

ABOUT THE INDIGENIZING HARM REDUCTION PROJECT



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

The First Nations Health Authority (FNHA), in partnership with Simon Fraser University, launched a study in 2018 with the aim of co-developing a provincial First Nations-led harm reduction framework. The study, *Indigenizing Harm Reduction in Response to the Overdose Crisis: Knowledge Gathering with First Nations in BC to Create an Indigenous Harm Reduction Framework*, responds to the ongoing toxic drug public health emergency, which continues to disproportionately impact First Nations people in British Columbia.

This work centres First Nations knowledge systems, lived and living experience, and community-led teachings and approaches as essential to a more effective, culturally grounded toxic drug response.

To support partners, FNHA is releasing a visual media bundle that brings forward insights shared by First Nations community members and care providers through the Indigenizing Harm Reduction project.

About the Indigenizing Harm Reduction Study

The study is a three phase research initiative designed to support the development of a provincial First Nations led harm reduction framework.

Phase 1:

Included community-based research with health providers and First Nations people with lived and living experience of substance use, along with a review of international Indigenous-led harm reduction programs. Findings highlighted the need for culturally safe, relevant services; a continuum of care that includes housing, food security, childcare, culture, and economic support; and approaches that honour First Nations ways of being, relationships, and strengths. Review the [Indigenizing Harm Reduction Study – Phase I: Summary of Findings Report](#).

Phase 2:

Focuses on partnering with First Nations communities to fund and support harm reduction initiatives tailored to local priorities and reflect the teachings and priorities identified in Phase 1. These projects will strengthen and identify culturally safe, First Nations-led harm reduction practices.

Phase 3:

Will weave all learnings from Phases 1 and 2 into a provincial First Nations harm reduction framework that supports community-led responses to the toxic drug crisis. The framework will be designed to be adaptable so communities can tailor it to their unique needs across BC.

About the visual media bundle

The visual media bundle is intended for partners to share in their own communications. The graphics include artwork created for the Indigenizing Harm Reduction project, including illustrations by Jessie Recalma and Ocean Hyland. These visuals:

- Reflect community shared knowledge
- Honour lived and living experience
- Support culturally grounded conversations about harm reduction

All materials are shared with care and respect for the teachings they carry. Partners are encouraged to use the visuals to raise awareness of First Nations led harm reduction approaches and support community education.



Medicine basket:

The Medicine Basket of Harm Reduction brings forward First Nations community insights on care, relationship, and wholistic support for relatives who use substances.



Relational practice:

First Nations harm reduction means connection. It ensures that love and compassion are central, integrating intergenerational collaboration between Elders, youth, Knowledge Keepers, peers and families builds strength through connection.



Wholistic health:

First Nations community-led approaches to harm reduction weave together cultural and western approaches to support wholistic health and well-being.



Strength-based approaches:

First Nations approaches to harm reduction care draw on the ancestral strengths of culture, community and kinship to provide unconditional and inclusive care for all community members.



Person center care:

First Nations approaches to harm reduction meet people where they're at with care and without judgement.