



DECLARATION of COMMITMENT – MAY 17, 2017

Cultural Safety and Humility in Coroner Services for First Nations and Aboriginal people in British Columbia

OUR DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT is an important step toward embedding cultural safety and humility within coroner services for First Nations and Aboriginal people in British Columbia. This commitment reflects the high priority we place on cultural safety and humility as integral components in how we provide services to improve community safety and quality of life in the Province of BC.

This Declaration of Commitment is based on the following guiding principles of cultural safety and humility:

- Cultural humility is a process of self-reflection to understand personal and systemic conditioned biases, and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural humility involves humbly acknowledging oneself as a life-long learner when it comes to understanding another's experience.
- Cultural safety is an outcome based on respectful engagement that recognizes and strives to address power imbalances inherent in the health and judicial systems. It results in an environment free of racism and discrimination, where people feel safe when receiving services.
- Cultural safety and humility must be understood, embraced and practiced at all levels of the health and judicial systems including governance, and institutions, as well as within individual professional practice.
- All stakeholders, including First Nations and Aboriginal individuals, Elders, families, communities, and Nations must be involved in co-development of action strategies and in the decision-making process with a commitment to reciprocal accountability.

Strong leadership on concrete actions is essential to achieving our vision of culturally safe health and judicial systems for First Nations and Aboriginal people in our province. We, the undersigned leadership of the BC Coroners Service, will:

CREATE A CLIMATE FOR CHANGE BY:

- Articulating the pressing need to establish cultural safety and humility as a framework to improve health and judicial services, including coroners' services for First Nations and Aboriginal people in BC.
- Opening an honest, informed and respectful dialogue with all stakeholders to show that change is necessary.
- Forming a coalition of influential leaders and champions who are committed to the priority of embedding cultural safety and humility in health and judicial services for BC and Canada.
- Contributing to a provincial vision of culturally safe health and judicial systems as a leading strategy to enhance coroner services in BC.

ENGAGE AND ENABLE STAKEHOLDERS BY:

- Communicating the vision of a culturally safe BC Coroners Service for First Nations and Aboriginal people in BC and the critical need for commitment and understanding on behalf of all stakeholders, partners and clients.
- Openly and honestly addressing concerns and leading by example.
- Identifying and removing barriers to progress.
- Monitoring, evaluating and visibly celebrating accomplishments.

IMPLEMENT AND SUSTAIN CHANGE BY:

- Embedding cultural safety and humility within BC Coroners Service policies, procedures, leadership development, training, workplans, and engagement.
- Encouraging and empowering our staff to develop cultural humility and foster a culture that strives for cultural safety.
- Facilitating a process where individuals can raise and address problems without fear of reprisal.
- Leading, encouraging and enabling successive waves of actions until cultural safety and humility are embedded within all levels of the BC Coroners Service.

REPORTING ON PROGRESS BY:

- Working with the First Nations Health Authority to prepare a public annual report on strategic activities, outlining and demonstrating how the commitment is being met.

Our signatures demonstrate our long term commitment to providing culturally safe coroners services for First Nations and Aboriginal people in British Columbia and to champion the process required to achieve this vision.

This Declaration of Commitment is endorsed by the First Nations Health Authority and the BC Coroners Service and signed by their representatives:

SIGNED ON THIS DATE: May 17, 2017

Joe Gallagher, Chief Executive Officer
First Nations Health Authority



Lisa Lapointe, Chief Coroner
BC Coroners Service

