

# NATIONAL INDIGENOUS DIABETES ASSOCIATION SPRING 2024 NEWSLETTER



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## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MESSAGE

Taanishi. (hello in michif)

Please enjoy this edition of the Spring NIDA newsletter.

Maarsii. (thank you in michif)



# NATIONAL INDIGENOUS DIABETES ASSOCIATION SPRING 2024 NEWSLETTER

Happy Spring from the National Indigenous Diabetes Association Board of Directors and Staff!

As the snow melts and the earth renews itself, so does our commitment to enhancing the well-being of our communities. This spring season brings both the promise of renewal and the somber reflection of loss.

We mourn this spring transition with the loss of Mary Beaucage to the spirit world, a cherished member of our board from Nipissing First Nation. Mary joined our ancestors on March 28th, 2024, leaving behind a legacy of wisdom, strength, and an unwavering commitment to the organizations she volunteered for and advocated with, including the Research Community. In the cycle of life, as we see in the natural world around us, endings are intertwined with beginnings. As plants root down and reach upwards, so too will we continue to grow, inspired by Mary's dedication. Our thoughts extend to her family and all who were touched by her spirit and teachings. We commit to honouring her memory in our ongoing work at NIDA.

Highlights from the Spring Season:

- We are grateful to the Manitoba First Nations Diabetes Leadership Council and Grand Council Treaty 3 for hosting a meaningful discussion on the Diabetes Kinship Circle Report. To learn more about our work with the National Framework for Diabetes in Canada, join our Zoom event on May 3rd, 2024, registration can be found below.
- Thanks to Victoria Taylor, Student at Queen's University, for her insightful article, "Towards a Sustainable Future: Reducing the Environmental Impact of the NIDA Conference." We are proud to explore more ways to reduce our ecological footprint and encourage our community to engage in these efforts.
- We are pleased to announce the open call for nominations for the Caroline Daigneault Diabetes Shkaabe Award. This award recognizes outstanding contributions to diabetes prevention and management within Indigenous communities. Nominate a deserving individual or community today.
- Stay tuned for more information on our initiatives and how you can get involved.

All My Relations,  
Celeste Theriault  
Executive Director, National Indigenous Diabetes Association

## IN MEMORY: MARY BEAUCAGE



It is with a heavy heart that we share the sad news of the passing of our deeply appreciated board member, Mary Beaucage, who joined the spirit world on March 28th, 2024.

Since January 2022, Mary has blessed NIDA with her wisdom, strength, and a deep commitment to our collective work and wellbeing. Her spirit and teachings have left a mark on our hearts and our mission.

In these moments of deep grief, we will always cherish the profound impact Mary had on our organization and the lives she touched. We shared many great memories in our time together. The lives she has impacted go above and beyond any human hand, Mary was impactful wherever she went.

May Mary's spirit guide us in a good way as we take on our next endeavors always remembering her kind thoughtful words along the way.

We extend our hands in comfort to Mary's family and all who knew her, sharing in the weight of this loss and the brightness of her memory. May we carry forward her example of dedication and community, holding her in our hearts until we meet again. May we find solace in our shared memories of her commitment and contributions to NIDA.

<https://www.echovita.com/ca/obituaries/on/north-bay/mary-beaucage-17852826>



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# NATIONAL INDIGENOUS DIABETES AWARENESS DAY      2024

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THE DIABETES KINSHIP CIRCLE CHANGING THE  
STORY OF DIABETES FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES  
FROM COAST TO COAST TO COAST  
PRESENTATION

*FRIDAY MAY 3, 2024  
12:00 PM - 1:30 PM CST  
ZOOM*

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**FREE  
VIRTUAL  
EVENT**

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**PLEASE RSVP:  
[CLICK HERE FOR LINK](#)**

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# YOUR HEALTH MATTERS SUMMIT



April 27, 2024

9:00 AM – 3:00 PM ET | In-person and virtual hybrid event<sup>nt</sup>



## Join Us for an Unforgettable Day of Health, Wellness, and Community!

### What to Expect

Free

Virtual Option Only

Scan to register



Or visit [obesity-matters.com](https://obesity-matters.com)

- Diverse Community: Open to all passionate about health and wellness.
- Expert Insights: Learn from obesity specialists and advocate stories.
- Interactive Sessions: From Masterclass to Jeopardy-style challenge.

### Your Hosts



Sandra Elia



Rachel Atkins

Register for the Summit Today and Be Part of Something Bigger!

### Speakers



Dr. Sasha High



Dr. Jeff Alfonsi



Dr. Sandy Van



Shilpa Joshi



Aashni Shah



Dr. Sean Wharton



Neda Nasseri



Lisa Machado



Andrew Locker



Dr. Gillian Mandich

### Sponsors



BAUSCH Health



### Media Partners



# Manitoba First Nations Diabetes Leadership Council (MFNDLC) Presentation

NIDA was able to present The Diabetes Kinship Circle Report and provide a NIDA Update to the Manitoba First Nations Diabetes Leadership Council (MFNDLC) in-person at the Dakota Ojibway Health Services Office. We thank MFNDLC for sharing their time with us.



**March 8th, 2024**  
**International Women's Day**

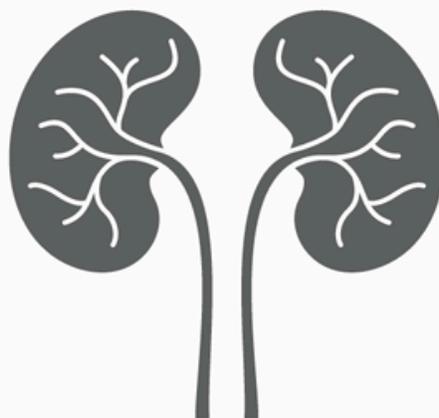


# March 14, 2024 World Kidney Day



# World Kidney Day

14 March



WWW.NADA.CA

# March 20th, 2024 2024 National Dietitians Day

## NATIONAL DIETITIANS DAY

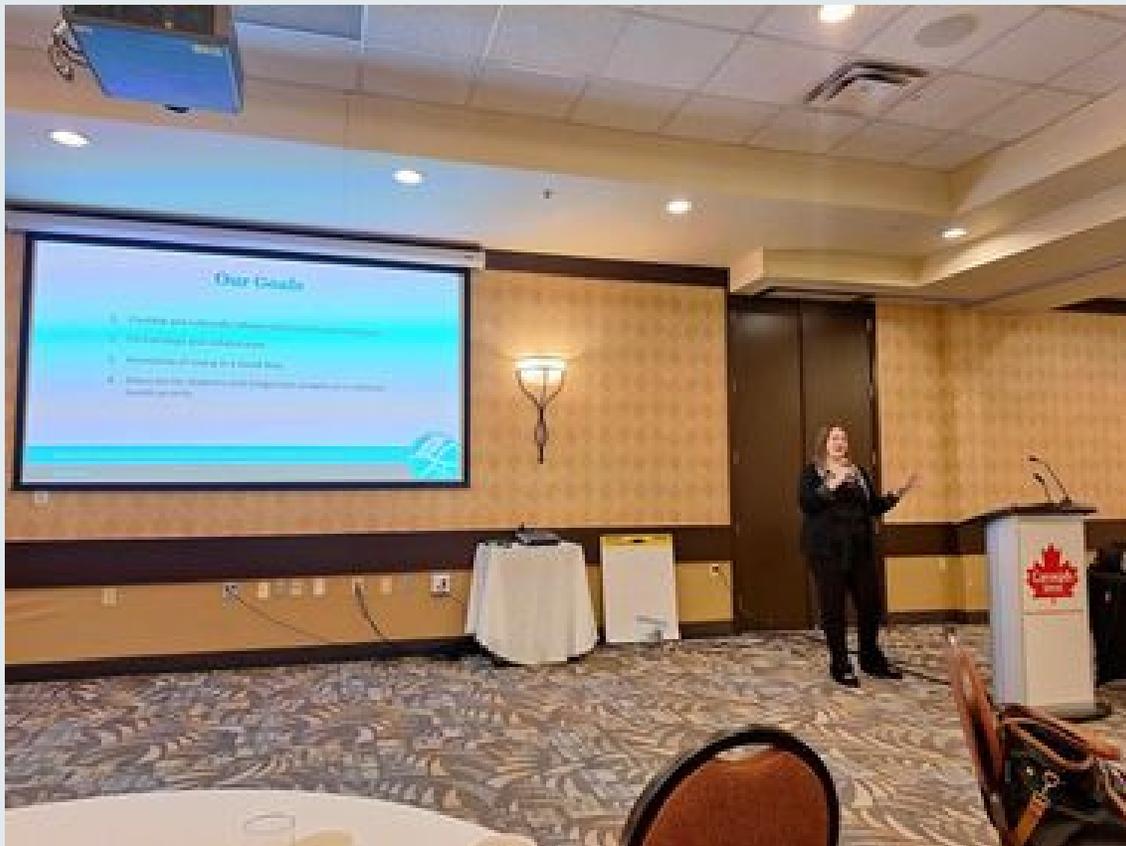
MARCH 20TH, 2024



# Grand Council Treaty 3 gathering for their Diabetes Training & Engagement Session

NIDA Executive Director Celeste Theriault had the pleasure to present during the Grand Council Treaty 3 gathering for their Diabetes Training & Engagement Session at the Canad Inns Club Regent Winnipeg MB.

Photo credit: Philina Sky



Four Arrows Regional Health Authority Inc.

# 2024 Indigenous Food Sovereignty Summit NATION TO NATION DIALOGUE



**June 18-20, 2024**  
**#ifss2024**

Location: TBD  
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

## By, For & With Indigenous People

Share and learn about Indigenous cultural food practices and the ceremonies, stories, and traditional languages that honour food.



For more information or to purchase tickets please contact:

Byron Beardy  
[bbeardy@fourarrowsrha.org](mailto:bbeardy@fourarrowsrha.org)

Larry Wood 1-204-881-4002

Jackie Linklater 1-431-279-1565

# Towards a Sustainable Future: Reducing the Environmental Impact of the NIDA Conference

If you attended the NIDA conference in Enoch, Alberta, last November, you may recall having been invited to participate in a survey to assess the environmental impact of the conference. NIDA partnered with researchers from the Community-Engaged Health Promotion Research group at Queen's University to explore how we could lessen the environmental 'footprint' of the NIDA conference. An environmental footprint is the effect that an activity has on the environment through the resources it uses and the harmful gases - carbon emissions- it produces. We were interested in understanding what we were doing right and where we might do better in the future.

NIDA conference organizers had the environment in mind during their planning process and made decisions to lessen the environmental impact of the conference. For example, attendee nametags were printed on seed paper that could be planted after the conference and a phone app was used to share the conference program instead of printing thousands of paper pages. Our study documented all these actions.

It is well-established that travel to in-person events significantly contributes to carbon emissions, so we were also interested in evaluating the emissions from attendee travel to the conference. Additionally, we wanted to understand conference attendees' attitudes towards environmentally friendly actions in their day-to-day work lives to determine interest in this topic and start the conversation about how NIDA can support communities in considering the environment when addressing diabetes.

All 157 NIDA conference attendees were invited to complete a survey that included questions relating to attendee demographics, mode of travel to the conference, and attitudes and barriers related to environmentally friendly actions at work. The survey was available through the conference app and on electronic tablets available at the registration desk on the first day of the conference. A total of 31 attendees who provided informed consent completed the survey. To assess the actions taken by NIDA organizers to reduce the conference's environmental impact, we used an observational checklist that focused on assessing conference menus, food service and waste related to single-use items, and conference swag.

# Towards a Sustainable Future: Reducing the Environmental Impact of the NIDA Conference

Average carbon emissions were calculated from reported attendee travel mode, survey responses were tallied, and observational data were summarized. An illustration of the findings is presented on the poster in figures 1-3.

Conference attendees travelled to Enoch, Alberta, from many different provinces across the country. Our calculations reveal that the average emissions of those travelling to the conference was 402.5 kg/CO<sub>2</sub>. This accounts for more than one-third of the transportation carbon emissions limit recommended annually by Canada's established target.<sup>1</sup> When you consider that each person's limit includes all daily transportation-related activities (e.g., going to work, running errands) for the entire year, using 1/3 of one's limit for one event is a lot!

We found that over 96% of survey respondents rated 'considering the environment in their work' as slightly important, important, or very important. Despite this high importance rating, 92% reported some level of difficulty in reducing their environmental footprint at work. Commonly reported barriers included financial constraints, limited resources, lack of time, uncertainty about where to begin, and resistance to change.

As mentioned above, the conference phone app not only eliminated the need for paper, but it also included an option for attendees to communicate about carpooling to and from the airport to limit vehicle emissions. Further, conference swag came in a reusable bag and included items like vegetable seeds that contribute positively to the environment rather than creating waste; a bin was provided for attendees to recycle their conference lanyard at the end of the conference.

In the future, NIDA will continue to use what we have learned from this study to make the event more environmentally friendly. Opportunities for further environmental action include incorporating vegetarian meals and locally sourced foods, exploring opportunities for food waste reduction, and choosing venues that can assist with environmentally friendly actions.

# Towards a Sustainable Future: Reducing the Environmental Impact of the NIDA Conference

If you are interested in making your own work events more environmentally friendly, consider these tips:

- Encourage carpooling or active transportation (walking or biking) to the event.
- Make information available online to limit the need for printing on paper.
- Use local food options or caterers where available.
- Ask attendees to bring reusable mugs, plates, and cutlery to limit single-use waste.
- Donate left-over food.

Reducing emissions today will ensure a better tomorrow for the generations to come.

## Reference

1.Akenji, L., Bengtsson, M., Toivio, V., Lettenmeier, M., Fawcett, T., Parag, Y., Saheb, Y., Coote, A., Spangenberg, J., Capstick, S., Gore, T., Coscieme, L., Wackernagel, M., Kenner, D. (2021). 1.5-Degree Lifestyles: Towards A Fair Consumption Space for All. Hot or Cool Institute, Berlin.

Submitted by: Victoria Taylor, Queen's University



# Assessing the Environmental Impact of the National Indigenous Diabetes Association (NIDA) Conference 2023



Victoria Taylor, Brittany McBeath, Céleste Thériault, Cameron Hare, Lucie Lévesque



National Indigenous Diabetes Association | Association nationale autochtone diabète

## Background

- In-person gatherings are significant contributors to carbon emissions.<sup>1,2</sup>
- There is an urgent need to address carbon emissions stemming from human activities.<sup>3</sup>
- Indigenous organizations are taking the lead on environmental action.<sup>4</sup>
- Data are lacking about conference organizer actions to reduce carbon emissions and attendee attitudes about the environmental impact of conferences.

## Aims

- To investigate actions by the National Indigenous Diabetes Association (NIDA) conference organizers to reduce carbon emissions.
- To calculate conference attendee travel emissions cost relative to Canada's annual per capita transportation emissions limit.
- To assess conference attendee attitudes towards environment-friendly actions at work.

## Data Sources & Measures

- Conference attendees (n=157):** invited to self-report demographics, mode of travel to the conference, and attitudes and barriers related to environmentally friendly actions at work.
- Conference organizer actions:** an observational checklist was developed to assess food content and delivery, and waste related to single-use items and swag; venue selection was discussed with conference organizers.

## Results

### Conference Attendee Survey Findings

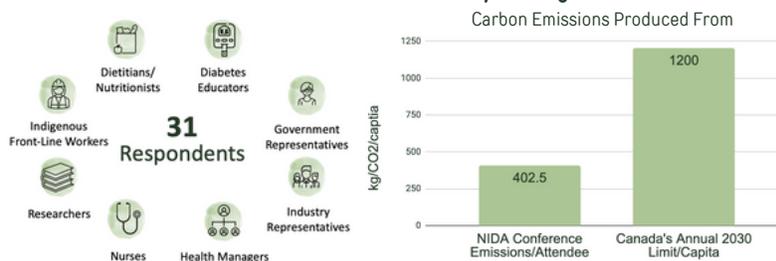


Figure 1. Comparing average carbon emissions per attendee traveling to and from the NIDA 2023 conference with Canada's annual limit per capita.<sup>5</sup>

### Importance of Considering the Environment in Your Work

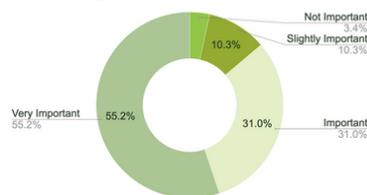


Figure 2. Attendees were asked the importance of considering the environment in their work. Over 96% reported some level of importance.

### Difficulty in Reducing the Environmental Impact at Work

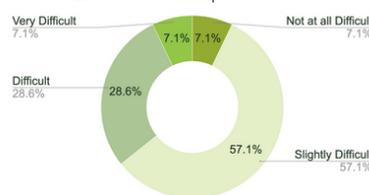


Figure 3. Attendees were asked the level of difficulty in reducing their environmental impact at work. Over 92% reported some level of difficulty.

### Conference Organizer Actions Findings

- Travel-Related Emissions**
  - ✓ Carpooling was encouraged
  - ✓ Venue was in an accessible location (i.e. close to the airport)
  - ✓ Venue was within walking distance of the hotel
- Waste Production**
  - ✓ Electronic agendas provided
  - ✓ Sustainable conference swag
  - ✓ Event organizers took action to reduce single-use products (e.g. reusing name tag lanyards)
- Food-Related Emissions**
  - ✗ Main meal option was vegetarian
  - ✗ Meal options identified as locally sourced\*
  - ✗ Plan in place for left-over meals\*
  - ✓ Single-use plastic was not used in food serving
  - ✓ Reusable cups and glasses provided
  - Reusable plates and cutlery provided

## Discussion

- Travel emissions to one domestic conference can contribute to over 1/3 of a person's annual transportation emissions limit.
- There is a strong desire to reduce one's environmental impact at work, but individuals perceive it as challenging to initiate change.
- Conference organizer decisions can reduce the environmental impact of the event.

## Future

### Recommendations

- Choose a venue that is willing to collaborate to reduce environmental impact.
- Explore opportunities to reduce food waste at conferences.
- Share environmental event practices with attendees to inspire them in their work lives.
- Consider hybrid options to reduce the need to travel.

## Acknowledgment

Thank you to the NIDA conference attendees who took the time to participate in the environmental survey. CIHR Project PCS-190954 & DRW-187410 | Canadian Institutes of Health Research | CIHR IRSC | Instituts de recherche en santé du Canada

## References

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5. Kenji, L., Bengtsson, M., Toivo, V., Lettenmeier, M., Fawcett, T., Parag, Y., Saheb, Y., Coote, A., Spangenberg, J., Capstick, S., Gore, T., Coscieme, L., Wackernagel, M., Kenner, D. (2020). *1.5-Degree Lifestyles: Towards a Fair Consumption Space for All*. Hot or Cool Institute, Berlin.

## 2024 Diabetes Update Conference

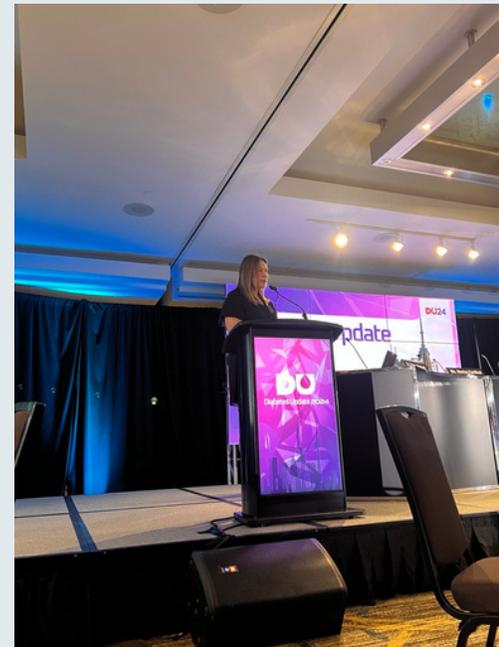
★ Highlights from the Diabetes Update Conference! ★

Last week, our very own Chair of the Board of Directors, Ms. Marisa Cardinal, took the stage at the Diabetes Update Conference in Toronto on April 12th to share NIDA's approach to Indigenous diabetes care.

Following NIDA's presentation, Dr. David Campbell discussed the critical issue of diabetes management in individuals facing homelessness and housing insecurity.

The session concluded with a dynamic panel discussion, moderated by Dr. Zaina Albalawi, featuring insights from Dr. Campbell, Ms. Cardinal, and NIDA's Executive Director, Celeste Theriault.

Thank you to all who participated and contributed to these crucial conversations. Together, we're making strides in enhancing diabetes care for Indigenous communities.



## Celebrating a Nourishing Future for Our Children 🌿

This past Tuesday on Canada's Budget Day, NIDA's Executive Director, Celeste Theriault, was in the heart of Ottawa, where we witnessed a historic commitment to our children's health. On traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory, we pledged to nourish the growth and well-being of our youth.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Liberal MP Julie Dabrusin for hosting this significant celebration on her birthday. We also want to acknowledge the profound opening comments from NDP MP Leah Gazan and Green Party Leader Elizabeth May reminding us of the journey ahead.

Our discussions with NDP critic Bonita Zorrillo were invaluable, reinforcing the importance of the National School Food Program's impact on Indigenous communities, particularly regarding diabetes, food sovereignty and traditional/country foods.

We also want to give a special acknowledgment to the Coalition for Healthy School Food and advocates like Debbie Field for their tireless efforts and advocacy.

The National School Food Program, with \$1 billion over five years, is a step towards nourishing all Canadian children. This also sets a new path for our First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children, ensuring access to healthy school food that sustain both body and spirit. Let's continue the important conversations to ensure our children do not need to go to school hungry.



# Research Canada's Parliamentary Health Research Caucus Panel and Luncheon : Exploring the Future of Diabetes Treatment, Management and Prevention Event co-hosted by Diabetes Canada

Last week in Ottawa, we were honored to engage in deep dialogue about the future of diabetes at Research Canada's Parliamentary Health Research Caucus Panel and Luncheon : Exploring the Future of Diabetes Treatment, Management and Prevention Event co-hosted by Diabetes Canada. We stood alongside esteemed leaders like MP Sonia Sidhu, sponsor of Bill C-237 for a National Framework for Diabetes in Canada, and Adria Cehovin, the Project Manager, Sustaining Momentum to Implement the Diabetes Framework at Diabetes Canada.

This gathering wasn't just a conference—it was a convergence of minds committed to transformative change. Together, we are part of a dynamic team that's actively shaping a comprehensive framework aimed at better diabetes management and prevention across Canada. The involvement of NIDA ensures that Indigenous knowledge and perspectives are integral to this national conversation, influencing policies and practices for better health outcomes in our communities.

Below are a couple moments from this pivotal event, including our discussions with MP Sonia Sidhu and Adria Cehovin. We are immensely grateful for this collaboration and eager to continue our work on this vital framework.

Together, we are not just envisioning a healthier future—we are creating it.





# Caroline Daigneault Diabetes Shkaabe Award



Call for Nominations National Indigenous Diabetes Association annual Caroline Daigneault Diabetes Shkaabe Award.

The Caroline Daigneault Diabetes Shkaabe Award recognizes individuals and/or communities that are leading the way in diabetes prevention and management for their Peoples.

The National Indigenous Diabetes Association is eternally grateful to Caroline for her contributions to our organization. Caroline shared her knowledge and wisdom with respect, love, and kindness. Caroline volunteered her time in her community to bring Elders and others together to share about their experiences with diabetes and to help people on their journeys.

[Caroline Daigneault Diabetes Shkaabe Award](#)

