



**University  
of Manitoba**

**College of Community and Global Health**

## **Bold Ideas Colloquium Speaker Series**

**Friday, March 27, 2026, 12:00 – 1 PM – HYBRID**

**In-Person: Chown, A106**

**Zoom Link:**

<https://umanitoba.zoom.us/j/61841338711?pwd=GYqNCsmYfaB1NrurUcK5BMU7cBGbGS.1>

### **Decolonizing Disability: Ableism, Colonialism, and Why Indigenous Knowledges are Important to Health Research**

Dr. Rheanna Robinson, University of Northern British Columbia, Dept of First Nations Studies



**Abstract:** As aspirations to ensure decolonization and reconciliation informs the strategic directions of health research, policy, and practice, it is imperative Indigenous lived experiences and knowledges are included. In this talk, Dr. Rheanna Robinson will draw on her experience as an Indigenous scholar that lives with chronic illness and disability to describe how her academic work within Indigenous Disability Studies and Indigenous patient-partnered research represents a compelling example of how Indigenous knowledges offer the world meaningful representations of equity and inclusion in diverse and varying ways. This talk, using a short power point and video presentation, will showcase three

primary areas of Dr. Robinson's work. First, research with the Nisga'a First Nation related to traditional perspectives and contemporary experiences regarding disability. Second, research related to Indigenous Peoples and Multiple Sclerosis on Lheidli T'enneh territory in Prince George, B.C. Third, how and why intersecting academic identities are relevant to moving this area of scholarship forward.

#### **Talk Learning Objectives:**

- 1: Understand the link between ableism and colonialism
- 2: Understand why disability and health research needs to be decolonized
- 3: Understand how Indigenous knowledges advance equity, inclusion, and challenge bias and assumption in bold and meaningful ways

**Biography** Dr. Rheanna Robinson is an Associate Professor in the Department of First Nations Studies at UNBC and a Co-Lead for the Indigenous Research Stream with the Canadian Institute of Inclusion and Citizenship at UBC. She is a member of the Manitoba Métis Federation, and was raised in the community of Smithers, in Northern British Columbia. Diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) in 1997, her research mobilizes Indigenous traditional perspectives and contemporary experiences regarding disability and the ongoing health inequities for Indigenous Peoples in the North and beyond.