



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness

# paddling Together:

First Nations Health Authority  
2026/2027 Summary Service Plan



## OUR BRAND

The First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) brand is based on the thunderbird, a traditional symbol of transformation and healing. The crescent around the thunderbird represents our environment, families, communities and the context in which our health is determined. The thunderbird's wings reach beyond this crescent, working within our context, but looking to break new ground in First Nations health. The thunderbird is shown looking up to signify a healthy future.

The design was created by Andrew (Enpaauk) Dexel, a Nlaka'pamux artist well known for his prints and paintings.



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness

### **Paddling Together Towards Health and Wellness: 2026/2027 FNHA Summary Service Plan**

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*The work represented in this plan was carried out on the unceded territories belonging to self-determining First Nations in what is now British Columbia. The First Nations Health Authority acknowledges and thanks those whose wisdom, knowledge and contributions are reflected in this plan.*

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## Paddling Together: Our Plan at a Glance

Our Plan is depicted as a canoe, reflecting paddling together on a health and wellness journey with First Nations in British Columbia (BC) as we work toward the vision of healthy, self-determining and vibrant BC First Nations children, families and communities. The canoe is a significant symbol, representing a journey through time as well as unity, resilience, strength and a pathway forward. Our shared health and wellness journey keeps us connected to our history and to the people we serve. Through careful listening, we did our best to capture a canoe journey forward that represents our Shared Vision, the 7 Directives, our commitments, mandate and what we heard from First Nations in BC. Our Directives keep the canoe on course as we paddle together on this journey.

As we paddle ahead together, we continue to remember to look back at our journey and hear the wisdom of those who charted the course before us. Our 7 Directives represent the canoe and are a strong foundation to carry us together towards our shared vision – which is

the skyline ahead of the canoe keeping us focused. Our journey is guided by the teachings from First Nations and the strengths of their knowledge, beliefs, values, practices and medicines that have always been there. Our journey also supports the traditions of our matriarchs, who play an important role in bringing future generations into being and lifting up our Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, plus (2S/LGBTQQIA+) leaders working to decolonize gender and reclaim important roles they held in many First Nations cultures.

This is a shared journey — one where First Nations are at the front of the canoe, guiding our direction. Partners also sit in the canoe with us to support our vision and tackle waterway challenges we face. We know that our canoe journey will take time. We know this journey includes all aspects of health; physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellness. We are committed to change — we invite you into the canoe with us.

# Shared Vision: Healthy, Self-Determining and Vibrant BC First Nations Children, Families and Communities



# Paddling Together: FNHA Health and Wellness Plan

## Our Guideposts



First Nations  
Perspective  
on Health  
and Wellness



Quality



Culture and  
Decolonization



Urban and  
Away-From-Home



Innovation

## GOAL 1



Drive transformation  
through the BC First Nations  
Health Governance Structure  
and partnerships

**1.1** Collaborate with the First Nations Health Council and the First Nations Health Directors Association to advance our shared vision and strengthen BC First Nations health governance and partnerships.

**1.2** Operate through excellence, strengthening regional decision-making and bringing services closer to home.

**1.3** Champion health and wellness with partners to advance social determinants of health.

## GOAL 2



Enhance access to quality  
health and wellness  
services

**2.1** Advance timely and equitable access to culturally safe, team-based primary care.

**2.2** Champion the BC First Nations Perspective on Health and Wellness with First Nations.

**2.3** Transform FNHA programs and services in areas such as First Nations Health Benefits, health emergency management and Urban and Away-From-Home.

## GOAL 3



Enhance culturally safe mental health and wellness approaches

**3.1** Develop and implement a healing-from-trauma approach, focused on the root causes of trauma, including residential school legacies.

**3.2** Enhance access to a continuum of mental health and wellness approaches, emphasizing cultural healing and prevention.

**3.3** Implement harm reduction strategies for substance use and the toxic drug crisis.

## GOAL 4



Advance First Nations approaches to addressing anti-First Nations racism in health

**4.1** Work with partners in BC to support a racism-free health system with embedded cultural safety and humility practices.

**4.2** Champion cultural safety and humility in BC through regional innovation, First Nations-led responses and service excellence.

**4.3** Advance First Nations approaches to addressing complaints.

## GOAL 5



Drive health and wellness innovation together with First Nations and other partners

**5.1** Champion BC First Nations initiatives, supporting capacity building and sharing of innovative practices.

**5.2** Advance First Nations data governance principles, health research partnerships and evidence-based data.

**5.3** Leverage innovative partnerships to advance creative and health and wellness initiatives.

# Introduction

We are honoured to share the *Paddling Together: First Nations Health Authority Summary Service Plan for 2026/2027* ("our Plan") which will guide FNHA through the next phase in the journey together with First Nations in BC and partners on health system transformation. Our Plan includes goals, strategies, performance measures and guideposts for the work ahead.

Our Plan builds on what we have learned and heard, considering health and wellness achievements together with First Nations in BC. These achievements include increasing health benefits coverage and access, addressing First Nations-specific racism in health care, and expanding mental health and wellness and primary health care.

FNHA will continue to build on the strengths of our partnerships with First Nations in BC and other partners as we chart a journey forward that considers flexible, innovative and responsive approaches to meeting the needs of First Nations, with a specific focus on improving and uplifting regional leadership and decision-making. Our Plan seeks to build on what has been accomplished while also considering the ever-changing environment that continues to influence and impact the health of First Nations in BC.

First Nations perspectives, priorities and the 7 Directives have been the foundation of Paddling Together, and as we work to implement our Plan, they continue to provide strength, guidance and inspiration.



## Who We Are

FNHA is a health and wellness partner to over 200 diverse First Nations communities across BC. We are working to transform and reform the way health care is delivered to First Nations in BC. FNHA is one component of the health governance structure established by BC First Nations to strategically advance BC First Nations health and wellness philosophies, interests and priorities.

Informed through regional processes, FNHA works alongside its governance partners—the First Nations Health Council (FNHC) and the First Nations Health Directors Association (FNHDA)—to achieve our Shared Vision of *“Healthy, Self-Determining, and Vibrant BC First Nations Children, Families and Communities”* and to pursue strong health partnerships and integration with federal and provincial governments. It is befitting that our vision includes reference to self-determination, as health and wellness and self-determination go hand and hand. It is vital to the achievement of our goals that First Nations continue to drive decision-making over the design and delivery of health systems, programs and services.

Honouring the governance processes and standards that led to the creation of this organization, FNHA advances health system transformation and undertakes program and service delivery through regional processes in a manner aligned with First Nations priorities, philosophies, perspectives and ways of being. Our work is grounded in the **First Nations Perspective on Health and Wellness** – an approach that defines FNHA as a health and wellness organization that is different from other health authorities and organizations. In accordance with our Shared Values and 7 Directives, we pursue excellence in the delivery of our mandate.



**FNHA, FNHC, FNHDA SHARED VISION:**  
*Healthy, Self-determining and  
Vibrant BC First Nations Children, Families and Communities*



# FNHA MISSION

**FNHA supports BC First Nations individuals, families and communities to achieve and enjoy the highest level of health and wellness by: working with them on their health and wellness journeys; honouring traditions and cultures; and championing First Nations health and wellness within FNHA and with all of our partners.**

**The work of FNHA and its partners is guided by the 7 Directives provided by BC First Nations Chiefs and Leaders:**

1. Community-Driven, Nation-Based
2. Increase First Nations Decision-Making and Control
3. Improve Services
4. Foster Meaningful Collaboration and Partnership
5. Develop Human and Economic Capacity
6. Be Without Prejudice to First Nations Interests
7. Function at a High Operational Standard

**Shared Principles guide the Tripartite work amongst FNHA, FNHC, FNHDA and federal and provincial partners:**

- Lead with culture
- Honour those who paved the way
- Maintain unity and discipline
- Create strong relationships
- Engage at the appropriate level
- Respect each other's process

# Shared Values

FNHA, FNHC and FNHDA conduct our efforts with one another in accordance with our **Shared Values:**

## RESPECT

We believe that maintaining respectful relationships is fundamental to the achievement of our Shared Vision. Respectful relationships are built upon the recognition that we all have something to contribute as individuals, and participants in the First Nations health governance structure. Therefore, we commit to treating each other with dignity and generosity, being responsive to one another and acknowledging that each entity has their own respective processes and practices. We are also committed to respectful interactions with First Nations, Tripartite partners and other collaborators.

## DISCIPLINE

We have the historic opportunity to achieve transformative change in First Nations health and wellness, and an obligation to make the most of this opportunity. This will require discipline amongst us, including through: loyalty to one another and our Shared Vision; upholding and supporting our roles, responsibilities, decisions and processes; maintaining and nurturing unity and a united front; integrity and reliability in fulfilling our commitments, and accountability to one another for these commitments and contributions; and, solutions-oriented and active participation.

## RELATIONSHIPS

We believe that effective working relationships with First Nations, Tripartite partners and with one another are the foundation for achieving our vision and implementing our health plans and agreements. We commit to fostering effective working relationships and camaraderie underpinned by: trust; honesty; understanding; teamwork; and mutual support. We also acknowledge that humour and laughter are both good medicine, and a good way to build relationships.

## CULTURE

We are here because of those that came before us, and to work on behalf of First Nations. We draw upon the diverse and unique cultures, ceremonies, customs and teachings of First Nations for strength, wisdom and guidance. We uphold traditional and wholistic approaches to health and self-care and strive to achieve a balance in our mental, spiritual, emotional and physical wellness.

## EXCELLENCE

We are humbled and honoured to have been asked by First Nations to work on their behalf to improve health and wellness, and have a moral and personal responsibility to strive for excellence. Excellence means that our outcomes are sustainable, that our processes are professional and transparent, and that we commit to learn continuously – through capacity development opportunities, from each other and from new, different and innovative models worldwide.

## FAIRNESS

We work to improve the health and wellness of all First Nations in BC. Our decision making reflects the best interests of all First Nations, and leads to just and equitable treatment amongst all First Nations communities and First Nations organizations across all regions of BC. We are committed to make room for everyone, and are inclusive in our communications, information-sharing and discussions.

## Honouring Those Who Paddled Before

Since time immemorial, healthy, self-determining and vibrant First Nations, individuals, families and communities thrived throughout what is now known as BC. Guided by their teachings and traditions, Nations have planned and provided for the health and wellness of their families and communities. A common thread across these diverse cultures is a wholistic perspective on health and wellness, reflecting the interconnectedness of the mental, physical, emotional and spiritual facets of life.

Many attempts were undertaken, including through policies and direct acts of colonialism and First Nations-specific racism, to disrupt the health and well-being of First Nations people. Despite these attempts, First Nations people remain resilient and strong, and the establishment of FNHA is an expression of that strength, self-determination and resistance to colonialism.

FNHA respects and upholds the right of First Nations people to self-determination, which serves as an important focal point for health and wellness for many First Nations people and is considered a determinant of health. First Nations leadership have fought for many years to solidify these understandings through direct action, court cases and negotiations. This work is helping to pave the way for the exploration of new models for delivering services.



# First Nations Health Governance Structure in BC

In 2005, First Nations in BC and federal and provincial governments, committed to a shared agenda through the Transformative Change Accord (TCA). The shared agenda in the TCA committed us to establish a new relationship based on mutual respect and recognition and to develop plans to bridge the differences in socio-economic outcomes between First Nations and other British Columbians, including in the area of health. Following this commitment, First Nations leaders in BC set out to enter into a series of agreements with both federal and provincial governments to begin a new path forward in health care.

Marked by years of discussions and negotiations, this work culminated in the decision by First Nations in BC to pass Resolutions 2011-01 and 2012-01. These Resolutions confirmed the standards, stages and design of the BC First Nations Health Governance Structure and the establishment of FNHA, FNHC and FNHDA. It was also through this work that the 7 Directives were established by First Nations in BC.

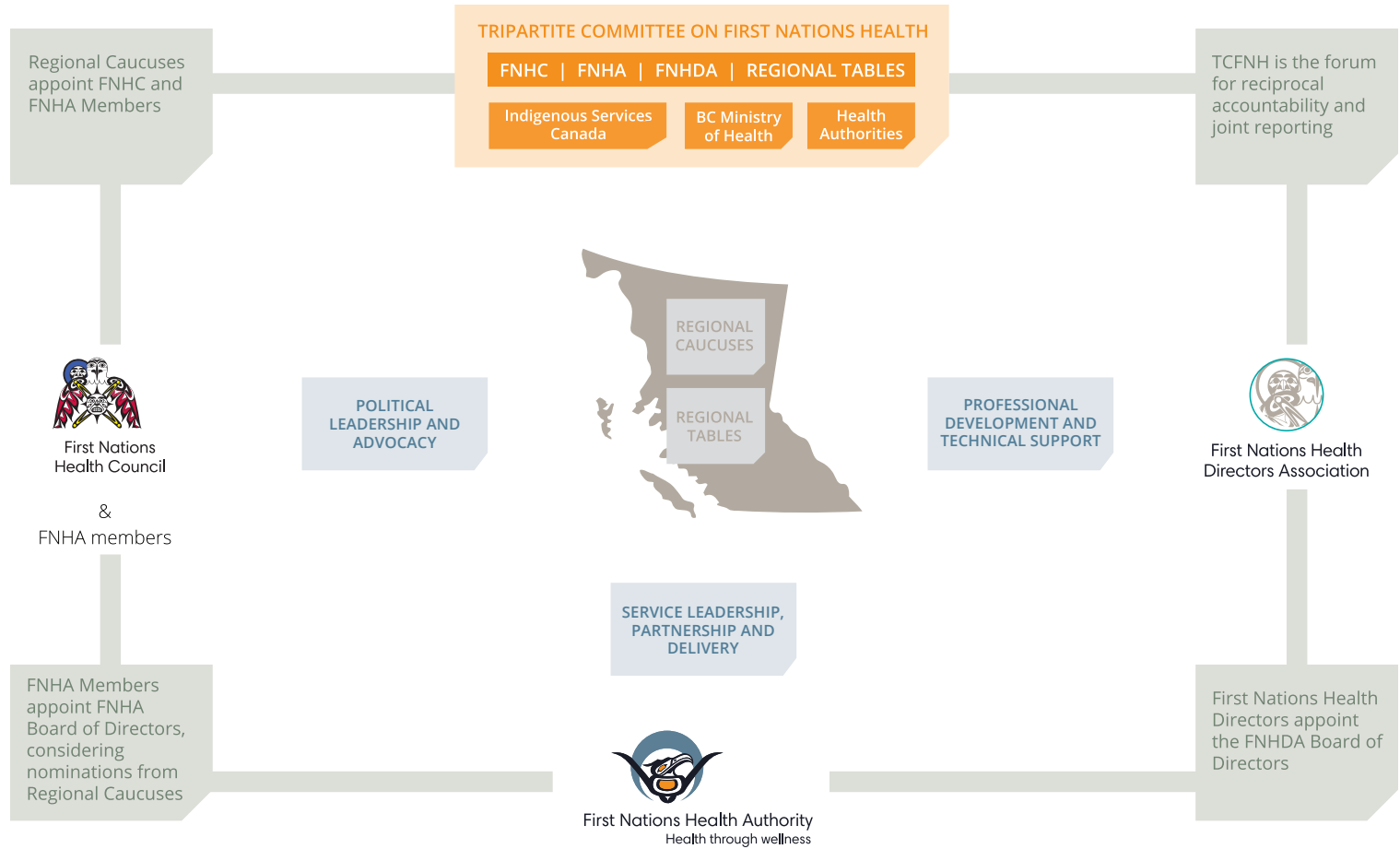
These agreements serve as the foundation for our work, and contain important commitments related to our relationships, including principles of reciprocal accountability. They guide how we approach service delivery, engage with

First Nations people and work with our health governance partners to strategically advance the health and wellness philosophies, interests and priorities of First Nations in BC.

We continually reflect on this history and the steps that brought us to where we are today. The BC Tripartite Framework Agreement on First Nations Health Governance (2011) makes it clear that our purpose has always been to work with our partners to build a new structure that is more responsive and integrated, embraces knowledge, facilitates discussions in respect of determinants of health, and provides First Nations in all regions of BC with access to quality health services which, at a minimum, is comparable to that available to other Canadians living in similar geographic locations. With this in mind, First Nations leaders established a health governance structure and a Shared Vision. Each time FNHA renews our Plan, we reflect on where we have been and on our vision for the future.

We raise our hands to First Nations and the work that they have done throughout the years since transfer within their communities, families and Nations and together at regional tables. FNHA is honoured to be a partner to First Nations in BC and walk alongside them to support their health and wellness goals.

## First Nations Health Governance Structure in BC

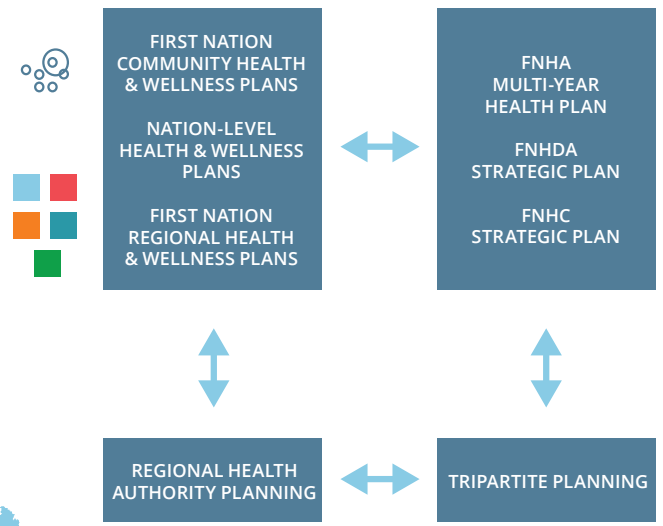
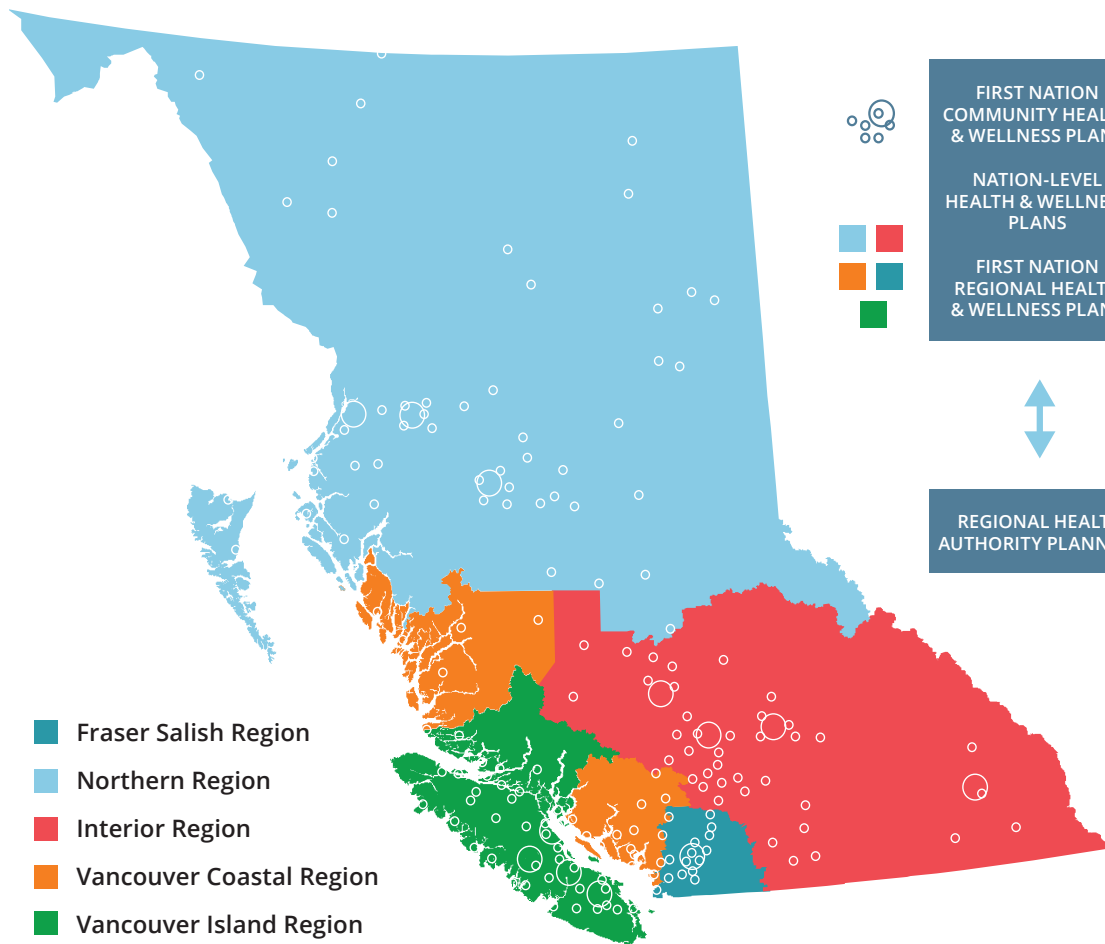


## Our Approach to Planning

First Nations have always planned for the health and wellness of their families and communities, grounded in and guided by First Nations traditions and culture. The First Nations in BC planning approach, articulated in *our Plan*, respects community, Nation and regionally driven processes and is a ground up planning model and ecosystem-based approach. Community or Nation health and wellness plans inform regional health and wellness plans, and these in turn inform FNHA's plans and partner plans.

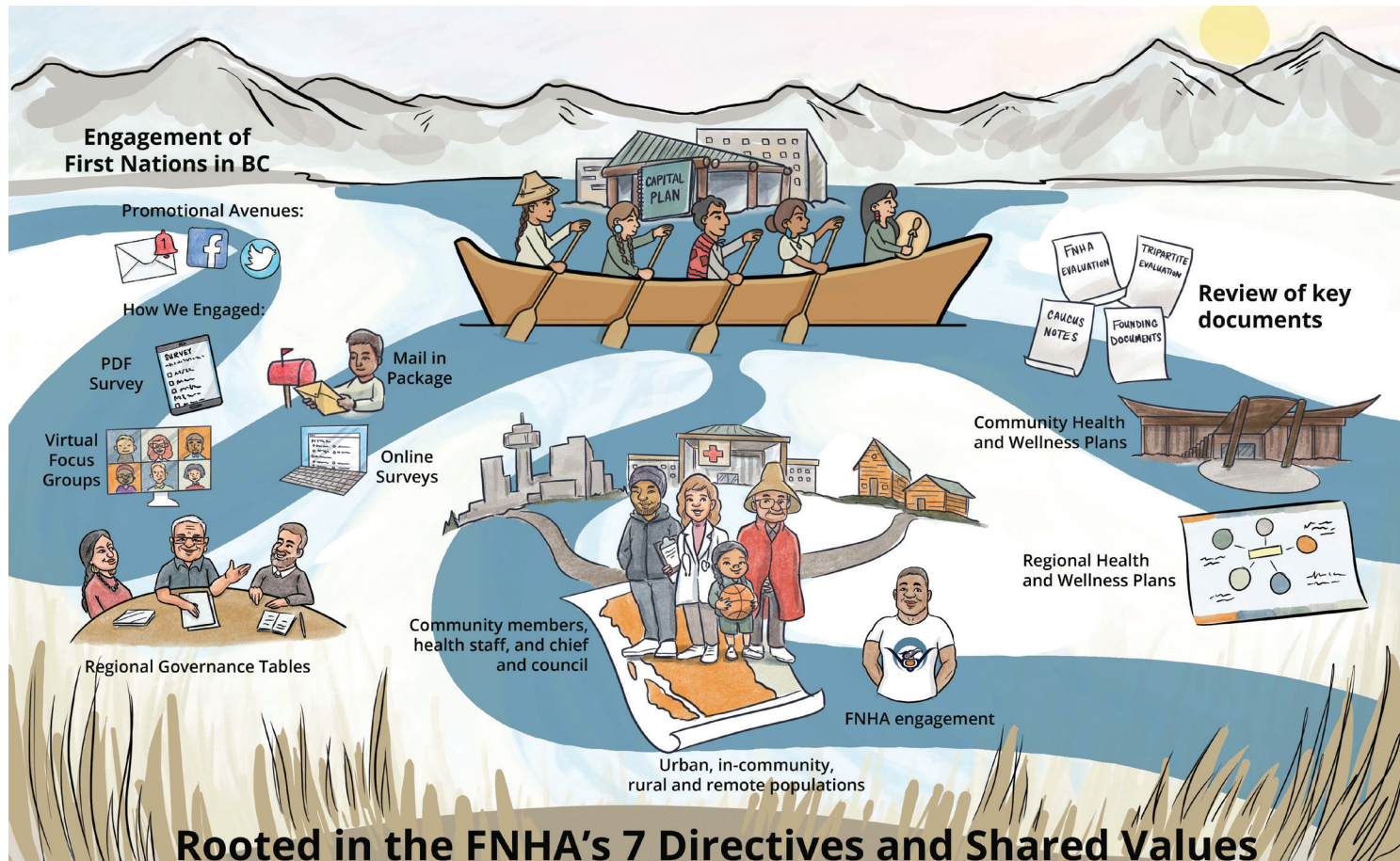
This planning approach supports the priorities, goals and perspectives expressed by First Nations in BC, guiding the plans and investments made regionally and provincially. It works to align activities at all levels to be complementary and supportive of one another, consistent with the 7 Directives, our operating principles and other guiding elements. The intent is to create a more integrated health system based on transparent and synchronized planning at each level. As a learning organization, grounding our work in First Nations priorities and perspectives while planning is essential to FNHA's growth and development.





# Pathways Informing Our Plan

Our health and wellness journey moves in the direction set by First Nations in BC through engagement. We therefore purposefully cast a wide net to guide priority-setting and stay grounded in Directive 1: *Community-Driven, Nation-Based*. Our process involved several concurrent approaches and is guided by First Nations in BC through various pathways.



## LISTENING TO FIRST NATIONS

Our 2022/2023 – 2026/2027 Plan was developed through a multi-pronged engagement process with First Nations in BC and is built around the priorities, pressures and opportunities that we heard through that process. Between 2020 - 2021, we held open provincial sessions and on-request regional and sub-regional sessions with community members, Chiefs and leaders and health staff. We also provided an opportunity for input to be provided through mail-in and online surveys. We also reviewed community and regional health and wellness plans and other documents to gain insights on what mattered most.

FNHA communicated these engagement opportunities through various FNHA channels, regional teams and communication pathways, presentations at regional tables and Caucus sessions, FNHC and FNHDA pathways and more.

## INFORMING OUR PLAN

Our Plan was informed by data on the health and wellness of First Nations living in BC. A key source was the 2021 *First Nations Population Health and Wellness Agenda*, which provides data on 22 indicators of First Nations wholistic health and wellness and a baseline against which FNHA and Tripartite Partners assess progress on health outcomes for First Nations children and families. Another important source was *Sacred and Strong: Upholding our Matriarchal Roles (2021)*, which contains data, stories and teachings about the mental, emotional, physical and spiritual health and well-being of BC First Nations women at every phase of life.

## REFRESHING OUR PLAN

As we move forward, we continue to listen to communities, reflect and learn from past lessons and new evidence. Every year, we look to the plans, reports and engagement data coming forward from communities, Nations and regions to check that our goals and strategies remain aligned with the priorities of First Nations in BC.

This refresh of our 2026/2027 Plan was informed by the First Nations Population Health and Wellness Agenda: First Interim Update, 2024, a set of eight, mutually agreed to priorities identified by the First Nations Health Governance pillar partners (FNHC, FNHDA and FNHA) and key evaluation findings from the 2024 Evaluation of the BC Tripartite Framework Agreement on First Nation Health Governance and the 2024 Evaluation of the FNHA.

The refresh of our Plan was also informed by a series of engagements with First Nations in BC, including Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey XIII, Regional Caucuses and Nation Assemblies. Through these engagements, we heard from First Nations about the priorities in their respective regions as well as about the pressures and opportunities for transformation regarding their priority areas. Engagement with First Nations continues to be vital to the development of our operational objectives, and to the advancement of our goals and strategies.



# Our Plan for 2026/2027

Our Plan articulates FNHA's goals, outcome statements, strategies, operational objectives and performance measures for 2026/2027. We are staying true to our course overall with no major changes to main components of our Plan.

## GOALS, STRATEGIES AND OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Our **goals** are a statement of a strategic-level aspiration of FNHA for the duration of our Plan. As part of our planning approach, our goals align with regional priorities identified in regional health and wellness plans. Each goal is coupled with an **outcome statement** that describes the desired changed state resulting from our course of action. **Strategies** are identified for each of our goals. They describe more specific mechanisms and processes by which the FNHA will work towards our desired outcomes as described by the outcome statements. Lastly, our Plan outlines **operational objectives** for the 2026/2027 fiscal year. These objectives are refreshed annually to reflect the evolution of our work areas and activities.

## EVALUATING AND MEASURING OUR PROGRESS

FNHA is committed to ongoing learning and improvement and remaining responsive and accountable to First Nations in BC through performance measurement, reporting and evaluation. We continuously monitor the progress made on our Plan's goals and strategies through an evergreen

performance measurement framework and publicly report our progress in the FNHA Annual Report. Monitoring facilitates ongoing real-time quality improvement and responsiveness to the evolving needs and priorities of First Nations in BC and changes in the broader health ecosystem.

Our work in evaluating our progress helps tell the story of our journey paddling together towards our goals and Shared Vision. Through evaluations, we gain wisdom and identify wise and innovative practices and lessons learned, including successes and challenges. We learn about emerging and evolving needs to position FNHA to best respond to the evolving priorities of First Nations in BC, including opportunities and challenges they face on many levels.

A number of performance measures are noted in strategies and outcomes under each goal. Our measures are framed from a First Nations perspective. Stories, which First Nations have used for thousands of years, figure prominently as a data source to consider the impacts of our efforts.

## THREE PILLARS SHARED PRIORITIES

In June and October 2025, FNHC, FNHDA and FNHA came together for two joint planning sessions at which they identified eight, focused, mutually agreed-upon priorities to guide their collective work together in advancing health and wellness of First Nations in BC. These priorities formed the basis of a *Three Pillars Action Plan*. Together with the goals and strategies of the FNHA Health and Wellness Plan, these priorities have provided a framework for FNHA's operational objectives for 2026/27.

- 1. Strengthen governance structures and processes** with a focus on advancing governance clarity and coordination between the Three Pillars.
- 2. Respond to the toxic drug crisis** by advancing a coordinated healing and treatment response for community-based care.
- 3. Advance the Social Determinants of Health Strategy** shared priorities including healing approaches, cultural infrastructure, Nation-based governance, and sustainable funding.
- 4. Strengthen traditional wellness & healing** integration and recognition, by expanding land-based healing programs and advocating for the inclusion of traditional practices within healthcare systems.

- 5. Address anti-First Nations racism, discrimination, and promote Cultural Safety and Humility:**

Advance the implementation of the BC Cultural Safety & Humility Standard through advocacy, promotion, and training, while supporting system-wide and partner accountability.

- 6. Improve medical transportation** funding and policies to facilitate First Nations' access to services that reflect their realities and needs.

- 7. Advance Regionalization** through shifting decision-making and resource allocation, bringing timely and culturally safe services home to each of the five Regions in BC and improving health outcomes and equity.

- 8. Expand supports for sexual harm and trauma response** by advocating for increased funding and expanded programming to address trauma caused by sexual harm.

## GUIDEPOSTS

Our Plan also includes guideposts, topics of focus that flow across all five of our goals. They reflect what we consistently heard throughout our engagements with First Nations in BC and are intended to keep us grounded and offer ongoing direction as we implement our Plan's goals and strategies.

# Our Goals and Strategies



## **GOAL 1: Governance and Partnerships**

Strengthen Governance  
Structures and Processes  
Advance Social  
Determinants of Health  
Advance Regionalization



## **GOAL 2: Access to Quality Services**

Improve Medical  
Transportation

**Alignment of  
Three Pillars Shared  
Priorities to our Goals  
and Strategies**



**GOAL 3:**  
Mental Health  
and Wellness

Respond to the  
Toxic Drug Crisis  
Expand Supports for  
Sexual Harm & Trauma



**GOAL 4:**  
Addressing  
Anti-First Nations Racism

Address First Nations  
Specific Anti-Racism  
and Promote Cultural  
Safety & Humility



**GOAL 5:**  
Health and Wellness  
Innovation

Strengthen Traditional  
Wellness & Healing

# Governance and Partnerships



# GOAL 1

## Drive transformation through the BC First Nations Health Governance Structure and Partnerships

### Alignment with Regional Priorities:

<b>FRASER SALISH</b> Active engagement with the 32 Fraser Salish First Nations to evolve and refresh the Regional Health Governance Structure. Renewed governance model will ensure that First Nations' distinct interests are upheld through partnership with the Indigenous Health Collaborative Council and the Fraser Partnership Accord Implementation.	<b>INTERIOR</b> Uphold Nation autonomy and self-determination through increasing First Nations decision-making and by evolving and transforming governance and partnerships.	<b>NORTHERN</b> Ensure meaningful engagement with health governance partners through collaboration and self-reflection.	<b>VANCOUVER COASTAL</b> Advance regionalization efforts and planning to bring services closer to home.  Advocating to ensure sustainability of funding and programs.	<b>VANCOUVER ISLAND</b> Empower community through established engagement and governance pathways.
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The BC First Nations Health Governance Structure was created by and for First Nations to bring decision-making closer to home. Within this structure, FNHA, FNHC, FNHDA and the Tripartite Committee on First Nations Health committed to work together based on reciprocal accountability — meaning that the partners will work together at all levels in a collaborative manner to achieve shared goals, living up to individual and collective commitments — to build a more integrated health system for First Nations people. Reciprocal accountability also commits us to work together as partners to develop responses, measures and strategies when faced with challenges.

Over the past several years, FNHA has gained considerable insight from the evaluations, reports, public health emergencies and First Nations feedback from participation in sub-regional, regional and provincial engagement sessions. Through our work and engagement with First Nations people, FNHA is working to clarify, evolve and strengthen the governance structure, including refreshing the

Relationship Agreement between FNHA, FNHC and FNHDA, and refine its organizational structure and regionalization approach.

We will advance work with health governance partners to action First Nations priorities around embedding First Nations health and wellness perspectives throughout the system. We will also work to influence a broader, more holistic perspective of health and wellness that encompasses the social determinants of health, recognizing the importance of the United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* for our work, and for the broader health system.

Work under this goal will include the development of region-specific plans to bring decision-making, health services and resources closer to home, complemented by a provincial regional plan. The intent is for FNHA regional offices to have the capacity, resources and supports to respond to community needs and priorities while maintaining organizational cohesiveness.



## GOAL 1:

**Drive transformation through the BC First Nations Health Governance Structure and partnerships**

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### Outcome:

A transformed health system in BC reflecting First Nations priorities, supported by the First Nations Health Governance Structure.

#### Strategy 1.1

Collaborate with the FNHC and the FNHDA to advance our shared vision and strengthen BC First Nations health governance and partnerships.

#### Strategy 1.2

Operate through excellence, strengthening regional decision-making and bringing services closer to home.

#### Strategy 1.3

Champion health and wellness with partners to advance Social Determinants of Health.

### 2026/2027 Operational Objectives:

- Strengthen coordination and strategic alignment of the BC First Nations health governance partners (FNHA, FNHC and FNHDA) by refreshing the Relationship Agreement and advancing the Three Pillar Shared Priorities in alignment to regional health governance pathways.
- Accelerate Regionalization closer-to-home plans and strengthen regional operational governance through the development and implementation of region-specific plans.
- Improve processes to ensure planning, decision making and operational governance remains grounded in First Nations voices, culture and traditional wisdom of Nations and communities.
- Enhance organizational excellence through strengthening and regionalizing operational supports in health infrastructure, finance, human resources, and policy and planning to support stable, well-resourced Regional teams.

*Continued on next page*

- Refresh reporting processes to enhance reciprocal accountability to First Nations, community members and health governance partners.
- Advance coordinated, FNHA-wide implementation of the 10 Year Strategy on the Social Determinants of Health, with support from federal and provincial partners.

## Measuring our Progress

### Walking Together – We are One

Progress on evaluation recommendations, as measured by:

- % recommendations addressed
- Stories of collaboration

### Closer to Home

Services brought closer to home, as measured by:

- % planned transfers of programs, services and staff implemented
- % rating of quality of health care services available in community or Nation as good or excellent

### Decolonizing Systems

FNHA partnerships advancing improvements on Social Determinants of Health, as measured by:

- Stories

# Access to Quality Services



# GOAL 2

## Enhance access to quality health and wellness services

### Alignment with Regional Priorities:

<b>FRASER SALISH</b> Advance regional innovation and transformation by developing regional strategies and investments that strengthen culturally safe, community driven health services closer to home.	<b>INTERIOR</b> Increasing access to culturally safe health services through increasing capacity and infrastructure closer to home.	<b>NORTHERN</b> Work with community partners to implement primary care, nursing, mental health and other health and wellness services and initiatives.	<b>VANCOUVER COASTAL</b> Implementation of two primary care centres and supporting Primary Care Network implementation. Ensuring access to culturally safe services at regional health centres.	<b>VANCOUVER ISLAND</b> Work with Nations and communities to provide high-quality services across all operational workstreams, including high priority areas such as primary care, traditional wellness and cultural safety and humility.
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FNHA works with First Nations in BC to improve access to quality and culturally safe services that align with the priorities of First Nations. Crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the toxic drug public health emergency and unmarked graves at residential schools have highlighted the importance of addressing barriers to care. FNHA continues to work for equitable access to quality services as directed by First Nations in BC.

Improving services means enhancing access to FNHA delivered and funded programs and services and strengthening the quality of care provided to First Nations in the health system and improved access to needed care, including improvements to medical transportation. Our work will include amplifying a wholistic view of health, healing and wellness across the continuum of care from prevention and health promotion to aftercare and championing these perspectives with our partners.

Services reflected within this goal include primary care, parental/caregiver and child health, traditional wellness, Elder wellness, youth wellness, health promotion and more. Primary care work with partners includes advancing the First Nations-led Primary Care Initiative, nursing services, virtual and hybrid care options such as the First Nations Virtual Doctor of the Day service and the First Nations Virtual Substance Use and Psychiatry Service. These virtual services seek to bring care and supports closer to home and facilitate increased access.

Work towards this goal involves equitable access by First Nations to timely, culturally safe, coordinated, team-based primary care. The FNHA Health Benefits Program, including medical transportation, is a key focal point and need to evolve to meet service needs and priorities for First Nations in BC.



## GOAL 2:

### Enhance access to quality health and wellness services

#### Outcome:

Access to culturally-safe health and wellness and primary care that reflect First Nations perspectives on wellness.

#### Strategy 2.1

Advance timely and equitable access to culturally-safe, team-based primary care.

#### Strategy 2.2

Champion the BC First Nations Perspective on Health and Wellness with First Nations.

#### Strategy 2.3

Transform FNHA programs and services in areas such as First Nations Health Benefits, health emergency management and urban and away-from-home.

### 2026/2027 Operational Objectives:

- Advance Region-led implementation of the First Nations-led Primary Care Initiative, including development of clinical practice standards, workforce development, academic partnerships, and sustainable operational and community ownership supports.
- Expand community access to Traditional Healing and Wellness, including through the integration of practitioners, Elders and cultural healers into primary care teams.
- Bolster FNHA's emergency and public health response through integrated regional crisis management, climate resilience, and coordinated communicable disease prevention and outbreak response.
- Continue to improve FNHA programs and services, including First Nations Health Benefits, medical transportation and virtual services to bring services closer to home for First Nations, improve access to culturally safe care and client experience, while ensuring accountability and long-term sustainability.



## Measuring our Progress

### Pathways to Access

First Nations clients' satisfaction with accessibility and cultural safety of FNHA primary care services

### Health Through Wellness

FNHA initiatives and programs that effectively incorporate First Nations perspectives on health and wellness, as measured by:

- Community feedback
- Stories

### Pathways to Access

Clients' satisfaction with transformed FNHA programs and services

# Mental Health and Wellness



# GOAL 3

## Enhance culturally-safe mental health and wellness approaches

### Alignment with Regional Priorities:

<b>FRASER SALISH</b> Advance the First Nations-led continuum of care by developing and implementing regional frameworks for mental health, substance use, toxic drug crisis and traditional healing and wellness.	<b>INTERIOR</b> Provide sustainable investments in Nation Mental Health and Traditional Wellness approaches.	<b>NORTHERN</b> Advance full integration of the Cultural Safety and Humility Framework across the region and work towards level two toxic drug response.	<b>VANCOUVER COASTAL</b> Implementation of the three Ways of Healing from Trauma (healing centre) projects. Implementation of the Treatment & Wellness Centre project. Navigating First Nations rapid access to treatment.	<b>VANCOUVER ISLAND</b> Strengthen capacity and enhance programs and services within communities to advance improvement in mental health and wellness and respond effectively to the toxic drug crisis.
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First Nations in BC continue to emphasize mental health and wellness and approaches that integrate culture, traditional ways of knowing and connection to land as a leading priority. Mental health and wellness challenges that First Nations people face, including addressing the impacts of the toxic drug crisis, are often rooted in the impacts of trauma, colonialism and First Nations-specific racism.

FNHA has invested heavily in wholistic First Nations-led mental health and wellness initiatives and prevention approaches that address the systemic root causes of trauma. With government partners, FNHA has invested in First Nations-operated treatment centres and plans to build on these investments. We are also committed to addressing sexual harm, from prevention to trauma-informed supports for those who have experienced harm and for those who have caused harm.

We also continue to work with partners to expand and improve access to a continuum of culturally safe mental health and wellness services and supports that focus on healing, prevention and harm-reduction using both First Nations and western perspectives and approaches. Our work seeks to support the restoration of mental health and wellness of First Nations people through reconciliation, Nation rebuilding and traditional wellness.

FNHA received a four-year federal investment to support youth mental health. This funding will enable the delivery of trauma-informed mental health and wellness counselling for youth, both in-community and online. It will provide a diversity of distinction-based approaches with traditional and cultural integration to best meet the needs of the young person.



## GOAL 3:

### Enhance culturally-safe mental health and wellness approaches

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#### Outcome:

Healing from root causes of trauma through improved culturally-safe mental health, harm reduction and substance use approaches.

#### Strategy 3.1

Develop and implement a healing-from-trauma approach focused on the root causes of trauma, including residential school legacies.

#### Strategy 3.2

Enhance access to a continuum of mental health and wellness approaches, emphasizing cultural healing and prevention.

#### Strategy 3.3

Implement harm reduction strategies for substance use and the toxic drug crisis.

### 2026/2027 Operational Objectives:

- Advance the implementation of a network of Healing Centres, Modalities and Lodges in each region that integrate trauma-specific services alongside Traditional Healing & Wellness.
- Improve First Nations access to treatment through the development of centralized intake, enhanced waitlist management and post-treatment/aftercare.
- Expand continuum of mental wellness services, inclusive of land-based healing, clinical supports, sexual harm supports, and fostering innovative partnerships for Nation-led Traditional Healing & Wellness programs.
- Continue to prioritize a community and Nation-led harm reduction approaches to the toxic drug public health emergency, including wrapping regional approaches and frameworks.

## Measuring our Progress

### Healing Journeys

Integration of healing from trauma approaches, as measured by:

- Stories from programs, services, organizations and clients

### Two-Eyed Seeing

Enhanced access to mental wellness and healing supports, as measured by:

- % of new/expanded mental health and wellness programs and services supported by the FNHA
- % of clients reporting satisfaction with mental health and wellness services

### Healing Journeys

Increased supports for healing and substance use, as measured by:

- % reduction of First Nations toxic drug overdose incidents and deaths in BC
- Stories of healing and the impacts of harm reduction approaches

# Addressing Anti-First Nations Racism



# GOAL 4

## Advance First Nations approaches to addressing anti-First Nations racism in health

### Alignment with Regional Priorities:

FRASER SALISH	INTERIOR	NORTHERN	VANCOUVER COASTAL	VANCOUVER ISLAND
Advance the implementation of the Xwélalà:m Xwelá Ye Xwexwílmexw (Feedback and Accountability Blueprint) through the development of the first regional Indigenous distinct feedback and accountability process collaboratively with health system partners.	Improve the quality and safety of care by fostering a collaborative Nation-led approach through reciprocity and accountability of partners.	Lead with culture and hold health systems partners accountable to providing health services free of First Nations-specific racism.	Improving the compliments and complaints pathway.  Addressing First Nations-specific racism hotspots.	Continue to build trust and increase visibility with communities to ensure awareness and accessibility of the regional compliments and complaints pathway.

Achieving health equity and eliminating anti-First Nations racism in the health system are areas of focus for FNHA and its partners within the BC First Nations Health Governance Structure. Through our focus on First Nations-led approaches, we have developed a Cultural Safety and Humility and First Nations Specific Anti-Racism Framework which is an organizational wide tool that is designed to guide the direction of all FNHA cultural safety and humility and First Nations specific anti-racism initiatives, activities and actions to ensure we are paddling together towards our

common goals and objectives. This framework integrates long-standing commitments, lived experiences of First Nations in BC, and organizational learning into a single, coordinated approach. It also includes culturally safe and accessible experiences and avenues for First Nations people to provide feedback on their experiences in health. Recognizing that addressing anti-First Nations racism in health is a long and complex journey, out work towards this goal is intended to help eliminate barriers and transform the health system.



## GOAL 4:

**Advance First Nations approaches to addressing anti-First Nations racism in health**

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### **Outcome:**

Culturally safe health care experiences where First Nations in BC feel heard, valued and seen.

#### **Strategy 4.1**

Work with partners in BC to support a racism-free health system with embedded cultural safety and humility practices.

#### **Strategy 4.2**

Champion cultural safety and humility in BC through regional innovation, First Nations-led responses and service excellence.

#### **Strategy 4.3**

Advance First Nations approaches to addressing complaints.

### **2026/2027 Operational Objectives:**

- Continue to advocate for the adoption of the BC Cultural Safety and Humility (CSH) Standard and for First Nations to have a meaningful partnership role in advancing CSH education and initiatives, working in partnership to take action to address racism against First Nations peoples.
- Operationalize the CSH and First Nations Specific Anti-Racism Framework and proactively identify opportunities to embed, develop, or amend CSH principles into legal, privacy, governance, and corporate policies and approaches.
- Continue to strengthen relationships and collaboration with Regional Health Authority partners to advance region-specific culturally safe pathways for feedback and accountability.

## Measuring our Progress

### Cultural Safety and Humility

Progress on anti-racism, cultural safety and humility as measured by:

- Stories of FNHA-related work and accountability among health system partners
- % regional anti-racism and cultural safety initiatives on target

### Being heard, valued and seen

- # of new complaints models embedding First Nations feedback pathways

# Health and Wellness Innovation



# GOAL 5

## Drive health and wellness innovation together with First Nations and other partners

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### Alignment with Regional Priorities

<b>FRASER SALISH</b> Advance regional health and wellness innovation by refreshing the Regional Health and Wellness Plan and develop a Regional Implementation Framework for the FNHC-FNHDA-FNHA 10 Year Strategy on the Social Determinants of Health.	<b>INTERIOR</b> Advance a regionalization plan that drives transformation and strengthens Nation sovereignty and self-determination.	<b>NORTHERN</b> Develop and implement new initiatives in primary care and mental health while engaging with First Nations community to drive self-determined innovations.	<b>VANCOUVER COASTAL</b> Support the implementation of the 10 Year Strategy on the Social Determinants of Health funding and reporting parameters.	<b>VANCOUVER ISLAND</b> Utilize the review and update of the Regional Health and Wellness Plan to further regionalization and embed a cultural family-based approach to the delivery of programs and services.
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FNHA acknowledges the work being implemented on the ground through First Nations-led innovation. Collaborative Nation-led mental health and wellness initiatives, culturally safe emergency response supports, traditional wellness supports and land-based healing programs are among the many of examples of how First Nations in BC are modelling and championing health and wellness innovation within their own communities and across Nations. As a health and wellness partner, FNHA will continue to support this important work as it strengthens services closer to home.

Our Plan includes learning from the creative direction and health and wellness priorities of First Nations in BC. This includes advancing First Nations data governance principles, including increasing the recognition and use of OCAP® and the creation of First Nations health data and health indicators in BC. The development of regional and sub-regional data reports to return to communities will also be a focus.



## GOAL 5:

**Drive health and wellness innovation together with First Nations and other partners**

### **Outcome:**

Innovative community-driven, Nation-based wellness initiatives are supported and amplified throughout the health system.

#### **Strategy 5.1**

Champion BC First Nations initiatives, supporting capacity-building and the sharing of innovative practices.

#### **Strategy 5.2**

Advance First Nations data governance principles, health research partnerships and evidence-based data.

#### **Strategy 5.3**

Leverage innovative partnerships to advance creative health and wellness initiatives.

### **2026/2027 Operational Objectives:**

- Advance an integrated Health Human Resources Strategy that supports both provincial and regional recruitment and retention to increase First Nations staff representation at FNHA, in community, and across the health sector.
- Champion digital enablement initiatives to support both provincial and regional innovation and operational excellence in alignment with First Nations community priorities.
- Strengthen FNHA's clinical quality, patient safety, and system resilience by operationalizing and regionalizing clinical risk, safety, and informatics and education strategies that enable proactive risk management, cultural safety, and high-quality service delivery across all care settings, in alignment with Nation and community priorities and embedding cultural identity into the design and delivery of all health and wellness services.

- In alignment with First Nations' Principles of OCAP®, advance key performance indicator reporting and access to information to support regionalization, sustainability, continuity of care, and accountable decision-making across FNHA.
- Continue work with Regions and government partners to strengthen sustainability and access to Region-led culturally safe primary care services, and Traditional Healing & Wellness integration, prioritizing innovative First Nations-led approaches.

## Measuring our Progress

### Community-driven, Nation-based

#### Increased First Nations health and wellness initiatives, as measured by:

- % of FNHA wellness initiatives on target
- Stories

### First Nations decision-making and control

- % of initiatives generating new First Nations-specific data for decision-making

### Lifting one another up

#### Increase in partnership initiatives, as measured by:

- # of new partnership initiatives

# Guideposts



**First Nations  
Perspective on  
Health and Wellness**



**Quality**



**Culture and  
Decolonization**



**Urban and  
Away-from-Home**



**Innovation**



## First Nations Perspective on Health and Wellness

The [\*First Nations Perspective on Health and Wellness\*](#) depicts a shared understanding of a wholistic view of health and well-being. This view understands health and wellness journeys as being owned by the individual and influenced by families, communities, environments and other social determinants of health. It is intended to serve as a starting point for discussion by First Nations communities regarding their concepts of wellness for themselves and FNHA.

# First Nations Perspective on Health and Wellness

**The Centre Circle** represents the individual. Wellness starts with each of us taking responsibility for our own health and wellness.

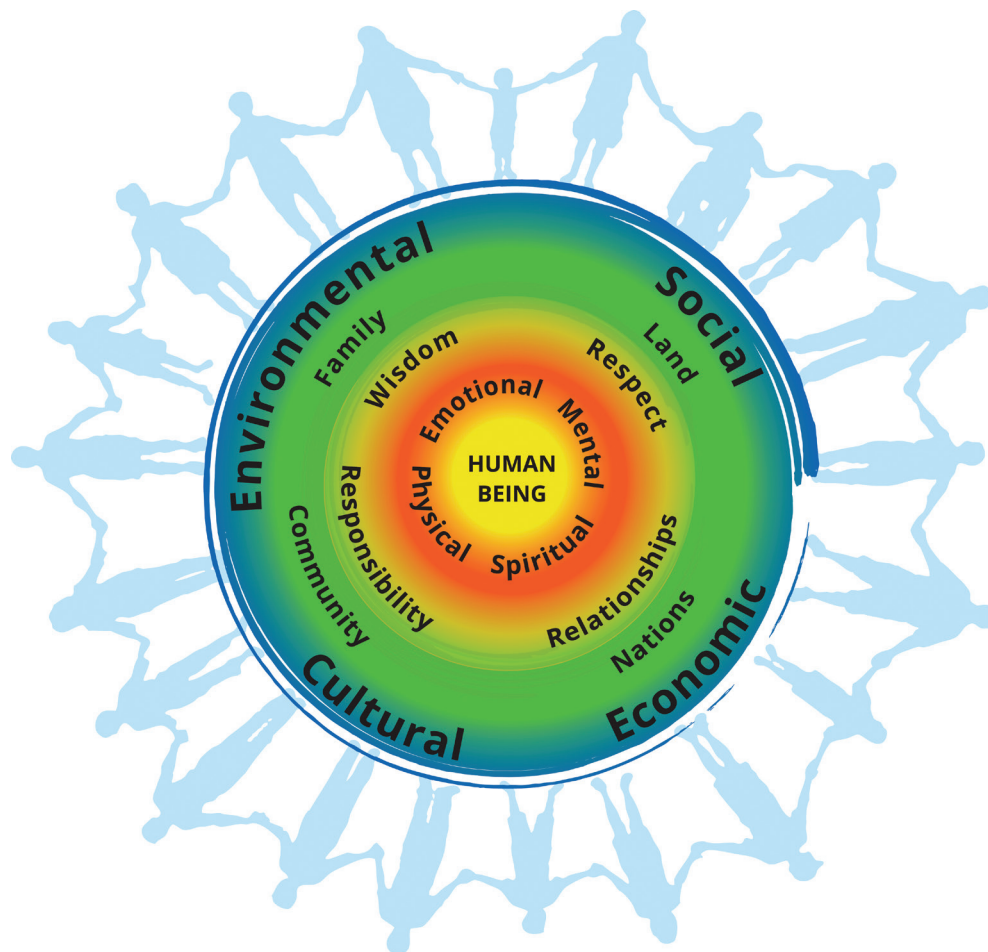
**The Second Circle** illustrates the importance of mental, emotional, spiritual and physical facets of a healthy, well and balanced life.

**The Third Circle** represents the overarching values that support and uphold wellness: respect, wisdom, responsibility and relationships.

**The Fourth Circle** depicts the people who surround us and the places from which we come: Nations, family, community and land—all critical components of healthy experiences.

**The Fifth Circle** depicts the social, cultural, economic and environmental determinants of our health and well-being.

**The Outer Circle** represents strong children, families, Elders and people in communities, holding hands to demonstrate togetherness.





## Quality

FNHA weaves quality improvement, standards and accreditation, client experience feedback and incident management into health and wellness systems across BC to improve health outcomes for First Nations people. This includes working with regulators, organizations, communities and health staff to support the delivery of person-centred care in a way that incorporates First Nations perspectives. It also involves working with our community, regional and provincial partners to enhance access to quality, culturally safe health care for First Nations in BC – in tandem with addressing First Nations-specific racism in the health system.

FNHA strives for excellence and continual improvement by building on wise practices and quality standards to inform decision-making and enhance the quality of programs and services. This includes gathering First Nations feedback on our programs and services, including the option for First Nations people to provide compliments and complaints through the Quality Care and Safety Office. This work is a key step towards aligning our work with the BC Cultural Safety and Humility Standard and providing a model for other health system partners to do the same.

## Culture and Decolonization

The connection to land, language and culture are foundational to First Nations health and wellness. Culture is a source of strength and identity for First Nations people. We embrace wisdom and guidance from communities and Nations to inform a health system that reflects culture. Our goals and strategies are directly tied to the five regional health and wellness plans, which embeds First Nations priorities and perspectives in our programs, services, partnerships and operations.

First Nations people continue to face significant barriers to wellness including First Nations-specific racism and the ongoing legacy of colonialism. FNHA works together with our partners within the BC First Nations Health Governance Structure on addressing these issues. FNHA, FNHDA and FNHC developed an Anti-Racism, Cultural Safety and Humility Framework and Action Plan (2021) which guides ongoing work towards a health system that is free from First Nations-specific racism.



## Urban and Away-From-Home

FNHA strives to be a health and wellness partner to all First Nations in BC, regardless of where they live or access health and wellness services. As of 2021, 72 per cent of First Nations people in BC live in urban areas or away from home, a number that is continuing to grow. However, systemic, institutional, clinical, geographical and individual barriers often limit their access to mainstream health services. Additionally, they are frequently excluded from meaningful participation in service design and delivery.

FNHA's Urban and Away-From-Home Health and Wellness Framework sets the foundation for being a health and wellness partner to First Nations people in BC living in urban and away-from-home settings. The framework establishes principles and strategic directions to strengthen FNHA's support for the urban and away-from-home population.

FNHA is implementing the framework, with a focus on aligning it with the five goals of our Plan. This work involves embedding the urban and away-from-home context into our daily operations so that FNHA regions and departments collectively contribute to supporting the health and wellness of all First Nations people in BC, regardless of where they live.



## Innovation

As a partner in health and wellness, FNHA supports innovative approaches to improving the health and wellness of First Nations individuals, communities and Nations. As the first and only province-wide health authority of its kind in Canada, established by and for First Nations, FNHA is itself a reflection of First Nations innovation. Key initiatives that FNHA has undertaken in mental health and wellness and primary health care, such as the establishment of virtual health care services and the First Nations-led Primary Care Initiative, reinforce the importance of innovation at FNHA, and will continue to be integral to our work, both in the short-term and in the long-term.

This model of innovation, grounded in culture and our relationships with communities and Nations, is shaping various areas of our work and bringing services closer to home. FNHA looks at ways to apply innovation across all of the five goals in our Plan. Our focus is on the practical and tangible steps we can take, not only in our operations, but also in our relationships, to adjust to new contexts and strategically pursue new opportunities that are important to First Nations.



# Moving Forward

*Paddling Together Towards Health and Wellness* maps the next phase of our journey as a First Nations organization. FNHA looks forward to the work ahead with First Nations in BC, our health governance partners and other stakeholders to advance our five goals.

1

Drive health system transformation through the BC First Nations Health Governance Structure and partnerships.

2

Enhance access to quality health and wellness services.

3

Enhance culturally safe mental health and wellness approaches.

4

Advance First Nations approaches to addressing anti-First Nations racism in health.

5

Drive health and wellness innovation together with First Nations and other partners.

Our Plan reflects the wisdom, guidance and direction shared by First Nations in BC and we continue to be grateful for this direction. FNHA remains steadfast and unwavering in our commitment to uphold our Shared Vision, Values and the 7 Directives that ground our work on our journey together toward healthy, self-determining and vibrant BC First Nations children, families and communities.

**Jack Page**

FNHA Interim Board Chair

**Monica McAlduff**

FNHA Chief Executive Officer



# Budget Statement of Operation of Summary Service Plan

## ANNUAL BUDGET 2026-2027

### REVENUES

Health Canada	831,744,349
Province of British Columbia	124,731,629
First Nations Information Governance Center	637,749
Health Authorities	1,347,948
Interest Income	15,812,196
Miscellaneous Income	3,563,415

**TOTAL REVENUES** **977,837,287**

### EXPENSES

#### PROGRAM SERVICES

<b>Health Benefits</b>	<b>324,514,549</b>	<b>31%</b>
Claims Costs	305,394,961	29%
PBC Administration Contract	6,855,757	1%
Health Benefits Program Salaries and O&M	12,263,831	1%
<b>Direct Community Services Funding</b>	<b>354,627,635</b>	<b>34%</b>
Ongoing CFA-Funded Direct Community Funding	278,599,532	26%
Toxic Drug, Treatment, Recovery Aftercare	29,309,756	3%
SDOH and JPB	19,717,287	2%
IRS, MMIWG, IDS, Trauma-Informed Supports	14,236,308	1%
Community Facilities	7,494,315	1%
Regional Priorities	4,053,286	0%
Mental Health & Wellness	1,217,152	0%
<b>Health Services and Programs</b>	<b>276,365,622</b>	<b>26%</b>
Primary Care, Environmental Health, Nursing, CMO, Health Authority Liaison	109,040,760	10%
Mental Health, Emergency Management, JPB, SDOH, Anti-Indigenous Racism	53,253,789	5%
Toxic Drug, Addictions, Treatment, Recovery Aftercare	47,664,102	5%
IRS, MMIWG, IDS, Trauma-Informed Supports	25,701,288	2%
Direct Funding to HSOs, Direct Funding Admin, Research, Policy, and Surveillance	17,914,362	2%
	8,931,596	1%

Healthy Children and Youth	6,465,741	1%
Program Planning, Reporting, Community Development	2,748,342	0%
Regional Program Priorities and Engagement	3,791,246	0%
Food Security, Crisis Response, Psychological Health & Safety	854,395	0%
	<b>955,507,806</b>	<b>90%</b>

### GOVERNANCE AND FIRST NATIONS ENGAGEMENT

First Nations Health Council	2,933,845	0%
First Nations Health Directors Association	2,659,172	0%
First Nations Engagement	8,159,775	1%
	<b>13,752,793</b>	<b>1%</b>

### OPERATIONS

<b>FNHA Operations</b>	<b>12,436,633</b>	
FNHA Board and CEO	1,386,451	0%
Amortization of Capital Assets	4,070,446	0%
Organizational Compensation Supporting All Program Areas (Annual Increases, Employer Health Tax, Parental Leave)	6,979,736	1%
<b>Shared Services†</b>	<b>60,306,193</b>	<b>6%</b>
Information Management & Technology	28,461,374	3%
Corporate Services	10,984,348	1%
Human Resources	8,219,228	1%
Finance	6,675,950	1%
Legal Privacy & Governance	2,761,666	0%
Communications and Marketing	2,582,425	0%
Strategic Services	621,202	0%
<b>Regional Operations</b>	<b>14,286,666</b>	<b>1%</b>
	<b>87,029,491</b>	<b>8%</b>

**TOTAL EXPENSES** **1,056,290,091** **100%**

† Shared Services support both provincial and regional teams and operations.





First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness

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