



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO  
DALLA LANA SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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*Professional Development Wednesday*

*February 13, 2019*

*Non-traditional Careers  
Panel for all MPH programs*

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PANELIST PROFILES

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**Paul Arora | Founding Partner, Lighthouse Outcomes and Assistant Professor, Epidemiology, Dalla Lana School of Public Health**



**paul.arora@utoronto.ca**

*Hon.B.Sc., M.Sc., PhD*

***Please describe the work that you are doing***

I run a consulting company focused on providing health economics and outcomes research services to various clients. We work with companies, NGOs and government to develop and conduct evidence generation and data analysis projects. Most of our work tends to be on comparative effectiveness analysis (comparing the efficacy and safety of medical interventions using network meta-analysis) or using machine learning to answer research questions in client datasets.

***How is your work non-traditional in public health?***

My work is “non-traditional” in the sense that I don't primarily work in or for academia or a government agency. Nearly all of my work is in industry and that poses a very different set of opportunities and challenges.

***Can you list/describe your career trajectory and how you got to where you are today, career wise?***

There wasn't much of a “trajectory” per se! After completing my undergraduate work in microbiology, I became interested in public health and infectious diseases. I spent some time in international development work and decided to complete graduate training in epidemiology. During my time completing my masters thesis I developed an interest in statistical methods for evaluating public health interventions. I took a job with the Public Health Agency of Canada and worked there for several years before starting a PhD in epidemiology. I spent time consulting on evidence synthesis and data analysis projects throughout my PhD and this gave me an opportunity to work in industry and learn more about that world. After completing my PhD I had an opportunity to start my own company and took it.

***What advice would you give recent graduates who want to do what you do?***

Get out of the academic bubble. Go to industry networking events and meet as many people as you can. Learn about the problems industry are trying to solve. Understand the differences between government, academia, industry and consulting. Speak to people who work outside of academia and government and try to understand what problems they need to solve. No matter what environment you're in, academic, government or industry/consulting, understand that everyone works for somebody

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solving some kind of problem and you will too. Try to understand the organizational hierarchy in each setting and how “value” is generated and how money flows.

***Please add anything else you would like to share.***

In any one person’s career, do not discount the role of plain old luck! Hard work and intelligence are important, but I think we tend to, willfully or not, forget about the huge role good luck plays in our professional lives. Partly this is because we can’t take credit for it! If you look back at the good things that happened in your life and trace back the antecedent causes of those events you’ll find that much of it was not in your control at all. This is why you have to put yourself out there, network, and meet as many different kinds of successful people that you can and make it clear that you’re looking to contribute and solve problems. You can’t control your luck completely but doing these kinds of things ups the likelihood that an opportunity will present itself to you.

## Raywat Deonandan | Associate Professor, University of Ottawa

*PhD (Epidemiology), M.Sc. (Neurophysiology), B.Ed. (Science/Math Education), B.Sc. (Physics/Physiology)*

[ray@deonandan.com](mailto:ray@deonandan.com)

*Additional training in Health Economics and Financial Analysis, as well as Ontario Teaching Certificate*

**Raywat Deonandan is an Associate Professor and incoming Assistant Director of the Interdisciplinary School of Health Sciences at the University of Ottawa. He is a global health Epidemiologist, journalist, novelist, and former Chief Scientist with the federal government on the topic of Assisted Reproduction. While presently mostly an academic, Dr. Deonandan's career emerged from the worlds of media and management consulting. His consulting firms, Deonandan Consulting Inc. and Vak International, provide a variety of scientific, communication and evaluation services to both corporate and governmental clients. Deonandan is an award-winning novelist, having won the national book award of the nation of Guyana in 2000, and a celebrated journalist, receiving an outstanding reporting award from New American Media in 2012 for his feature on reproductive tourism. He believes that the key to a successful non-traditional career is excellence in multiple skills sets, most importantly involving different types of writing.**

### ***How is your work non-traditional in public health?***

Prior to becoming a professor, I was solidly in the world of scientific consulting. I have founded several companies, including two consulting firms: Vak International (which conducts evaluations of international development projects) and Deonandan Consulting Inc (which provides epidemiologic services, mostly to governmental clients). I run an e-publishing company (The Intangible Press), which produces low cost public health textbooks, and recently launched a research training company (Research Ready).

### ***Can you list/describe your career trajectory and how you got to where you are today, career wise?***

While I did the traditional things that most scientists do –collecting degrees, because that’s what we were told to do—I also made it a point to learn to write well. I made most of my mistakes while writing for university newspapers, so that I had a fairly hefty portfolio by the time I graduated. This gave me the credibility to secure a book deal, which led to several award-winning publications. Those in turn gave me the credibility to enter the world of management consulting as a biotechnology grant and business plan writer. In short, augmenting my “traditional” degree-specific skills with the more untraditional skill of writing gave me enough of a competitive advantage to straddle several sectors.

### ***What advice would you give recent graduates who want to do what you do?***

Invest in skills acquisition above all else. There are only two categories of skills that are timeless and universal: communication and analysis. The latter includes statistical, qualitative, economic, and political analyses. The former is largely about writing rapidly for different audiences and in different domains: precis, grantwriting, technical writing, newspaper writing, report writing, briefing notes, investment folios, etc. It is increasingly rare to find candidates who show depth and excellence in both communication and analysis.

Please add anything else you would like to share.

More about me at my website: [www.deonandan.com](http://www.deonandan.com)

**Taheera Walji** | Monitoring and Evaluation Consultant, Aga Khan Agency for Habitat



**taheera.w@gmail.com**

*Bachelor of Science in Health Studies and Gerontology, University of Waterloo*  
*Master of Public Health (Specialization in Health Promotion and Community Development), University of Toronto*

***Please describe the work that you are doing***

Taheera Walji is currently based in Dushanbe, Tajikistan as a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Consultant at the Aga Khan Agency for Habitat (AKAH), an agency of the Aga Khan Development Network. Taheera is managing AKAH Tajikistan’s M&E Unit where she is leading the design of AKAH’s first multi-country M&E framework and plan, developing policies and procedures to streamline activity reporting and operational efficiency, and overseeing the regular M&E activities of six water and sanitation and disaster preparedness and response projects in three regions of Tajikistan.

***How is your work non-traditional in public health?***

While Taheera is applying the skills that she has gained from her graduate studies in public health and her experiences in working in the public health sector in Canada, her work is non-traditional in that she is working in an overseas setting on international development projects which go beyond traditional public health topics. This includes but is not limited to, projects which strive to increase community safety from natural hazards and climate change by promoting community and institutional resiliency to respond effectively to disasters, enhancing community access to basic services and creating opportunities for sustainable livelihoods.

***Can you list/describe your career trajectory and how you got to where you are today, career wise?***

After obtaining her MPH degree, Taheera worked in regional, provincial and national public health organizations, including Women’s College Research Institute, University of Toronto and Parachute, where she held positions in quantitative and qualitative research, knowledge translation and policy development. Most recently, she worked as a Health Promotion and Research Analyst at the Region of Waterloo Public Health, where she carried out research, planning, and evaluation activities to inform the design and implementation of infectious disease, sexual health, and child and family health programs and services. Taheera began her career in international development when she chose to pursue her interest in global health by applying for the Aga Khan Foundation Canada International Youth Fellowship. Once awarded the Fellowship, she was placed in Mumbai, India for nine months as an M&E Officer, where she supported with the development of the M&E tools, databases, best practice guidelines, and carried out the agency’s first gender analysis on its’ programming.

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### ***What advice would you give recent graduates who want to do what you do?***

Let your passion guide the work and experiences you pursue. Do your research and understand the sector well, in terms of current priorities, the types of roles available and the types of organizations offering positions both in Canada and overseas. This will provide you with more insight on the types of skills you have to offer, the experience required, and where you will be a good fit. If you don't have previous international development experience, look into paid Fellowship opportunities which will provide you with the ability to build your practical experience overseas. Be sure to network and don't be afraid to go on informational interviews - most often people are happy to share their experiences and insight with you.

**Anjum Sultana | Manager of Policy & Strategic Communications, YWCA**



**[anjumsultana.mph@gmail.com](mailto:anjumsultana.mph@gmail.com)**

*Honours Bachelors of Science, Major in Health Studies (Population Health Co-op) and Neuroscience, Minor in Psychology, University of Toronto  
Masters of Public Health (Health Promotion), Collaborative in Public Health Policy, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto*

*Additional training at Maytree Policy School through Maytree Foundation (In progress)*

***Please describe the work that you are doing***

At YWCA Canada, I lead the organization’s government relations, policy development and strategic communications strategy and implementation. As a national organization committed to advancing gender equity, I work with internal and external stakeholders to advocate for policies related to the social determinants of health such as addressing women’s housing and homelessness; ending gender-based violence; pushing for universal child care and promoting women’s economic equality. Using a gender equity lens, I leverage my research, analysis and policy development skills gained through the MPH program to put forward evidence-based policy recommendations. I also participate in extensive collaboration with member associations across Canada as well as aligned coalition groups to conduct consultations, promote knowledge translation and carry out advocacy campaigns. Our organization also has special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, so we also participate in international policy development processes such as the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women that occurs every year in March at the UN headquarters in New York.

***How is your work non-traditional in public health?***

I do not work in a traditional public health institution such as a research centre or public health unit. However, every day I am working on advancing health equity through action on the social determinants of health by leveraging my applied research, social policy analysis and knowledge translation skill sets. Currently, I do so through an intersectional feminist lens that focuses on key social determinants of health that my organization has specialized in delivering services and programs around such as providing housing and child care services; addressing gender-based violence, as well as providing employment, training and literacy programs. At the National Office, my role is to work towards creating a health promoting and enabling environment in Canada where women, girls and their families are able to access key social determinants of health without barriers and to build the social safety net, so our interventions are not necessary in the long run. My main focus is on areas the federal government has jurisdiction over, so it doesn’t directly map on to several social determinants of health that the provincial/territorial and municipal governments have more direct control over. However, the federal government plays an important role in transfer payments and tax policies so I focus on policy levers that can have downstream impacts on provinces, territories and municipalities.



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### **Can you list/describe your career trajectory and how you got to where you are today, career wise?**

- Completed a 2-year Fellowship at the Wellesley Institute, a research and policy think tank focused on advancing health equity in the Greater Toronto Area through action on the social determinants of health.
- Did extensive volunteering on health equity and policy initiatives such as with the Ontario Public Health Association, the Canadian Muslim Mental Health Conference, as well as participate as an advisor and/or board member with Progress Toronto, Regent Park Community Health Centre and the Council of Agencies Serving South Asians.
- Created platforms to facilitate a community of practice for people interested in a specific issue area ([Racial Health Equity Network](#) – over 2000 members) and a particular skill set ([Millennial Women in Policy](#) – nearly 600 members).
- Continued involvement as an alumni member in various service capacities at the University of Toronto such as at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health Open House events, on practicum and career preparation panels, as a member of the Masters of Public Health – Health Promotion selection committee, and as a Mentor with the Hart House Mentorship Program.

### **What advice would you give recent graduates who want to do what you do?**

Giving back to my communities is something I greatly value, and which has also opened several doors for me.

Mentoring and being of service is an important way to share your expertise as a public health professional, deepen your understanding by adapting your skill set to different contexts as well as broaden your networks and foster relationships. In the above section, I gave some examples of what that can look such as a) being actively involved as an alumni member of the University of Toronto community; b) being a board member of a public health/health equity related organization; c) doing skills-based volunteering with industry organizations or events; or d) being a mentor in the different communities you are part of or participate in.

A key piece of advice I share with students and early career professionals is to create your networks before you need it and be helpful. I find networking most effective when your primary objective is providing value and service to others and your communities.

### **Please add anything else you would like to share.**

I love connecting with fellow MPHers, feel free to get in touch via Twitter at [@AnjumSultana](#) or via email at [anjumsultana.mph@gmail.com](mailto:anjumsultana.mph@gmail.com).

**Kashtin Fitzsimms** | Manager, Quality Improvement at Amice Senior Lifestyles



**k.fitzsimons@amica.ca**

*B.A (U of T, Political Science), MSc (Queen's, Health Quality, Risk and Safety)*

***Please describe the work that you are doing***

Working with Amica, I am primarily focused on advancing resident safety and quality of life. In practice, my involvement with seniors residences ranges from local initiatives to provide more meaningful behaviour support to residents with dementia to the development of analytics resources to reduce falls.

***How is your work non-traditional in public health?***

Amica is a private pay seniors residence, which offers some unique opportunities and presents some challenges. In addition to the funding model, my role's focus on quality of life often extends into culinary services and other amenities offered in seniors residences. For every site visit on the subject of harm reduction there is a site visit concerning the service experience for residents in Memory Care.

***Can you list/describe your career trajectory and how you got to where you are today, career wise?***

I began my career working in primary care and community health with a focus on health promotion. Working with Unison Health & Community Services, I was tasked with increasing uptake of the Diabetes Education Centre at Bathurst-Finch. What that role required was an emphasis on community partnership and collaboration. From there, I took on a role leading quality improvement initiatives at a publicly funded long-term care home in Hamilton. Immersing myself in the operations of a single site was valuable in understanding the operational challenges of one segment of the health system and how those challenges can influence the capacity for other parts of the health system to integrate within long-term care. Prior to the joining Amica, I worked in decision support at the Scarborough Health System primarily supporting the surgery. At each step of my career, I cast a fairly wide net and kept an open mind about where I might go next.

***What advice would you give recent graduates who want to do what you do?***

For those looking to work in quality improvement, I think it is important to have a good foundation in methodologies that are commonly applied in the health system. Whether that means taking a course in Lean Six Sigma or attending free workshops provided by IDEAS, that foundational knowledge is critical for getting in the door. That said, I feel having a wide range of experiences within and beyond the health system is just as important. Knowing when to apply the right tool or methodology is best learned through application and making lots of mistakes.

For those looking to work with seniors, I think the first and best thing to do is spend time volunteering or working with seniors.

## Iradele Plante | 1L Student, McGill Faculty of Law



**iradele.plante@mail.utoronto.ca**

*B.Sc (Psychology), MPH (Health Promotion)*

*Additional training and certificates – Specialization in sexual diversity studies*

***Please describe the work that you are doing***

I study law! Right now, this means that I spend a lot of time thinking about the foundations of our legal system in Canada, and what legislation regulates our health and access to healthcare (and how you can sue if something goes wrong).

***How is your work non-traditional in public health?***

Not many folks think about law after public health (granted, it is 3-year commitment, so I wouldn't put it past anyone!), but I have been surprised to see how transferrable the skills are. Here's my take: If health promotion helps you understand how communities interact within a system, law helps you understand how and why the system was made in the first place. The work is non-traditional because you really get to see social determinants connect with the inner machinery of legislation and public policy—it's kind of like learning what determines the social determinants!

***Can you list/describe your career trajectory and how you got to where you are today, career wise?***

I started working in HIV non-profits before my studies in public health. From there, I transitioned into public health research, where I worked with organizations like Re:Searching for LGBTQ Health, Access Alliance and The Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. While I loved the spirit of participatory research and working with communities on a program level, I found myself increasingly interested in the social determinants of health. I took a public health law course in my second year, and found my calling. Here, I met lawyers who worked for advocacy organizations, legal clinics and governmental agencies, many of whom were supporting people with housing applications, employment contracts and human rights claims—the very social determinants we learned about in class. It's an honor to get to study what I study, and bring some of that DLSPH spirit into my work!

***What advice would you give recent graduates who want to do what you do?***

If you think law is your next step, that's awesome to hear! We NEED more compassionate people and systems thinkers in law. However, the world of law can be very different from public health. In many ways, it's like learning a new language. By being in a more generalist discipline, there's many different opinions around you, and some may not be concerned (or frankly care for) the value of health promotion. For that, I would say be kind to yourself, it can sometimes feel a bit lonely in the ivory tower. Take extra care to find your niche – law school feels more intense, not because the work is more difficult, but because it's a different etiquette and there are different expectations.

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***Please add anything else you would like to share***

I'm a queer person, a white settler and a person living with an invisible disability. I'd like to take a moment to recognize how my career experiences have been shaped by these identities and privileges. What has worked for me might not work for others – However, if you ever have any questions, feel free to reach out to me (even if we don't know each other) at [lradele.plante@gmail.com](mailto:lradele.plante@gmail.com). I'm always happy to support and hear you out.

**Pierrette Buklis | Assistant Professor and Program Director, MPH-Nutrition & Dietetics, Dalla Lana School of Public Health**



**pierrette.buklis@utoronto.ca**

*BSc, MHSc*

*Additional training and certificates – RD (Registered Dietitian), FDC (Fellow of the Dietitians of Canada)*

***Please describe the work that you are doing:***

In my current role, I am responsible to:

- Plan and deliver curriculum to prepare students for careers in nutrition and dietetics; and share nutrition and dietetics expertise and value with students in other disciplines, in a clinical public health context;
- Share knowledge and experience with the broader community of dietetic educators, regulators and standard-setting agencies; and work together to ensure the profession of the future is evolving with the health environment and public need;
- Support student learning outside of the classroom through individual support and mentoring;
- Advocate for Nutrition & Dietetics students and for the program within the school and university;
- Foster a climate of respect, growth, learning and community among our faculty, partners and preceptors.

***Can you list/describe your career trajectory and how you got to where you are today, career wise?***

I began my career as a Public Health Nutritionist, delivering nutrition care at a population level for the Scarborough area; and engaging with other community and population health focussed agencies to share knowledge and strategy to apply locally or collaborate in application at a provincial or even national level. That part was very traditional, and the entry level role that our degree prepared us to take. Very early in my career, I was given the opportunity to engage in interdisciplinary education and action, with Scarborough public health staff, and later with community physicians and then medical students at the University of Toronto. This interdisciplinary work, which also involved bridging our education/policy/health promotion approach to the individual/clinical level of care, seemed unusual in the early '90s and very interesting to me.

That interest led me away from traditional public health roles, into paid work and volunteer activity in media communications, non-profit association management, research project leadership, entrepreneurial ventures and food business. Today, at this stage of my career, being back at the university to share my experiences with students who are where I was a couple of decades back, might be viewed as a closing of a circle ... almost ... I prefer to see it as looping back to launch some new vectors. Where I was prepared

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in my graduate program in a very straight-line to a career in public health, and “rebelled” by transferring my skills and knowledge to many other environments and approaches to practice, it is my aim that all of our students see their graduate career as a means to develop competency for action in divergent and perhaps as-yet-unknown ways and fields.

***What advice would you give recent graduates who want to do what you do?***

- Know yourself
- Read your landscape
- Engage with partners and stakeholders
- Take calculated risks
- Give 100%

## Eric Ng | Associate Program Director, MPH Nutrition & Dietetics

HBSc MPH

erickh.ng@utoronto.ca

### ***Please describe the work that you are doing***

I am the Associate Director at the MPH N&D program. I work with a team of dietitians who are part of a unique partnership that aims to bring dietetic education together using the concepts of clinical public health. I contribute to the coordination of admission, curriculum development, and I am also a PhD Student in Policy Studies at Ryerson where my focus is on the connections between race and food in social policy. I also teach undergraduate courses at Ryerson and graduate courses within the MPH program. I am currently taking a leave from my role as health equity specialist at Toronto Public Health. My role there has been to support Toronto Public Health programs and staff in working with marginalized communities in addressing health inequities in Toronto. We work from a social justice and anti-oppression perspective. I also provide health equity training to staff.

### ***Can you list/describe your career trajectory and how you got to where you are today, career wise?***

After several years working in primary care and community health centre, I learned about the impact of social determinants of health and human rights on the communities we serve. I pursued further training and experiences outside public health in anti-oppression and facilitation. My journey has led me to working with other health professionals in addressing systemic issues that impact how we work with our communities as allies (e.g. LGBTQ, Mental Health, Racialized, Indigenous communities, newcomers in Toronto).

### ***What advice would you give recent graduates who want to do what you do?***

- Humility and openness to learning and un-learning
- Developing a critical lens
- Linking new experiences with previous practice
- Understanding the various socioeconomic systems in which we are a part of

## Zoran Bojic | Team Leader, Quality Programs (SickKids)



**zoran.bojic@sickkids.ca**

*Master of Health Science degree in Occupational and Environmental Health, University of Toronto*

*Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental and Safety Engineering, University of Tuzla*

*Additional training and certificates: Certified Project Management Professional (PMP), Certified Six Sigma Black Belt (CSSBB), Certified Lean Agent (CLA), Certified ASQ Manager of Quality/Organizational Excellence (ASQ-CMQOE), Quality Management System (QMS) Lead Auditor, IQMH Accreditation Program Assessor, and Certified Industrial Hygienist (CIH-ret)*

### **Please describe the work that you are doing**

Zoran is currently responsible for the development and implementation of strategic and tactical action plans to achieve and sustain the benchmark quality, safety and risk management programs in multiple clinical areas. Zoran leads process improvement initiatives to reduce waste and variation, enhance information flow, improve effectiveness and efficiency of processes, minimize patient safety risks, optimize utilization of resources, and create additional value for patients. He develops interprofessional education programs and applies Human Factors Engineering concepts and principles to improve quality of care, enhance patient experience and design robust systems that are resilient to failures and human errors. He coordinates morbidity and mortality (M&M) reviews, facilitates a collaborative team-based approach to problem solving, leads interdepartmental project teams, and applies Lean Six Sigma and Project Management knowledge and skills to meet or exceed stakeholder needs. Zoran acts as a change agent, builds structures and processes to enable innovation, writes business plans, and facilitates strategic planning process to establish a common vision, create a culture of safety and build commitment to achieve clinical, academic, and research excellence. He provides numerous academic contributions including the design, development and delivery of continuing education courses and training programs, scientific posters, and presentations at international conferences.

### **How is your work non-traditional in public health?**

Using highly integrated Lean Six Sigma, Project Management, Risk Management, and Human Factors Engineering methods, tools, and techniques to enhance multi-project coordination, facilitate change, improve efficiency and effectiveness of processes, and create value represents rather non-traditional work in public health. This approach is based on the knowledge and experience gained from working in several High Reliability Organizations (HROs) characterized by a rapid pace of change, high degree of ambiguity, exceptionally complex systems and processes, variable and unpredictable process inputs, and high potential for catastrophic incidents.



### **Can you list/describe your career trajectory and how you got to where you are today, career wise?**

Prior to joining the Hospital for Sick Children, Zoran held several leadership positions within the aerospace, pharmaceutical, and petrochemical industries and received numerous awards for achieving breakthrough organizational performance improvements and increasing customer satisfaction. As a member of the senior leadership team in an aerospace company, he also performed corporate management system audits at manufacturing and service facilities across the United States and Canada.

### **What advice would you give recent graduates who want to do what you do?**

- Demonstrate unwavering commitment to lifelong learning
- Continue to develop communication, team building and interpersonal skills
- Build both an emotional and rational case for change
- Anticipate the influence of organizational culture on the likelihood of success
- Bring an outside perspective and experience to your teams
- Use multiple communication channels in the context of target audience
- Maintain adaptability, versatility and flexibility in your career choices

### **Please add anything else you would like to share.**

As the current President of the Registered Nurses Foundation of Ontario (RNFOO), Zoran provides strategic direction, oversight, guidance, and leadership for key activities of the Foundation. RNFOO is a registered charitable organization that provides financial support for nurses and nursing students in Ontario to help them further their educational studies, conduct nursing and health care research, and support community health initiatives. Zoran also serves on the Board of Directors of the Public Health Alumni Association (PHAA), promotes fellowship among the alumni community and help foster growth and advancement in public health by advancing the values and supporting the academic mission of the Dalla Lana School of Public Health (DLSPH) and the University of Toronto.

Zoran has also authored two textbooks for the Canadian Association of Medical Radiation Technologists (CAMRT) Continuing Professional Development Program: Fundamentals of Quality Management and Human Factors in Patient Safety.

## Michael Mahkwa (Bear) Auksi | Indigenous Health



University of Toronto: Dalla Lana School of Public Health

Waakebiness-Bryce Institute for Indigenous Health: Research Coordinator

International Journal of Indigenous Health: Co-Manager

**michael.auksi@utoronto.ca**

*Bachelor of Social Work (Ryerson University '12)*

*Master of Social Work (Ryerson University '13)*

*Additional training and certificates: Canfitpro Personal Trainers' Specialist (PTS)*

### ***Please describe the work that you are doing***

My current work plan is best understood when broken down into 4 components: Research/Education, the International Journal of Indigenous Health (IJIH), Community Engagement, and Institute Day-to-Day. Specifically, some of the research projects I'm working on have to do with Indigenous homelessness (specific to women and youth), Indigenous art in education, food sovereignty, physical activity, land-based learning, to name a few. Working as co-manager of the International Journal of Indigenous Health has allowed me to develop professionally in ways I could never have imagined. Getting to email and chat with dynamic researchers on a daily basis is an absolute joy. The community engagement aspect of my work is always a treat for me. Visiting and working with Indigenous community members at various agencies, hosting archery sessions at nearby Hart House Archery Club are just some of the many ways we are able to expose people to the university. Lastly, Institute day-to-day duties can be as simple as lugging water jugs from the sixth floor to the importance of greeting visitors politely and professionally.

### ***How is your work non-traditional in public health?***

I would never speak for our directors, but I feel like Indigenous approaches to public health and research are distinctly different from mainstream approaches. Without neglecting critical quantitative data, I would suggest that qualitative approaches are integral to our work. For example, a Community-Based Participatory Action Research (CBPAR) data collection method lines up well with Indigenous research ethics because it allows for participants to be active in the research process. When data collection occurs, the process begins and ends with a spiritual opening consisting of purification rituals using specific sacred medicines (i.e. sage or sweetgrass) along with a giving of thanks. This transforms the usual focus group into a sharing circle which embraces and values the telling of stories and narratives. It is a space where people feel safe to share freely and participants leave feeling inspired, having been active producers of knowledges and insights.

### ***Can you list/describe your career trajectory and how you got to where you are today, career wise?***

I've had the most fitting career trajectory for my life and who I am. I was one of those young people who got a bit carried away socializing in my critical late teens. As a result, I never finished high

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school. Thankfully, I was able to access the University of Toronto through the Transitional Year Programme (TYP) in 2004-05. I studied two years of Indigenous Studies before transferring to Ryerson University to pursue my undergraduate and graduate degrees in social work. The Master of Social Work program at Ryerson was ideal because I gained invaluable research skills through my dissertation which sought to enlighten the concept of Indigenous youth development from the perspective of Elders. After completing my graduate studies in the fall of 2013, I boarded a plane destined for Tallinn, Estonia, my mother's country of birth. My intention was to play hockey there for two seasons so I could be ruled eligible to compete in the 2015 IIHF World Hockey Championships. In short, all my dreams came true as I played in the 2015 event as well as two Olympic Qualification events leading up to the 2018 Games in Pyeongchang, Korea. Life back in Canada has been great. I sharpened my front-line skills for 2 years having worked as the recreation coordinator at Native Child & Family Services of Toronto. When it was time for a change, I emailed Dr. Suzanne Stewart in hopes that there might be part-time work for me. I had met Dr. Stewart many years prior and knew all about her talent and love for the Indigenous community. Today, I am so proud to be part of the Waakebiness-Bryce team as I continue to develop personally and professionally each day.

### ***What advice would you give recent graduates who want to do what you do?***

Specific to the Indigenous community, it's not always as simple as putting on nice clothes and running a comb through your hair. Sometimes dressing down is more, but it varies. To truly be accepted takes time, the courage to make mistakes, and time spent to prove that you're sincere in your intentions. That said, just get out to some events! Every week there are events put on by the universities and colleges, local Indigenous agencies, along with film screenings, theatrical productions, community gatherings, feasts, dances, and the list goes on. If you really want to get involved, get to some events and the community will notice. Chances are you'll meet a few community members and you just never know what will come of it.

### **Please add anything else you would like to share.**

I just want to say thanks to everyone I've met in my journey.

**Anita Tsang-Sit** | Manager, Risk Operations and Enterprise Risk Management,  
Toronto Community Housing Corporation



[anita.tsang.sit@alum.utoronto.ca](mailto:anita.tsang.sit@alum.utoronto.ca)

*MPH, RN, BScN, BA*

*Additional training and certificates: Canadian Risk Management(c), certificate in risk management, certificate in evidence-informed decision making*

***Please describe the work that you are doing***

To list and provide a snapshot of some of the work as Manager, Risk Operations and Enterprise Risk Management –

*Risk Advisory Services:*

- Adopting a client-centric risk advisory services model to support business functions and projects to identify risk exposures and generate risk control solutions
- Ensure delivery of risk management training and capacity building activities to business functions and projects to advance broader understanding of risk management principles

*Claims Management – Liability*

*Insurance Management*

- Liability, Property, Construction, and Contracts
- Insurance portfolio and coverage

*Enterprise Risk Management (ERM)*

- Support implementation and operation of the Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) program
- Support enhancement and sustainability of ERM program in alignment with industry best practices
- Develop and maintain ERM management policies and procedures
- Conduct business and/or enterprise-wide risk assessments as required

***How is your work non-traditional in public health?***

Public health work is around the common goal of improving the health of individuals and the community through health promotion, preventing injuries and managing the spread of infectious diseases.

My work with risk management at TCHC is considered non-traditional in public health. Although housing is a social determinant of health and an important factor in the work I do, the focus of the work around risk management is more often focused from a corporate perspective. However, this upstream approach has a downstream effect on tenant health.

## PANELIST PROFILES

### ***Can you list/describe your career trajectory and how you got to where you are today, career wise?***

- Nursing BScN and registered nurse- practiced in the hospital at Toronto General Hospital as well as at Peel Public Health as a public health nurse
- MPH in Social Behavioural Sciences- completed a placement at the National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tool and Ministry of Health and Long Term Care
- Analyst, Research and Policy at Peel Public Health
- Consultant, Risk Management at Trillium Health Partners
- President, Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) Peel Chapter
- Manager, Risk Operations and Enterprise Risk Management at Toronto Community Housing Corporation

### ***What advice would you give recent graduates who want to do what you do?***

Consider completing placements in areas/expertise within the MPH program in an area you want to work in. Often employers are looking for some experience in candidates applying for positions.

I believe that enterprise risk management and using a framework to analyze risk is an area that is not integrated into the public health work we do. Risk management is integral to a lot of work in public health, e.g preventing the spread of infectious diseases.

- Consideration of completing the risk management certification

### ***Please add anything else you would like to share.***

I have found my volunteer work with RNAO as well as networking to be of a valuable asset to doing work that I am passionate about and advancing the health of individuals and the community. These exposures have given me such opportunities to meet with politicians at Queen's Park to discuss political platforms and its impact on health.