



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness

# First Nations Health Benefits *Focus on the Future*

**John Mah, VP Health Benefits**

***Gathering Wisdom for a Shared  
Journey, October 22-24, 2013***



# Agenda

- Building the FNHA
- Health Benefits Team
- Focus on the Future
- Priorities for Improvement
- Health Benefits Improvements Committee
- Frequently Asked Questions



## Building the FNHA

### Our Vision

Healthy, self-determining and vibrant, BC First Nations children, families and communities

### Our Values

Respect, Discipline, Relationships, Culture, Excellence & Fairness

### Our Directives

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

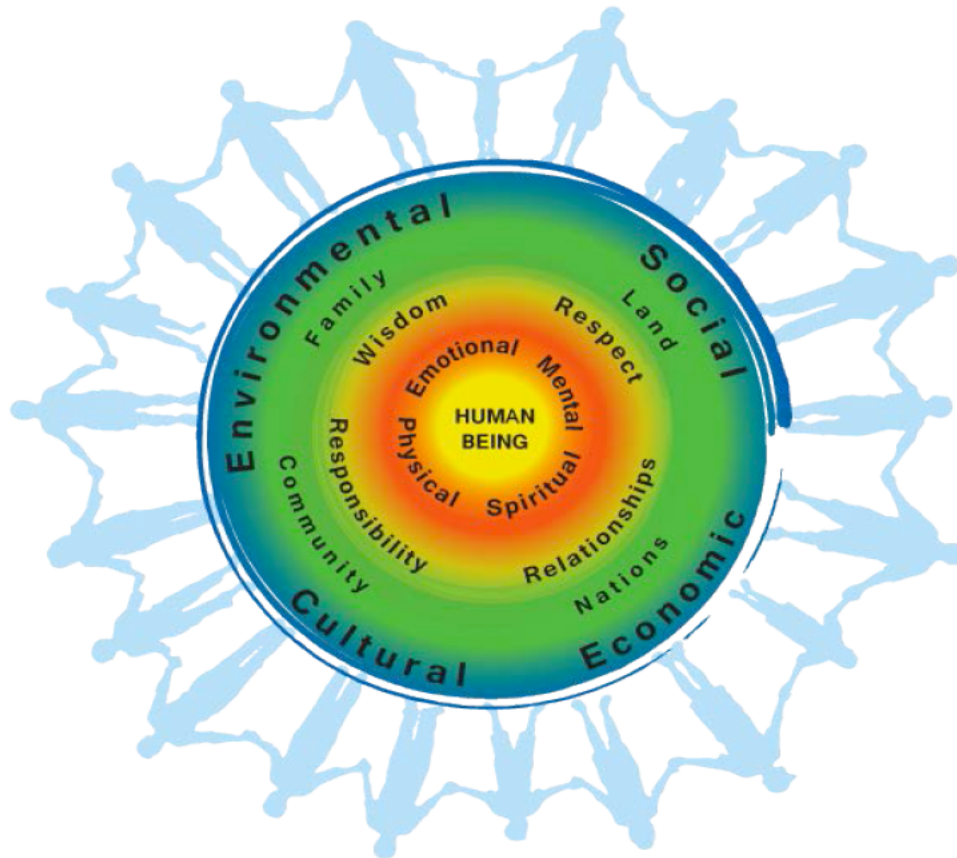


## FNHA Operating Principles

- ❖ **W**ellness philosophy based on First Nations teachings is the perspective through which the FNHA approaches every aspect of its work and carries out its roles as health and wellness champions and partners
- ❖ **E**mphasis on personal best – being the best human being we can be – is how the FNHA approaches its work, partnerships, and those we serve
- ❖ **L**iving it – the FNHA leads by example as a First Nations Health Organization that models wellness
- ❖ **L**isten, learn, and act is the approach through which the FNHA establishes itself as a learning organization – and knowledge transfer will support shared learnings with health partners
- ❖ **N**ever leaving anyone behind, the FNHA works with its partners to ensure health initiatives, programs and services support and are accessible to all First Nations and Aboriginal peoples living in BC
- ❖ **E**xcellence means implementing initiatives, programs and services that brings the best in western medicine together with that of First Nations traditional knowledge and medicine and by examining needs to continuously improve services and approaches and remove barriers
- ❖ **S**ervice delivery and system transformation is driven by First Nations decision-making through engagement to determine desired outcomes, and supported by consensus leadership of the First Nations health governance partners and realized through leveraged collaboration with federal and provincial health systems
- ❖ **S**ustainability, integrity, efficiency and innovation are essential components to the business approach that the FNHA brings to its programs, services and initiatives



# First Nations Perspective of Wellness



- FNHA as a health & wellness partner
- Living the Wellness Model – FNHA as a Champion for health and Wellness
- Commitment to supporting the health and wellness from the youngest to the oldest
- Commitment to our youth (\*46% under 25)
- Leading edge of systemic change by aligning with the Innovation and Change Agenda of the Province of BC



# Health Benefits – Who We Are

## John Mah

Vice President of Health Benefits.

John is:

- from Edmonton
- a licensed pharmacist
- was the Director of NIHB, Alberta Region prior to coming to the FNHA
- worked with Bigstone Cree Nation when they took transfer of their health benefits





# Bigstone Experience





# Bigstone







# Health Benefits – Who We Are



Andrew Chisholm, Director, Program Analysis & Claims Adjudication

- This unit analyzes data on health benefits service delivery and finance to ensure Health Benefits stays “on track” and also works with service providers
- Previously Health Canada Headquarters (Ottawa)



Renée Nyberg, Director, Benefits Management, Policy & Planning

- This unit determines how benefits are provided through the Operations Unit by developing policy and guidelines and planning for the future based on information from the Analysis unit and community/provider input
- Previously Health Canada Headquarters (Ottawa)



Tara Bjornson, Director, Health Benefits Operations Unit

- This unit processes claims, and other related activities, for First Nations people for health benefits and manages contribution agreements with communities
- Previously Health Canada Regional Office (Vancouver)



# Our Health Benefits Team





# Health Benefits – Benefit Areas:

## Pharmacy

- Prescription drugs
- Over-the-counter drugs
- Compounded drugs

## Medical Supplies & Equipment

- Supplies (e.g. wound care)
- Equipment, including Audiology & Respiratory

## Dental

- Dental coverage
- Orthodontic coverage

## Vision

- Eye exams
- Glasses

## Medical Transportation

- Transportation costs to and from medical services

## Crisis Intervention Mental Health

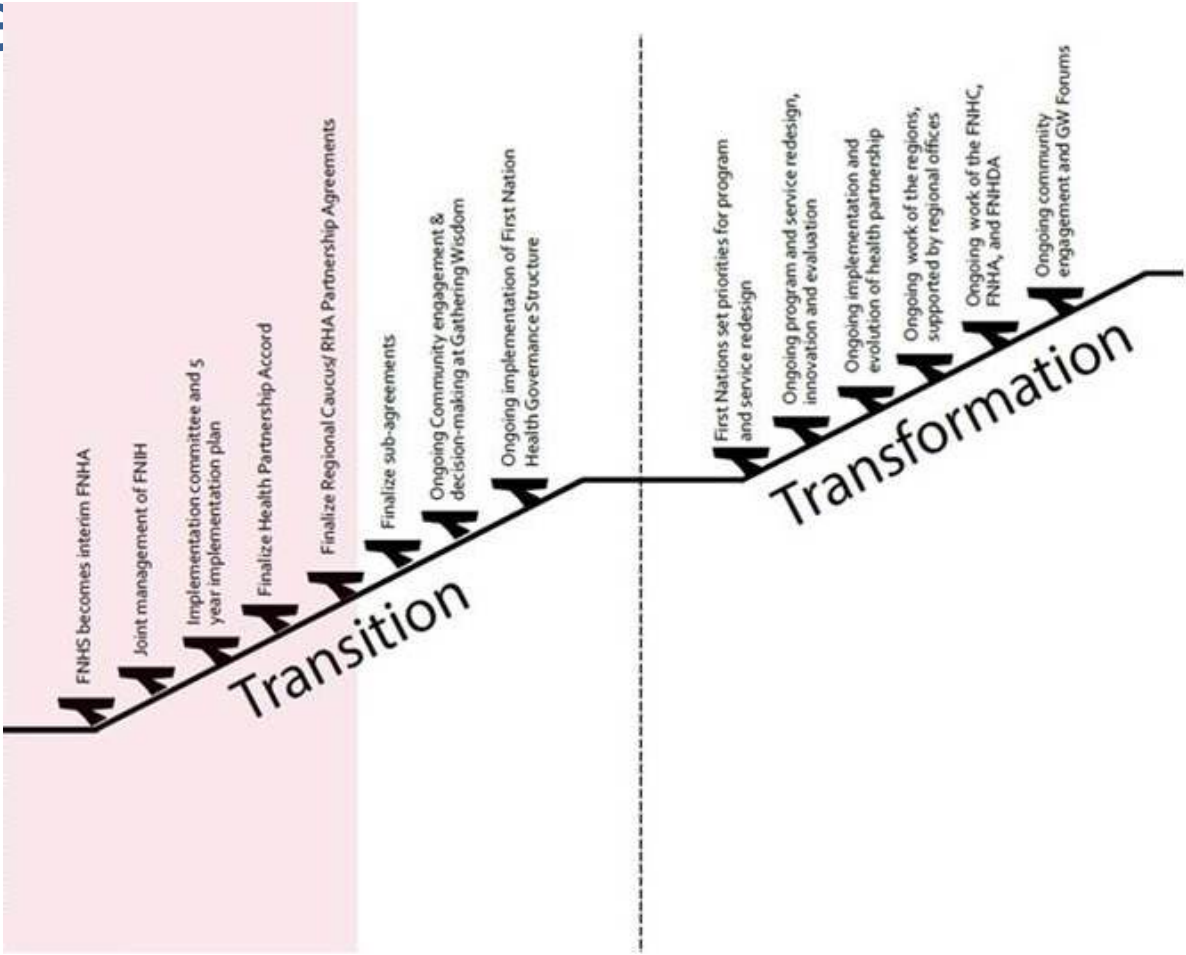
- Counselling and support (Not Indian Residential School program)

## MSP Payments

- BC medical services plan



# FNHA/Health Benefits - Focus on the Future





# Health Benefits – Improvement Priorities

- Foster Meaningful Collaboration and Partnerships
  - New relationships developed with communities and professional associations
- Improve Services
  - Streamlining processes
- Develop Human and Economic Capacity
  - Development of new communication tools to improve community members' knowledge of health benefits
- Community Driven, Nation Based
  - Health Benefits Improvement committee



# Health Benefits Improvements Committee





# HBIC – Workplan Highlights

## Communications

- Develop mechanisms for ongoing communication with communities and providers
- e.g. Learning Circles, E-Blasts, Presentations, etc.

## Navigation

- Training for all FNHA staff to answer HB questions
- Specialized training for FNHA staff who have direct contact with First Nations people

## Asset & Service Mapping

- To inform Health Benefits on what is currently accessible for First Nations in BC
- Better information for making improvements

## Engagement

- Honouring & utilizing past information gathered from communities
- FNHDA Survey & Workbook on Health Benefits/NIHB
- Developing more mechanisms for engagement



## **FNHDA Survey: Health Benefits/NIHB**

- **Purposes:**
  - To gather technical advice from Health Leads in the form of strategic solutions and recommendations
  - To ensure Health Leads share in the development of a strategic vision and in the responsibility of an improved future for Health Benefits
- 116 Health Leads participated from across the province.





## **FNHDA Survey: Preliminary Recommendations**

- **Medical Supplies and Equipment:** Health Canada (now FNHA) purchase supplies that could be loaned creating a depot for recycled and reusable supplies
- **Medical Transportation:** having travelling physicians and nurse practitioners and having a central emergency patient travel clerk who works after hours
- **Pharmacy:** developing a registered mobile pharmacy program



## **FNHDA Survey: Preliminary Recommendations (cont.)**

- **A unified reporting system for all of BC to standardize patient reporting (which would help to meet requirements)**
- **Creation of a new 'card system' (e.g. a FNHA Drug Benefits Card) which would help with the coordination of benefits across all systems**



# Health Benefits Frequently Asked Questions

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How can I confirm that I am eligible for FNHA Benefits?

Any First Nations person (that has a status number) who was considered a resident of BC prior to July 2, 2013 should already be enrolled with the FNHA. Call 1-800-317-7878 to confirm.

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What about my MSP coverage?

MSP coverage has not changed. MSP for status First Nations people residing in BC is covered by FNHA. If you are unsure of your coverage, call 1-800-317-7878.

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Will anything change at my pharmacy or dental office?

Nothing will change at your pharmacy or dental office. Pharmacists and dentists bill for Health Benefits the same way they did when it was NIHB.

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## Health Benefits Frequently Asked Questions cont'd

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Will there be changes to benefits?

There will be no changes to benefits right away. Information from past consultations, along with current consultation with the FNHDA & FNHC, will frame any future changes to benefits.

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Will wait times for services decrease?

Our first goals are to improve wait times and customer service. We are working with staff and our providers to streamline processes. Wait times will decrease in the near future.

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Why do I have to pay up front for some benefits?

Some providers are not registered with Health Canada or FNHA. If they don't register, they cannot bill directly for benefits and must bill the client. This is the provider's choice. We are working on creating a provider registry.

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# Health Benefits Booth at Gathering

## With

**First Nations Health Benefits**  
 formerly "Non-Insured Health Benefits program"  
**Community Driven – Nation-Based**  
*We would like to hear from you!*

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 **Name The Health Benefits "Operations Unit"**

 **We want your feedback to help us improve health benefits for you!**

This unit connects with you and providers to process claims for:

- Dental
- Pharmacy
- Vision
- Crisis Intervention Mental Health
- Medical Transportation
- Medical Supplies & Equipment

Please fill out a ballot with your suggestion for a name and Place in our box or send us an email: [healthbenefits@fnha.ca](mailto:healthbenefits@fnha.ca)

Please honour us by submitting your suggestions or feedback by filling out a form and placing it in the box or send us an email to [healthbenefits@fnha.ca](mailto:healthbenefits@fnha.ca)

We are committed to listening to you to help us improve your Health Benefits in the future.





# Staying Connected

Email: [healthbenefits@fnha.ca](mailto:healthbenefits@fnha.ca)

[www.fnhc.ca](http://www.fnhc.ca)

Sign up for our eBlasts



[www.facebook.com/firstnationshealthauthority](http://www.facebook.com/firstnationshealthauthority)



Twitter @fnhc



# Contacting Health Benefits

## First Nations Health Benefits

*Have your Status card and CareCard ready*

604.666.3331

Toll free: 1.800.317.7878

## Dental

604.666.6600

## In-Person Inquiries

1166 Alberni Street, Room 701

Vancouver, BC V6E 3Z3



# Thank you

<http://www.fnha.ca/about/news-and-events/events/gathering-wisdom-for-a-shared-journey-vi>