

Community Engagement Coordinator – Sub-Regional Caucus Report

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Name of CEC Reporting: Coco Miller

Engagement Area: Coast Mountain

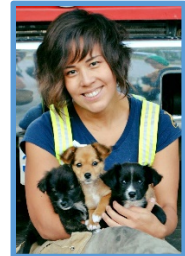
Contact: 250-641-2245 Coco.Miller@fnha.ca

Office Address: 101-3230 Clinton Street, Terrace BC V8G 5R4

Engagement Area: Coast Mountain

Communities Served: Haisla First Nation, Tsimshian Nation, Kitselas, Kitsumkalum, Nisga'a Nation, Gitlaxt'aamiks, Gitwinksihlkw, Gingolx, Laxgalts'ap

Sub-Region: Northwest



Partnership between the Pacific Northwest Divisions of Family Practice and the FNHA

A community engagement strategy has been completed within the Coast Mountain Alliance engagement area over the past year. The strategy, which included a survey and subsequent focus groups, was created to better understand patient perspectives for a proposed liaison position to support patients in the Terrace Park Avenue Medical Clinic. The survey, which is now complete, was met with enthusiasm by all community members reached. The last engagement step involved focus groups hosted by Kitselas, Kitsumkalum and Haisla. The work of the focus groups was to gather information on the kinds of services required of the new Aboriginal Patient Liaison. A report encompassing all feedback gathered from the communities will be submitted to the Pacific Northwest Divisions of Family Practice and the FNHA to establish this position in being effective and responsive to community needs.

Terrace-Kitimat Indigenous Health Improvement Committee

The combined Nations worked together to create a webinar presented from the whole committee to health service providers to better understand the needs of First Nations clients and patients. The underlying concept is to improve service to reflect how clients and patients prefer to be supported when accessing primary care services.

In May 2017, Kitselas hosted an event to share the results of a video project showcasing youth programming intended to support health and wellbeing. NVHA presented regarding their learned best practices, recent achievements and future priority areas. Mental health has been a goal of the committee in 2016 and planning is underway to focus on elderly care and planning for aging.

Kitselas

The Kitselas Traditional Abundance Project will engage the community in active, collaborative and healthy wellness activities by growing and harvesting food.

Using an 18-month multi-year, phased approach structured for mental health, skill development and sustainability, Kitselas will establish healthy food systems within an integrated community food network centered around a “Good Food Box” distributed to (and with the participation of) vulnerable community members. Kitselas will responsibly harvest and incorporate food resources from gathering, foraging, gardening and 350 square feet of greenhouse production (extending the season and scope of food production). This project will be overseen by a designated Coordinator reporting to an ad-hoc working committee dedicated to using traditional food based knowledge to inform community direction on mental health and wellness programming.

There will be two phases to this project. The first phase, Planning and Community Engagement, will be overseen by a Community Health Actions Coordinator with FNHA as a key partner. The second phase, Harvesting and Sustainability will engage the community as they gather and produce food for the benefit of the Kitselas people.

In May 2017, Kitselas Health changed its health administration structure from retaining a Health Director to an integrated approach. Its Community Health Nurse has taken on the administration of programming with the Kitselas Finance Director and Manager administering the financial aspects of the Health Department.

Haisla

Haisla has created a youth strategy focused on engaging and empowering their youth. Listed are the participants, goals, clients, benefits, concept & design, and an activity matrix. The intent is increased understanding and practice of Haisla cultural values, improved life skills, respect for the land, and one another. Areas of improvement are overall physical, mental and spiritual health. Haisla Health staff will receive training and support for the effective and successful implementation of this comprehensive, multi-phased plan.

Kitsumkalum

Kitsumkalum membership were given an opportunity to voice their concerns and priorities as they relate to health issues. The session, which is part of ongoing community dialogue to inform planning, was completed in January 2017. A report was submitted the following month to Kitsumkalum Health and the FNHA to better inform the delivery of health services and support to their membership as well as to act as an advocate to external health services where they are a community priority.

Kitsumkalum is continuing to emphasize wellness through teaching traditional food & medicine gathering/preparation. In 2016, Kitsumkalum held a series of workshops hosted by its knowledge holders, chief, and health professionals working with its membership to strengthen shared knowledge. Kitsumkalum wishes to support its membership to be knowledgeable, self-sustaining, self-determining people well-connected to their land, culture, traditions and to one another. The project is intended to provide a platform with which knowledge keepers are given opportunity to transfer their wisdom in traditional wellness through the practices of preparing materials for the production of ceremonial drums. It is with the understanding that members draw their main strength from one another as a family unit especially in terms of supporting their own mental health and wellness. Kitsumkalum leadership is committed to ensuring its programs provide respectful support to these networks with complementing services conforming as secondary supports when required.

Kitsumkalum Health hosted a dinner with guest speaker Dr. Art Hister in April 2017 sending invitations to the Coast Mountain Alliance communities to join the event. The intent was to engage its membership as a component of its series of health-focused events scheduled on an on-going basis throughout the year.

Nisga'a Nation

In February 2017, health priority information was compiled for the Nisga'a Valley Health Authority for the purposes of increasing effective and up to date health service delivery. The engagement process supported identification of a variety of health related training opportunities for capacity development within the Nisga'a Nation. The Nisga'a also hosted the AHIC Webinar with true Nisga'a hospitality and we look forward to the Four Crest Dancers performing at the upcoming Northern Caucus!

Coast Mountain Alliance

All communities have been looking for improved mental health strategies with a focus of on-the-land traditional practices. The health directors of Kitselas, Kitsumkalum and Haisla were planning a trip to Bella Bella in the summer of 2017 to learn of their successes in this area in order to implement these practices in their own communities. The Haisla Health Director along with members of his staff made the trip and have begun program planning for implementation in the next year.

The health directors have also completed briefing notes to the FNHA regarding dental service provision and to advocate for the funding of health benefits for First Nations health staff.