is a multi-year, multi-stakeholder initiative that supports Indigenous people living with HIV and AIDS by supporting connections to land-based teachings delivered by HIV Olders.



University  
of Victoria

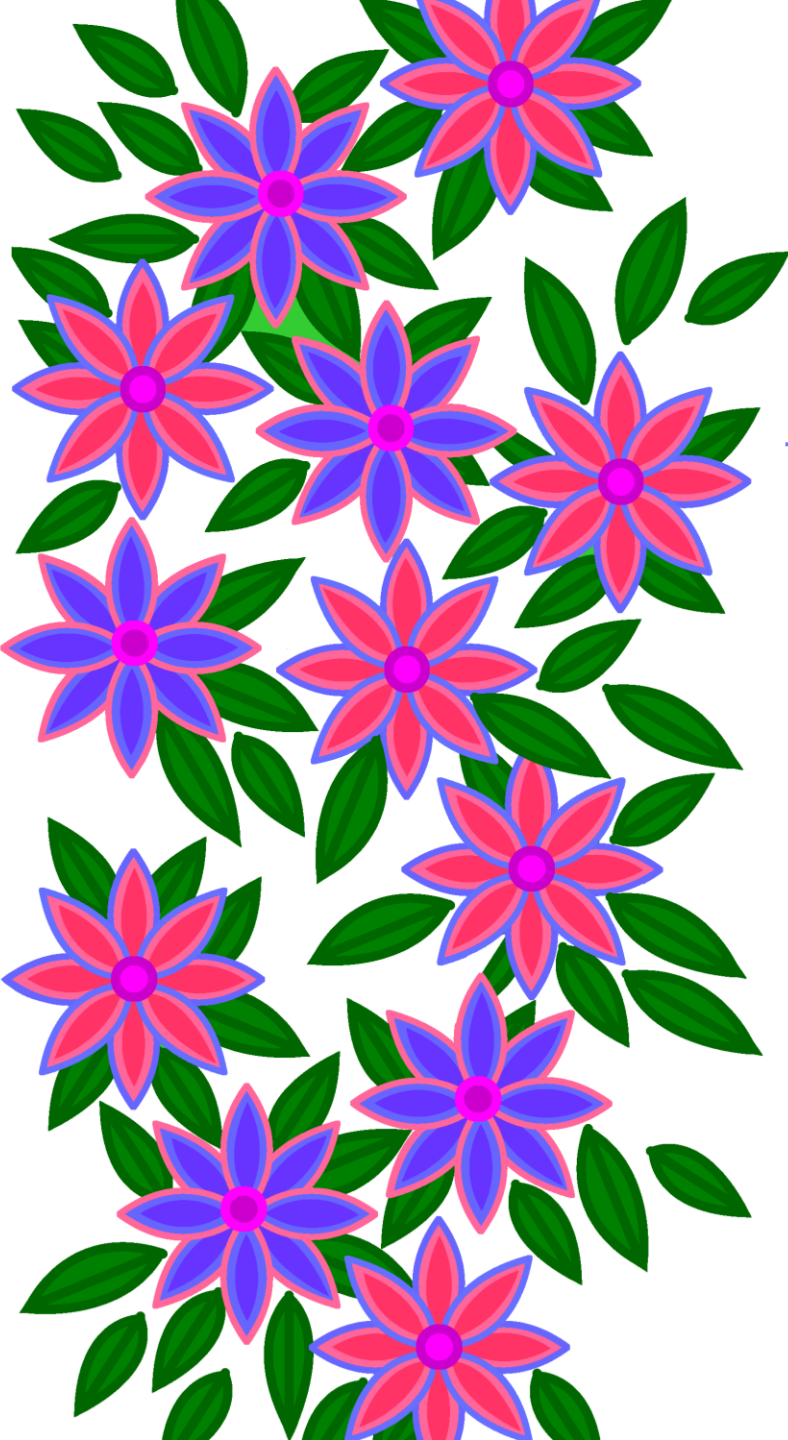


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TORONTO



HIV Olders are Indigenous people living with HIV and AIDS (IPHAs) who have lived long term with HIV and are considered knowledge holders who have wisdom and experience to support HIV wellness for other IPHAs.

HIV Olders understand how cultural teachings can be a positive action initiative to support managing day-to-day needs of living with HIV. They are knowledge holders of HIV history.



**Overarching Objective:** To (1) develop, (2) investigate and (3) share lessons related to a land-based approach that aims to “weave our wisdoms” in order to optimize wellness and “whole”-istic health among Indigenous people living with HIV (IPHAs).

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### Research Questions:

- a) Which aspects of this land-based approach are most impactful and enduring, and why (e.g., food-based activities, medicine walks, tipi teaching, sharing circles)?
- b) How do participants perceive the roles of HIV Older people in building the capacity of Indigenous people living with HIV to optimize their whole-istic wellness within a land-based approach?
- c) What is the role of peer-to-peer knowledge-sharing and capacity-building among participants from different nations?
- d) What is the relevance of sex and gender for this land-based approach to optimizing wellness?

### Research Methods:

- Guided by four complimentary approaches to research (community-based research, Indigenous Knowledge, Decolonizing Methods, and Two-Eyed Seeing), WoW employed on the land, with the land methodologies to explore IPHA wellness. Using this approach to explore how IPHAs perceive and understand their health has built the capacity of IPHAs to optimize their own “whole”istic wellness while reflecting on formal and informal mentorship roles of HIV Older people.





## Methods

We gathered on the land

- To feast,
  - Engage in ceremony,
  - Pick plant medicines,
  - Share tipi teachings,
  - Participate in sharing circles
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- Verbal reflections on the above activities were gathered
  - Notes were taken during the tipi teachings, sharing circles, and verbal reflections

## Virtual collaborative analysis

- Our team relied heavily on software and platforms that allowed for sharing information virtually. Analysis of the verbal reflections and the notes from the tipi teachings and sharing circles revealed four major themes.



# Findings

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## 4 major Themes

### Intersections of Indigeneity

SUBTHEMES:

Culture & Ceremony: Food, Land/Mother Earth, Spiritual Awakening

### Sex, Gender & Sexuality

SUBTHEMES:

2S/LGBTQIA+, Gendered Exclusion, Sex & Gender

### Interconnections

SUBTHEMES:

Connection, Relationships, Urban Living

### Ways of Knowing/ Knowledge Sharing

SUBTHEMES:

Bio/Western Medicine; Colonization; Indigenous Medicine; Knowledge, Learning & Teachings; Lived/Living HIV Experience: *drug use & addictions, HIV stories, HIV diagnosis*; Role of HIV Olders