



First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) Anti-Racism, Cultural Safety and Humility Update (November 2021)

Introduction

The FNHA, First Nations Health Council (FNHC) and First Nations Health Director's Association (FNHDA) jointly developed an *Anti-Racism, Cultural Safety and Humility Framework and Action Plan*, shared on our website in April 2021. This interim update highlights some key FNHA implementation efforts as of December 2021.

Priority Area 1: Regional Innovation and Focus

- Over the last two years, the FNHA supported over 144 engagements with First Nations (above ongoing engagements such as regional level events) on important health matters such as COVID-19, healing, toxic drug supply, wildfires, planning, and transformation of health programs and services.
- A Vancouver Island Regional Task Force was established to respond to the immediate need for action to address racism within Island Health and the broader health system.
- The FNHA Vancouver Coastal Region hosted a series of anti-racism meetings between the FNHC, Vancouver Coastal Health, and the Fraser Salish Region.
- The FNHA Northern Region worked with Northern Health to establish a regional cultural safety strategy.
- The FNHA Interior Region embedded cultural safety into COVID-19 responses through traditional medicines and wellness resources at vaccination clinics and the Interior Region Partnership Accord Leadership Table discussed addressing racism.
- In December 2020, Fraser Salish's Regional Caucus approved the *Closer to Home/Chémat* plan to further the goal of bringing decision-making and service delivery closer to community.
- FNHA Fraser Salish Region endorsed a comprehensive *Anti-Racism Action Plan* responding to the findings of the *Lafontaine Report* and *In Plain Sight*, jointly developed with Fraser Health and the Fraser Salish Caucus. Implementation efforts to date include hiring a Wellness Systems Quality Care Coordinator and developing an alternative complaint system.

Priority Area 2: First Nations-Led Response

- The FNHA plan includes an anti-racism priority with progress reported through FNHA's Annual Report.
- An FNHA steering committee is informing strategic direction of FNHA actions under the *Anti-Racism, Cultural Safety and Humility Framework and Action Plan*.
- In June 2021, five new FNHA Vice President, Regional Operations positions were created, all staffed by self-identified First Nations individuals.
- The FNHA partnered with the Health Standards Organization to develop a *BC Cultural Safety and Humility Accreditation Standard*, which went through a public review in 2021 and is scheduled for release in 2022.

- The *First Nations Population Health and Wellness Agenda* and the *Sacred and Strong – Upholding Our Matriarchal Roles: The Health and Wellness Journeys of First Nations Women and Girls Living in BC* were both released in partnership with the BC Office of the Provincial Health Officer.
- The FNHA and other organizations continue to provide culturally safe and trauma-informed cultural, emotional, and mental health services to Indigenous people in BC, which have been important during the dual public health emergencies.
- The FNHA supported the FNHDA with communicable disease emergency response and pandemic planning training by providing subject matter expertise.
- Partnership continues with the University of British Columbia, Faculty of Medicine through a joint advisory council as well as with Simon Fraser University and Fraser Health Authority on the development of a new medical school program.
- The FNHA funds health career scholarships and bursaries to increase the number of First Nations people in health careers.
- FNHA staff recruitment processes include cultural safety and humility questions and postings indicate preference will be given for applicants of Indigenous ancestry.
- A new Deputy Chief Medical Officer role is established with the intent to find a First Nations incumbent.
- A New Executive Director role in Health Benefits is staffed by a self-identified First Nation individual.

Priority Area 3: Service Excellence

- The FNHA Quality Care and Safety Team launched a Compliments and Complaints webpage to support First Nations clients and families' navigation of the health system on related to concerns, complaints, information requests or compliments.
- The FNHA continues work with the Ministry of Health to establish 15 First Nations-led Primary Health Care Centres to provide First Nations access to culturally safe, quality and holistic health care and social services. Three sites are planned per region, with local priorities and needs central to planning. Cultural safety screening is part of selection and screening processes for health providers for the First Nations-led Primary Health Care Initiative.
- The FNHA and Ministry of Health produced an Indigenous Engagement and Cultural Safety Guidebook: A Resource for Primary Care.
- The FNHA launched the First Nations Virtual Doctor of the Day and Virtual Substance Use and Psychiatry Services during COVID-19. This included:
 - Embedding cultural safety and humility language into physician contracts;
 - Anti-racism and cultural safety and humility in selection criteria and experience requirements; and
 - Provides cultural safety training and support to enhance ongoing development of health professionals.
- A resource, *Honouring Traditional Healing and Wellness Practices: Developing an Ethical Framework for the Respectful Inclusion of both Traditional Healers and Primary Health Care Providers* was completed.
- The FNHA developed a Harm Reduction policy in 2021 and new supports for land-based healing initiatives include 147 sites delivering land-based services as of June 2021.

- Six organizations are funded to provide suicide prevention services to 51 First Nations.
- The FNHA is collaborating with the BC Public Safety and Quality Council on development of research on cultural safety in Indigenous patient data and measurement.
- The FNHA collaborates with provincial partners on data surveillance efforts such as perinatal registry, opioid overdose, COVID-19 and cancer.

Conclusion

The FNHA will continue to work with partners to advance health system responses to address anti-Indigenous racism. Our work thus far reflects the FNHA's continued dedication to this important area that First Nations in BC have prioritized for the FNHA. While a number of steps have been made, there is still significant work to do and we will continue on this journey.