



*It's Laura Hall writing to you with an update this month! As we are all very aware, we are right in the thick of our final project year & it has been incredibly productive and exciting already. Margo is busy finalizing the draft instrument so we can start pilot testing! Here are highlights from the past month...*

### **March 2014 - Greetings Team!**

**Happy Retirement Dr. Randy Duncan:** Congratulations to Randy and many thanks to him for all of his work on our team as he embarks on the project of official retirement! Randy has been an invaluable member of the Honouring Our Strengths team, and his work predating our project was instrumental in paving the way toward developing a culturally grounded and viable measurement instrument. In 2011, Randy completed a Post-Doctoral Fellowship with Dr. Colleen Dell to construct and validate a culturally competent instrument as a measure of client change in Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) programs. Since this time, Randy's research with the Honouring Our Strengths project has built on this innovative approach. While Randy's presence will be missed on our team we wish him nothing but the very best!

**Draft Wellness Instrument:** The first draft of the Wellness Instrument was presented to client focus groups in five treatment centres: Tsow-Tun Le Lum Society, Nimkee NupiGawagan Healing Centre, Nenqayni Wellnes Centre Society, White Buffalo Treatment Centre, Leading Thunderbird Lodge. The focus of this presentation was to test how well the draft statements in the instrument perform with clients; for example: did clients understand what the statements were asking about, did they understand the categories in the rating scale, did the cultural intervention activities make sense. Thank you very much to these centres and their clients for participating! In addition to written comments received from the clients and staff, a large team teleconference was organized with treatment centre representatives to share their suggestions and impressions of the instrument. All others on our team had opportunity for written or individualized feedback. It was good for the team to check in to see whether certain words made sense, and to make sure that terminology was clarified where needed. The research team is in the process of making changes to the instrument based on focus group suggestions, and keeping with the cultural rootedness of the project.

**Recipes:** Nearly all of the treatment centres have submitted a recipe for sharing with one another and with communities across Turtle Island. The recipe cards will go a long way toward reaffirming the importance of traditional foods in healing and wellness. The cards also showcase the wonderful work of each of our project's participating treatment centres, as they continue to nurture the path of healing and renewal. Many thanks to treatment centre Staff and Executive Directors for sharing!

**Please be in touch** at any time to share your input and ideas about these or any other aspects of the project going forward by emailing or calling Margo Rowan at [mar805@mail.usask.ca](mailto:mar805@mail.usask.ca) or 613-841-7520, or Barb Fornssler, at [barb.fornssler@usask.ca](mailto:barb.fornssler@usask.ca) or 306-966-7894.