

Bernice Downey



Short Biography

Dr. Bernice Downey is a woman of Ojibwe and Celtic heritage, a mother and a grandmother. She is a medical anthropologist with research interests in health, health literacy and Indigenous Traditional knowledge and health/research system reform for Indigenous populations. Bernice is currently cross appointed to the School of Nursing and Department of Psychiatry and Neuro-Behavioural Sciences and is the Indigenous Health Lead for the Faculty of Health Science at McMaster University. This past year she successfully led the development of the McMaster Indigenous Research Institute. She is also the Regional Aboriginal Cancer Lead for Cancer Care Ontario, Toronto-Central Region.

Bernice's professional experience includes Sole Proprietor of her consulting company; 'Minoayawin - Good Health Consulting'; Chief Executive Officer of the National Aboriginal Health Organization, Executive Director of the Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada, Associate Director and Research Associate of the Well Living House - Centre for Research on Inner City Health at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto. She was a member of the the Canadian Institute of Health Research - Institute of Aboriginal Health, Advisory Board for six years. She was appointed to the WHO Commission on the Social Determinants of Health, Canadian Reference Group. She is an experienced administrator, facilitator, and an organizational and systemic change agent. She is also a life - long advocate in the work towards addressing the serious health inequities among Indigenous populations in Canada.