

Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey VI Summary Report



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Background of our Forum



Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey is an annual gathering of First Nations leadership, Health Directors and government partners. The forums provide a key engagement opportunity for Tripartite partners to communicate progress on the implementation of the Tripartite First Nations Health Plan and to gain additional direction and feedback from BC First Nations to advance the health reform process.

The Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey Forums have been fundamental to shaping the work of the First Nations Health Council (FNHC) under the Transformative Change Accord: First Nations Health Plan (TCA: FNHP) and Tripartite First Nations Health Plan (TFNHP). On May 20-21, 2008 the second annual Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey Forum was convened in Vancouver, BC, and offered opportunity for BC First Nations health professionals, and their provincial and federal counterparts to discuss the significant progress made in the implementation of the TCA: FNHP and TFNHP actions, and to continue conversations about BC First Nations' health.

On November 3-5, 2009, Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey III took place with further discussion on health governance, and the actions in the TCA: FNHP and TFNHP. This included discussions about the First Nations Health Society (FNHS) – created to take on the legal and financial responsibilities for implementing the health plans - and ratification of the establishment of the First Nations Health Directors Association (FNHDA).

At Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey IV held on May 24- 26, 2011, BC First Nations considered, debated and ratified Resolution 2011-01. Leadership voted to adopt the Consensus Paper, which describes a First Nations' vision of a new BC First Nations health governance structure. Through this Resolution, BC First Nations endorsed a Tripartite Framework Agreement on First Nation Health Governance – a tripartite legal agreement to transfer the operations of Health Canada's First Nations and Inuit Health Branch-BC Region to a First Nations Health Authority and enter into a new health partnership with the federal and provincial governments.

The BC Tripartite Framework Agreement on First Nation Health Governance was signed on October 13th, 2011.

From May 15-17, 2012, Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey V brought together over 800 delegates including BC Chiefs, Health Directors, and federal and provincial partners to discuss the future of health for First Nations in BC.

This year we continued our collective journey towards First Nations control of the design and delivery of First Nations health programs and services, and a new health partnership with the federal and provincial governments.

2013 Overview



The annual Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey Forum attracts Chiefs, Health Leaders, front-line health workers, federal and provincial partners, and other key decision makers in BC First Nations health. The unique conference is an opportunity for these diverse participants to learn, share, and shape the future of First Nation health in BC and beyond. The only one of its kind in Canada, in its sixth year of operation the 2013 forum was bigger and better than ever with over 900 delegates in attendance.

Since their inception, the Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey Forums have set the stage for one-of-a-kind dialogues in which BC First Nations provide wisdom for building and transforming a more effective health system from the ground up. This year, we will achieve a historic milestone as operations of the First Nations and Inuit Health BC Region of Health Canada have been transferred to the FNHA.

In recognition of this milestone, we hosted the largest ceremony of its kind in BC history “Honouring our Shared Journey: Commemorating the Transfer” during the opening of Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey VI on October 22, 2013. The opening commemoration ceremony was a powerful reminder of how we plan to approach this work differently. The Ceremony offered the opportunity to reflect on our collective achievements and to honour our continued journey.

Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey VI occurred only three weeks after Phase Two of the transfer of programs and services from FNIH to the FNHA. The Forum provided an opportunity to begin to envision how the existing health system can be transformed to support First Nations philosophies of a holistic wellness system. Three presentation streams - Governance Strategy, Wellness Partnership and Sharing Wisdom - provided delegates with broad opportunities for learning, networking, and collaboration.

This year, Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey included an expansive Trade Show. Over 70 Exhibitors, government and health service partners and BC First Nations Artisans were on hand to share information, products and resources.

Other highlights included the announcement and celebration of the First Nations Health Council's first ever leadership wellness challenge: Beefy Chiefs & Champions Wellness Challenge and Friendly Feud. We thank everyone who took time to attend Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey VI and to contribute to the conversation to shape the future of First Nations health in BC.

Honouring our Shared Journey Transfer Commemoration Ceremony

Corner Posts and Living Markers

The **Corner Posts**, usually we call upon our elders. People that have a lot of experience, or a lot of investment, a really good understanding, about the significance of the work of health. They are the ones that ground the work. They are the ones who are the pillars; they are the ones that will be the house posts if you will. So, that is their job.



Corner Posts:

- Deputy Chief Frank Alec, North Region, Lake Babine
- Chief Bob Pasco, Interior Region, Oregon Jack Creek
- Hereditary Chief Bill Cranmer, Vancouver Island Region, Namgis
- Elder Virginia Peters, Fraser Salish Region, Sts'ailes
- Chief Patrick Williams, Vancouver Coastal Region, Skatin

The **Living Markers**, because our elders here have said we don't usually put a name on something that is not alive, like a building. When there is something significant that has happened, we would choose young people to be a living marker for that. The transfer of health responsibility at this time is a big thing in First Nations history.

Living Markers:

- Mishon Sutherland (Age 27), North Region
- Jordie Johnson (Age 31), Interior Region
- Jenn Smith (Age 34), Vancouver Island Region
- Wenona James Point (Age 25), Fraser Salish Region
- Janelle Tom (Age 23), Vancouver Coastal Region

So those young people would be the living markers. They would have to say how old they are. They tell all the people. This is the age today. Then, we mark this event by their age. So, if they are 25, and when they turn 50, we will know we have had health transfer for 25 years.

BC First Nations called on the ancestors to help mark and celebrate the day. Elder Leonard George welcomed everyone to the traditional territory of the Squamish, Musqueam and Tsleil-Waututh as strong, magnificent nation of people, the people of the earth.

The work started with a sacred ceremony to celebrate 8 years of hard work. Chiefs, health directors and dignitaries were called forward to ground the work, witness the work, and to bring the message home.

The first part of the work included calling forward Corner Posts and Living Markers, each was blanketed and reflected that it was an honor to be chosen for this role as ambassadors.

For the second part of the work, the elders asked that the people come together to ask the Creator for direction, and to let go of the past and to provide a good future. The people wrote down on two separate pieces of paper: Things that they wanted to do away with and to clear a path; and what they wanted to keep – the goodness that they want for their future selves, the children, families and communities. Chief Ko'waintco Michel indicated that she would take all of the papers that indicated what people wanted to keep. She would have a sweat and put tobacco on the papers and would ask the ancestors to take them. Cliff Atleo shared that he would take the papers that indicated what people wished to let go of and would burn them in order to let go of all.

Witnesses came forward to speak before the people. Each spoke about the pride and inspiration they felt, their hopes for the future health for BC First Nations through self-determination, the relationships and responsibilities to overcome challenges together, to share lessons learned and their journeys, to find direction and a good path forward, and that First Nations were ready accept this challenge for a better future for the children and future generations.

Witnesses to the work

- Michel Roy, Assistant Deputy Minister, Health Canada
- Ian Potter, Chief Federal Negotiator for the Tripartite First Nations Health Plan
- The Honourable Terry Lake, BC Minister of Health
- Shawn Atleo, National Chief, Assembly of First Nations (via videoconference)
- Grand Chief Doug Kelly, Chair, First Nations Health Council
- Lydia Hwitsum, First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) Board Chair
- Jacki McPherson, First Nations Health Directors Association (FNHDA) President
- Chief Jody Morrison, North Region
- Chief Kukpi7 Wayne Christian, Interior Region
- Chief Bob Chamberlin, Vancouver Island Region
- Chief David Jimmie, Fraser Salish Region
- Chief Don Harris, Vancouver Coastal Region
- The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Former Minister of Health and Current Minister of the Arctic Council for Canada

CEO Presentation summary:

First Nations Health Authority Chief Executive officer Joe Gallagher presented on the activities of the last eighteen months and the work of the FNHA to facilitate the transfer of the First Nations and

Inuit Health Branch – BC Region to the FNHA. With the conclusion of the transfer Gallagher provided an update on transition and discussed what to expect from the FNHA as a partner in health and wellness. This keynote presentation highlighted key activities and achievements in this transitional period and our continued relationship with provincial and federal partners and emerging partnership opportunities to address important health issues and support health promotion and disease prevention.

Beefy Chiefs and Champions



In early 2013, the FNHC launched the first annual FNHC leadership wellness challenge: Beefy Chiefs and Champions. The province-wide challenge occurred over a period of six months and aimed to promote individual health and wellness through self-care and health literacy. The focus of the inaugural challenge was to lose weight and inches. Two winners were selected from each region to take home \$4,000 to be put toward a community health and wellness initiative.

The winners who attended Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey VI were invited to share their health and wellness stories and successes. These stories of personal commitment, leadership and perseverance were inspirational – testaments to the importance of setting accessible, achievable and sustainable personal goals.

Health Fair Summary

Back by popular demand and met with great success, this year's mental wellness and self care-themed Health Fair at Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey VI provided conference delegates a chance to relax and have fun. Smiles and laughter spread across the 34th floor of the Hyatt as conference delegates took part in the Health Fair activities.

Health Screening

A popular activity at the Health Fair, wellness enthusiasts starting showing up to participate in the Health Screening and wellness goal setting before the Fair had even started!

Approximately 85 people completed health screening during the 4pm – 8pm Health Fair.



Spin the Wellness Wheel Game

Centered around the Health Fair's theme of mental wellness and self-care, Spin the Wellness Wheel Game participants were asked "What do you do to stay well?" From walking the dog to praying to eating whole foods, responses illustrated a wide range of activities that conference delegates engage in to promote holistic wellness. Participants were eligible to win a variety of prizes including an iPod Shuffle, Nintendo Wii Consoles, Self Care Prize Packs and Beefy Chiefs Kits.

Professional Chair Massage



Many delegates were willing to wait in a short line for the opportunity to have a 10-minute chair massage while at the Health Fair. This was a popular activity throughout the duration of the Fair, and delegates walked away relieved of tension and stress.

Photo Booth

Delegates had the opportunity to capture the GW-VI experience at the photo booth! There were props available to incorporate into the photos and a photo print out was available to take away as a GW-VI souvenir. Overall, there were 104 different individuals/groups that got their photos taken.

Tradeshow summary



GW VI received sponsorship from (4) Platinum sponsors: Attain Solutions, Softlanding, Telus and Cisco. Notable highlights expressed from the Platinum sponsors included: Tradeshow and Forum networking, the cultural ceremony, the evening reception and private breakfast with FNHA leadership.

Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey VI also hosted FNHA Partners information tables (12), exhibitor tables (35), and community artisan tables (15). Below are some shared testimonials:

"Overall, I was very pleased with the event in terms of the networking opportunities that it offered and the exposure it provided for the UBC Learning Circle program." – UBC Learning Circle

"We wanted to say how much we enjoyed being part of such an amazing and well executed event. My colleague said how incredible everyone was and that all the sessions were well received. Thank you for letting us be a part of this and we are looking forward to future events." – Urban Poling Inc.

"The FNHA team: Everyone was FABULOUS! Happy, helpful, professional – THANK YOU for being so tremendous! Having the FNHA staff in matching shirts was very helpful. Any time we had questions or an issue popped up it was very easy to see who we could go to ask for support. Everyone was available as needed – I don't think there was a time during the entire event where I couldn't easily find an FNHA staff. Having team members located in central locations on both floors was extremely helpful." – The Canadian Red Cross

"I truly had a great time- chatting with old friends and meeting new ones! The breakfasts and lunch were delicious! I actually did quite well financially and made networking dates for next year. Being on the same

floor as the conference participants would have been an extra plus and hope this is a possibility for your next conference. I noticed all of your staff had a smile for everyone, great energy and supportive! I look forward to meeting again.” – Community Artisan

“It was the most well-run conference I've attended. Please pass that on.” – GMG Consulting

This year there was the inclusion of the Passport Program: a fun incentive designed to draw participation from GW VI forum attendees to the trade show floor with a scavenger hunt/bingo type gaming process. Overall this endeavor was well received by attendees and exhibitors appreciated the support, common suggestions for future were to incorporate lengthier break times throughout the forum to allow attendees more time. The addition of the microphone was a hit this year and can be further developed for incorporation into future FNHA events.

General feedback to consider for future forums include: fees structure, table sizes, increased signage, a venue that allows the Tradeshow to be on the same floor as the Forum.

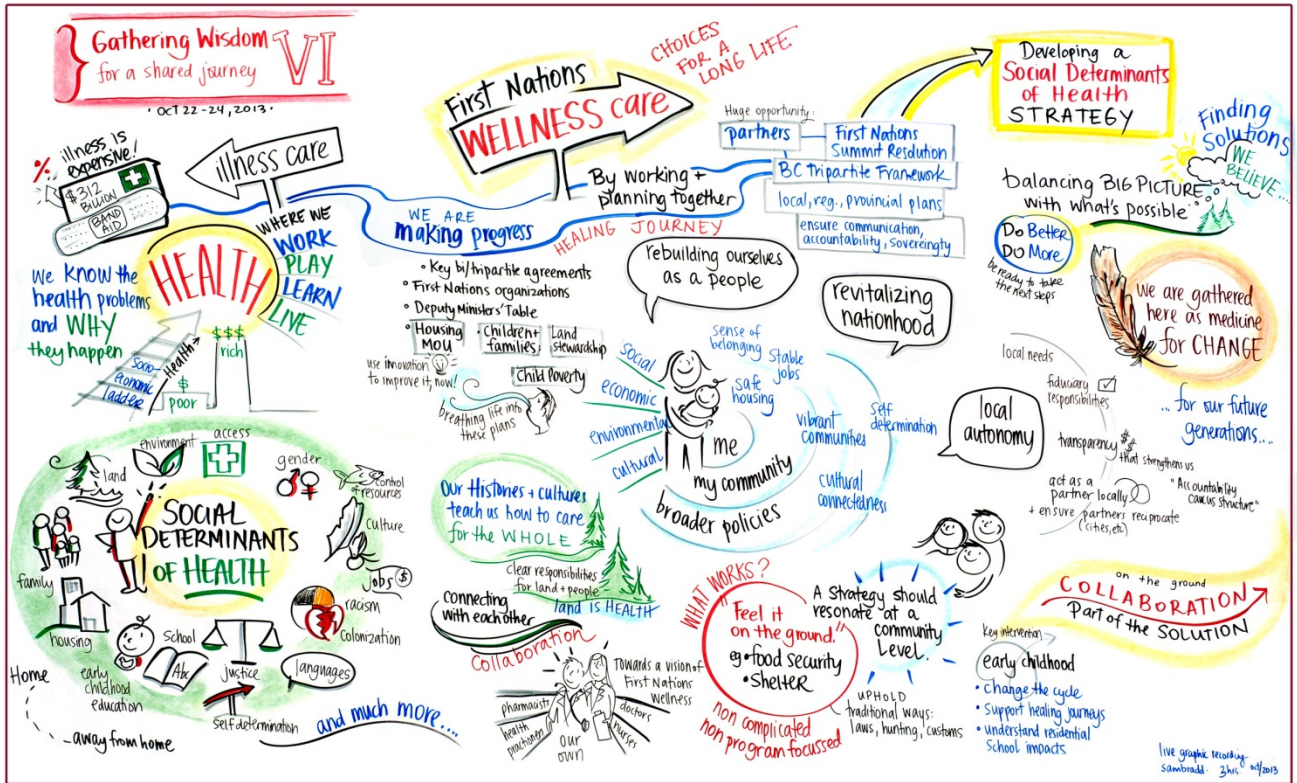
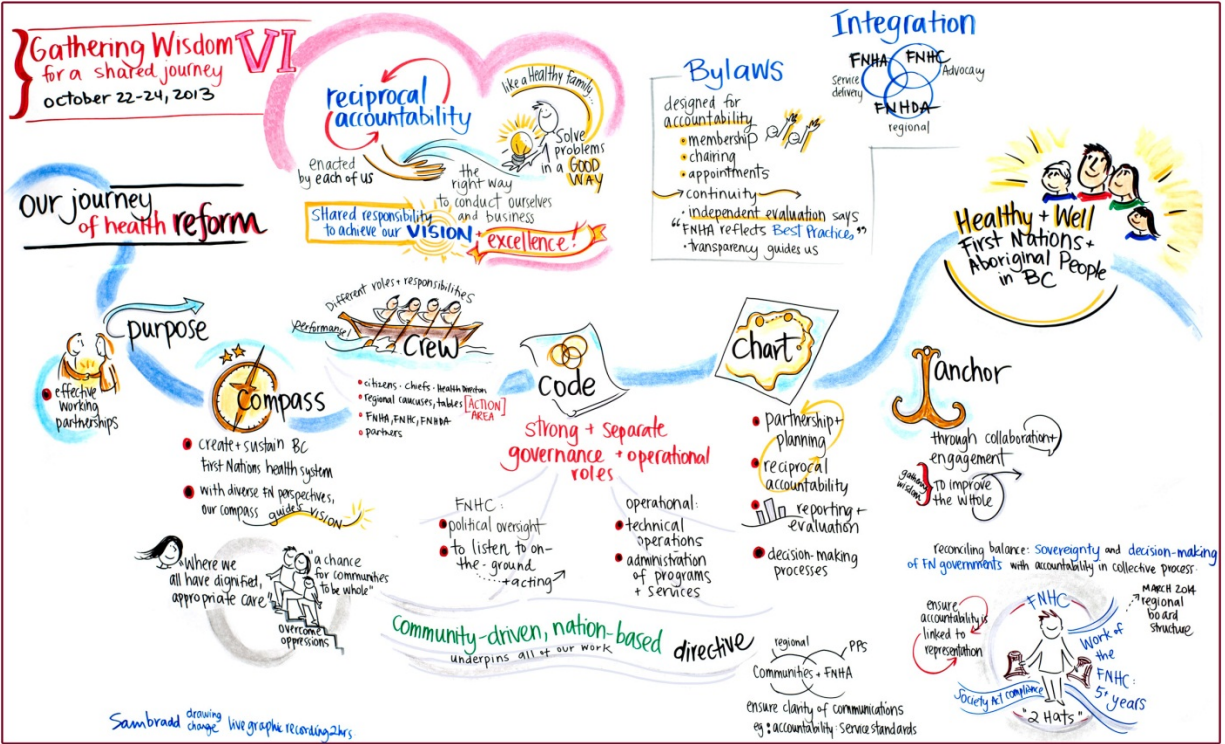
Presentation Streams

Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey presentations were broke up into three streams: Governance Strategy, Wellness Partnership and Shared Wisdom.

Governance Strategy

The successful conclusion of transfer and our continued work to achieve our shared vision is a testament to the historic level of consensus amongst BC First Nations and the continued commitment and contributions of Chiefs and Leaders toward the achievement of common goals. Taking steps to improve health services, programs and systems will require a clear understanding of how BC First Nations work together within the new health governance structure, how we collect and manage our health information to inform our decisions, and how we begin to address the broader social and economic conditions that influence the health of our people and communities. This year, building on discussions about the building blocks for transformation of health services for First Nations in BC, Chiefs and Leaders called for an opportunity to engage in an open, strategic-level dialogue to discuss and further develop the concepts of reciprocal accountability, data governance, and the social determinants of health. These discussions provided an opportunity to reflect on the work achieved to date and provided clear direction to gain greater clarity in our processes for resolving issues, setting priorities and building consensus.

[Governance Stream Summary](#)



Wellness Partnership

These sessions are opportunities for First Nations and health professionals, practitioners and administrators to discuss the ways in which the First Nations Health Authority and Tripartite Partners may directly provide services as wellness partners to First Nations.

[Beefy Chiefs & Champions Challenge](#)

[Urban Poling for Fitness, for Health](#)

[Influenza Pandemic Pandemic Planning with Donna Lawrence](#)

[Telehealth Expansion Project with FNHA TEP Team](#)

[Recruitment & Retention for Nurses](#)

[Occupational Health & Safety Employer/Employee Roles and Responsibilities](#)

[Partnership and Health Service Collaboration with Renee Hetu, Brad Anderson and Judy Sturm, Interior Health Authority](#)

[FNHA Board of Directors Meet and Greet](#)

[Nike N7 Partnership](#)

Sharing Wisdom



These sessions are opportunities for interested forum participants to listen, learn and share experiences, successes, and innovative approaches to improving health systems and services. These sessions are hosted by the First Nations Health Authority and select presenters recruited from a public call for presentations.

[Sto:lo Nation Elders Lodge: Assisted Living Lodge for First Nations: Jeanine Lynxleg & Michele Hobek](#)

[Developing an integrated care model in Oceanside - incorporating the learnings from the South Central Foundation - Allison Cutler](#)

[Integrated Primary Care with Ts'ewulhtun Health Centre - Dr. Danièle Behn Smith & Judith Gohn](#)

[Collaborative Partnerships to Improve Access to Culturally Appropriate Primary Health Care in the Fraser Region - Leslie Bonshor & Kelowa Edel](#)

[Accreditation Process with Accreditation Canada](#)

[Aboriginal Employment Program with Vancouver Island Health Authority - Steve Sxwithul'txw](#)

[First Nations and the Canadian Red Cross Society: Working Towards Health - Becky Row & Joyce Kenoras](#)

[Chronic Disease Management - Rebecca Sovdi](#)

[Older Adult and Vulnerable People Abuse Recognize, Respond and React - Diana Day](#)

[Yes You Can: Simple Steps to a Longer, Healthier, Happier Life - Dr. Art Hister](#)

[UBC Institute for Aboriginal Health - The Aboriginal Health and Community Administration Program \(AHCAP\) - Kerrie Charnley](#)

[Scratching for Answers...We Have the Solution! - Darlene Miller](#)

[British Columbia's Take Home Naloxone \(THN\) Program: A Year in Review - Dr. Jane Buxton & Ashraf Amlani](#)

[Maternal, Child and Family Health](#)

[Reconciliation Dialogue Workshop - Chief Robert 'Bobby' Joseph and Shelly Joseph](#)

[Bringing Birth Closer to Home: Midwifery in Aboriginal Communities - Lauren Redman, Sharyne Fraser & Marijke de Zwager](#)

[University of Victoria, Centre on Aging: Self-Management Programs in British Columbia - June Clearsky & Rhoda Carrier](#)

[System Change to Promote Health – Through a Tobacco Lens - Geri Grigg, Quitnow](#)

[Bridging the Gap: First Nation Mental Health Liaison Program - Perry Omeasoo](#)

[Harm reduction supplies and services - Sara Young & Denise Thomas](#)

[New Relationships: Initiatives Co-Created by First Nations and Addiction Knowledge Exchange Leaders - Kate Hinter & Diane Smylie](#)

[Adult Persons with a Disability – Health and Mental Health Supports - Tracey Michell, Jay Townsend & Julie Dutt](#)

[Traditional Foods: Setting the Table: Creating Space for Food, Land and Culture to Thrive - Fiona Devereaux](#)

[First Nations Health Information Management: the Mustimuhw cEMR](#)

[Best Practice and Cultural Relevance in HIV and Hepatitis C](#)

[CUSO International: International Volunteers Applying their Skills in BC First Nation communities - Tracey Foster & Marilyn Ota](#)

[Traditional Health Planning and Implementation with Gitwangax First Nation - Ruby Morgan](#)

[Communications Workshop: Developing Powerful Messages](#)

[Integration of Traditional Healing with the Medical System - Dr. Ted Mala](#)

[AIDS & HIV Harm Reduction Youth Panel](#)

[Traditional Medicines - Georgina Hnatiuk](#)

[Collaborative Partnerships to Improve Access to Culturally Appropriate Primary Health Care in the Fraser Region - Leslie Bonshor & Kelowa Edel](#)

[Sanala: To Be Whole - Vera Newman & Barbara Cramner](#)

In closing



The FNHA/FNHC/FNHDA will continue to establish Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey as the premier First Nations health conference in BC and Canada. We look forward to seeing our friends and colleagues again in 2015!

