

Indigenous Employee Experience Strategy

Weaving an organizational approach

2024 - 2029

Setting the context

A note on terminology

Indigenous Peoples

Interior Health (IH) uses the term ‘Indigenous’ as the collective term to describe the diverse and distinct groups of First Nations, Inuit and Métis. The use of the term ‘Indigenous’ is in response to the need for inclusive and respectful terminology in alignment with the spirit of reconciliation and renewed relationships with First Nations, Inuit and Métis in the Interior region.

Language can have a significant impact and IH recognizes that individuals may not identify with, or agree on, using a collective term. We make every effort to use a distinctions-based approach and support employees in using respectful and appropriate terminology, recognizing and honouring the unique rights, culture, histories, interests, and circumstances of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and groups.

Employees

In the context of this Strategy, the term “employee” refers to all IH employees, residents, students, medical staff, and volunteers.

Content warning

We recognize that some of the content and subject matter within this document may be triggering and cause trauma to readers. Indigenous Peoples may reflect on their own experiences of cultural unsafety and discrimination in the health system. For crisis support in B.C., please contact the 24-hour KUU-US Crisis Line at 1-800-KUU-US-17 (1-800-588-8717) or the Métis Crisis Line at 1-833-MÉTIS-B.C. (1-833-638-4722).

Pulling together

The Indigenous Employee Experience Strategy was drafted in collaboration with IH subject matter experts, IH Indigenous employees, and Indigenous Nation Partners. We lift our hands and give thanks to those throughout the organizations and communities who have supported this integral work to enhance the Indigenous employee experience at IH.



Acknowledgements

Land acknowledgement

IH would like to recognize and acknowledge the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the Dăkelh Dené, Ktunaxa, Nlaka'pamux, Secwépemc, St'át'imc, Syilx, and Tšilhqot'in Nations, where we live, learn, collaborate and work together.

Land acknowledgement is rooted in humility and respect for those whose land we stand upon and guides how we move forward in both conversations and actions. IH is committed to acknowledging the traditional territories where we live, work and play with mindfulness, intention, and reflection. Acknowledgement is an important step IH employees have taken to further our commitment to partnership and reconciliation.

Partnerships

IH recognizes Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC), Métis Peoples, and urban and 'away-from-home' Indigenous Peoples in the Interior region who contribute to the diverse landscape of Indigenous knowing and being.

We offer our sincere gratitude to Indigenous Nation Partners who have contributed to the development of this Strategy through meaningful engagement as we build, repair, and improve relationships with Indigenous Nation Partners.



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Executive summary

To action IH's commitment to reconciliation, the Indigenous Employee Experience Strategy ("Strategy") was developed to address the recommendations in foundational documents such as the *In Plain Sight* Report, weaving external calls for change with internal strategies to build organizational capacity and create a positive employment experience for Indigenous job seekers, candidates, and employees.

The Strategy was driven by meaningful engagement with IH Indigenous employees; Indigenous Nation Partner representation from the Dākelh Dené, Ktunaxa, Nlaka'pamux, Secwépemc, St'át'imc, Syilx, and Tsilhqot'in Nations, MNBC, and urban/away; and subject matter experts at IH. This comprehensive engagement identified opportunities to improve the overall employee experience for Indigenous Peoples.

The Indigenous Employee Experience Strategy supports IH's [Strategic Priorities](#) of "advancing Indigenous health and wellness" and "supporting our people" by empowering portfolios to embed Indigenous perspectives within their policies, programs, and services to improve the Indigenous employee experience. It sets a foundation for change within IH, addressing B.C.'s Health Human Resources (HHR) Strategy [objectives](#), with a focus to "embed reconciliation and cultural safety."

By actioning the Strategy, IH will address gaps and remove barriers to meet the outcomes in IH's 2024-2027 Strategic Plan of "improved health and well-being for Indigenous populations" and "our people feel safe, supported, and valued." The objectives within the Strategy address sixteen recommendations and calls for action in key [foundational documents](#), including:

1. In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care.
2. Truth and Reconciliation Commission Final of Canada: Calls to Action.
3. Reclaiming Power and Place: The Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: Calls for Justice.
4. 2022-2027 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan.

In alignment with these external documents that call for system changes, the B.C. HHR Strategy, the IH 2024-2027 Strategic Plan, and other internal strategies, policies, and plans, the Indigenous Employee Experience Strategy has four overarching objectives:

1. Foster a culturally safe, inclusive environment that is free from racism, discrimination, and biases.
2. Improve access and supports for Indigenous employee health, wellness and engagement.
3. Establish equitable employment practices and address inequities for Indigenous employees.
4. Embed Indigenous perspectives into IH policies, programs, and processes through Indigenous leadership representation.



A message from our President & CEO

Susan Brown

President and CEO

On behalf of the Interior Health (IH) Senior Executive Team, I want to reaffirm our collective commitment to reconciliation. Reconciliation is a journey that requires all of us to listen to the truths being shared, humbly acknowledge our mistakes, commit to change, and take meaningful action. We are and will remain steadfastly dedicated to continuous change at IH.

The 2024-2029 Indigenous Employee Experience Strategy weaves a path to reconciliation for IH and all employees and is aligned with the recommendations from external foundational documents, such as the *In Plain Sight* Report and the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

Driven by the voices and experiences of Indigenous employees and Nation partners, this strategy combines overarching objectives with a tangible plan to improve the employee experience for Indigenous Peoples at IH.

Over the past few years, IH has made progress in this area, such as receiving approval for a Section 42 Special Program under B.C.'s *Human Rights Code* in our hiring process for preferential hiring of qualified Indigenous candidates to non-contract roles, as well as rolling out IH-developed Indigenous-specific Antiracism Education to all employees. When we create a culturally safer environment for Indigenous employees, and foster representation, inclusivity, and equity, we truly start to live out our values.

I call upon everyone to review the Indigenous Employee Experience Strategy and join me in taking meaningful action towards reconciliation with humility and authenticity.

On behalf of the Senior Executive Team, I would like to acknowledge and thank the partners and employees who contributed to this important work.



Landscape

Interior Health

For more than 20 years, IH has been working and partnering for the health and well-being of everyone in the B.C. Interior. By working together with the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions, as well as health organizations, communities and leaders, we cover over 215,000 sq kilometres to deliver services and solutions to [more than 843,500 people](#), with a goal to make a positive difference in the lives of everyone in the region.

Governance and partnerships

On Oct. 13, 2011, the B.C. Tripartite Framework Agreement on First Nation Health Governance was signed by the Tripartite Partners, represented by the First Nations Health Society, First Nations Health Council, Federal Minister of Health, and the B.C. Minister of Health.

The B.C. Provincial Health Authorities are working in partnership with First Nations and MNBC to implement new and innovative health partnerships at regional and provincial levels.

IH has formal partnership agreements with the seven Interior First Nations and MNBC. Partnership committees are the foundation of IH's engagement with Indigenous Nation Partners to bring Nation-identified priorities to the forefront of health-care planning and decision-making. The Partnership Accord Agreement and Partnership Accord Leadership Table bring First Nation executives and IH leadership together to address regional First Nations priorities. The Métis Nation B.C. and IH Leadership Table brings MNBC and IH executives together to support improved health outcomes for Métis people living in the Interior.

Currently, the success indicators of the Interior Partnership Accord and IH's Partnership Agreements with Indigenous Nation Partners and Métis Nation B.C. include an increased number of Indigenous employees working in the Interior Region, and confirmation from these employees that IH offers inclusive and culturally safe work environments.



ReconciliACTION¹

The Indigenous Employee Experience Strategy was developed to encompass the entire employment experience of Indigenous employees, from attraction to retirement. By developing a strategy built on the larger employment experience, it enables broader accountability across IH to embed Indigenous perspectives into strategies, plans, policies, programs, and processes.

Grounded in and guided by key [foundational documents](#), the objectives and actions within the Strategy address the specific recommendations and calls to action related to advancing reconciliation with Indigenous employees.



Foundational document legend

-  In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care
-  Truth and Reconciliation Commission Final of Canada: Calls to Action
-  Reclaiming Power and Place: The Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: Calls for Justice
-  2022-2027 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan

¹In 2015, the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation released the [6 Actions for ReconciliACTION](#). In alignment with these actions, IH is taking meaningful action towards reconciliation.



Guiding principles

These guiding principles were used in the development of this Strategy and inform our continued people-focused approach and commitment to embedding reconciliation at IH.

Accountable

We are accountable to all IH employees, Indigenous Nation Partners, and external governing structures through transparency, open communication, and meaningful engagement.

Collaborative

We build trusting and meaningful relationships within IH and with external partners, sharing ownership and accountability and aligning efforts.

Culturally safe

We commit to addressing Indigenous-specific racism in the workforce and in services. Every person at IH will feel safe to bring their whole self to work, spiritually, emotionally, mentally, and physically. Policies and practices will be culturally safe and culturally relevant by using community-led direction.

Equitable

We will establish equitable policies and procedures to improve employment outcomes for Indigenous employees, which will foster improved health outcomes for Indigenous recipients of care.

Reciprocal

We commit to reciprocal communications and information-sharing with Indigenous employees and Indigenous Nation Partners, honouring their sovereignty and inherent rights as providers of Indigenous Knowledges, to confirm positive impacts of strategic efforts.

Reconciliation

We honour Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous Nation Partners as the experts in reconciliation and cultural safety, and commit to building meaningful relationships as guided by the voices of Nations and Indigenous Peoples.



Objective 1

Foster a culturally safe, inclusive work environment free from racism, discrimination, and biases.

IH recognizes that systemic racism against Indigenous Peoples exists in Canadian society and within the B.C. health-care system. IH acknowledges the legacy of colonization and its negative impact on Indigenous Peoples, including health disparities. We are dedicated to eliminating Indigenous-specific racism and fostering a culturally inclusive workplace that addresses biases, racism, and discrimination.

Educating and empowering employees to question and call out racism and biases will help transform IH. When we establish an environment where all employees feel safe to bring their whole, authentic selves physically, spiritually, emotionally, and mentally to their workplaces, then we truly start to live out our values.

Foundational document alignment


[#22](#) [#23](#) [#92](#)


[#8](#) [#10](#) [#11](#) [#20](#)


[#7.1](#) [#7.2](#) [#7.6](#)


[#3.7](#)

KEY ACTIONS

Improve the access to cultural resources for Indigenous employees by creating programs and spaces to support culturally relevant practices. Address racism, discrimination, and biases through awareness, training, mentorship, policies, and practices. Increase accountability for individuals perpetrating racism and create a framework for organizational accountability.

1. Embed Indigenous cultural resources within IH.

- 1.1 Support Indigenous employees in accessing traditional Indigenous medicines and ways of healing during work hours.
- 1.2 Allocate gathering areas for culturally safe and sacred practices.

2. Implement job-ready and mandatory Indigenous-specific anti-racism and cultural safety education.

- 2.1 Develop and implement revised leadership and employee annual training requirements for cultural safety and Indigenous-specific anti-racism.
- 2.2 Create opportunities to practice *speaking up* against racism and discrimination.
- 2.3 Create opportunities and partnership to support mentorship and cultural training and learning opportunities for IH employees.



3. Improve individual accountability in fighting racism.

- 3.1 Expand recognition programs to include champions for cultural safety and speak-up culture.
- 3.2 Enable accountability through performance improvement plans for individuals who perpetrate racism and create unsafe work environments.

4. Increase organizational accountability to a safe work environment.

- 4.1 Evaluate policies for revision and education opportunities.
- 4.2 Link cultural safety, inclusion, and anti-racism in the workplace to individual annual performance goals.

5. Strengthen Indigenous-specific racism reporting and response mechanisms.

- 5.1 Assess current investigation and resolution pathways to track and report on Indigenous-specific racism and cultural safety complaints and resolutions.
- 5.2 Provide culturally safe response, investigation, and mediation options for employees.



Objective 2

Improve access and supports for Indigenous employee health, wellness, and engagement.

Employee health, wellness and engagement are important for individual satisfaction and psychological health, and lead to positive outcomes for communities and our staff. By supporting Indigenous employees in their physical, spiritual, emotional, and mental health through meaningful engagement, we will improve the long-term retention and employment experience of Indigenous staff.

Foundational document alignment



[#23](#) [#92](#)



[#14](#)



[#7.1](#) [#7.2](#) [#7.7](#) [#7.8](#)



[#3.2](#) [#3.7](#) [#4.9](#)

KEY ACTIONS

Address barriers and gaps in IH culturally safe health and wellness access, resources, and programs. Create opportunities for inclusive engagement through peer networks, recognition, and mentorship. Improve communication and transparency by establishing new feedback mechanisms and continuing to build and improve continuous listening at IH.

1. Expand Indigenous health and wellness supports in the workplace.

- 1.1 Support the continuous improvement, promotion, and navigation of internal and external resources for employees, to enable their access to traditional mental health and wellness supports.

2. Foster positive Indigenous employee engagement and inclusivity.

- 2.1 Create an Indigenous peer network for Indigenous employees to forge connections through in-person gatherings, on-the-land teachings, and virtual connections.
- 2.2 Incorporate traditional gifts and ceremonies in employee recognition efforts.
- 2.3 Develop an Indigenous employee orientation and onboarding pathways for new employees and newly promoted Indigenous employees.

3. Continue to build and improve continuous listening through formal and informal feedback mechanisms.

- 3.1 Establish internal feedback mechanisms to promote conversations across IH between Indigenous employees and all levels of leadership.
- 3.2 Develop feedback mechanisms for Indigenous candidates and job seekers.
- 3.3 Improve Indigenous data collection, tracking, analysis, and governance for Indigenous employee demographic, hiring and retention trends.



Objective 3

Establish equitable employment practices and address inequities for Indigenous employees.

Indigenous Peoples are underrepresented in the health-care system and have historically experienced barriers to accessing health-care services. Evidence supports that health-care systems and patient outcomes benefit when care providers have a cultural understanding and reflect the diversity of the population.

IH is committed to equitable employment practices for Indigenous job seekers and employees by incorporating Indigenous perspectives into policies, programs, and processes. Enhancing current and establishing new equitable practices supports the attraction and long-term employment of Indigenous Peoples, and a diverse and fair workforce.

Foundational document alignment



[#23](#) [#92](#)



[#14](#)



[#7.1](#) [#7.2](#) [#7.7](#) [#7.8](#)



[#3.2](#) [#3.7](#) [#4.9](#)

KEY ACTIONS

Review existing practices to identify inequities, gaps, and barriers that impact the recruitment of Indigenous Peoples. Develop education, tools, and resources to create streamlined, equitable recruitment processes. Collaborate with Indigenous organizations and Nation Partners to develop formal and informal recruitment and learning initiatives.

1. Expand recruitment, education and training supports for Indigenous Peoples.

- 1.1 Assess opportunities to expand the Health Career Access Program (HCAP)'s application, admission, funding, and positions for Indigenous Peoples.
- 1.2 Enable Indigenous Employment Advisors to educate Indigenous job seekers and employees in non-contract compensation processes and outcomes.
- 1.3 Develop an effective career marketing and recruitment plan with engagement from Indigenous Nation Partners, communities and Health Service Organizations.

2. Implement equitable hiring practices across IH.

- 2.1 Establish an IH-wide diversity, equity, and inclusion framework.
- 2.2 Review opportunities to address gaps to inclusive and equitable hiring practices, including implementation of an equitable hiring policy and corresponding education for managers and recruiters.
- 2.3 Develop opportunities for Indigenous employees and community partners to participate as panelists in Indigenous-specific position interviews.



Objective 4

Embed Indigenous perspectives into policies, programs, and processes through Indigenous leadership representation.

A leadership team representative of the Interior Indigenous population and of Indigenous employees is crucial to enable accountability and inclusivity in the workplace. IH seeks to create a work environment where Indigenous employees feel accepted, supported, and have opportunities for career development and advancement.

In the spirit of reconciliation, IH will establish new and enhanced initiatives to develop and empower Indigenous employees to assume leadership roles in IH to drive system changes.

“It’s really important for us at the leadership table to be who we are – no one knows us like we know ourselves.”

- Addie Pryce, Vice President, Indigenous Partnerships

Reconciliation alignment



#23 #92



#14



#7.7 #7.8



#3.2 #3.7 #4.9

KEY ACTIONS

Achieve a consistently equitable representation of Indigenous leaders across IH, in all portfolios and departments. Support Indigenous employees to gain leadership roles by establishing leadership pathways, Indigenous-specific roles, career development support, and equitable practices. Strategize and collaborate with Indigenous Nation Partners for professional development and career progression pathways for Indigenous community members.

1. **Enable equitable Indigenous leadership representation, relative to the Indigenous employee workforce.**
 - 1.1 Identify opportunities for Indigenous-specific leadership positions to supervise and support Indigenous frontline roles.
 - 1.2 Identify opportunities for Indigenous-specific leadership positions to support systemic and structural changes throughout all levels at IH.
2. **Develop Indigenous leadership pathways through designated initiatives.**
 - 2.1 Create an Indigenous talent management stream for Indigenous employees with mentorship, succession planning, and education pathways to enable promotion readiness.



3. Enable community-based recruitment of leaders.

- 3.1 Highlight leadership opportunities for Indigenous Peoples at community career fairs, events, and road shows.
- 3.2 Empower Indigenous Recruitment functions to strengthen community-based employment readiness initiatives to support Indigenous community members to meet requirements for leadership roles at IH.



Outcomes

By actioning the Indigenous Employee Experience Strategy, we anticipate seeing the following five-year outcomes:

Indigenous employees feel culturally safe in the workplace.

Indigenous employees feel that IH is a culturally safe place to work and feel culturally well and supported in accessing traditional medicines and practices. IH receives accreditation with the B.C. Cultural Safety and Humility Standard.

Speaking up is a safe, relational process with individual and organizational accountability.

Instances of cultural unsafety and Indigenous-specific racism are immediately and effectively addressed using a variety of investigation and resolution pathways, with accountability for perpetrators of racism through performance management.

Indigenous employees feel they can bring their whole, authentic selves to work.

Indigenous employees have access to culturally relevant and safe health and wellness supports in the workplace, acknowledging Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Indigenous employees feel included and engaged and feel empowered to bring their whole, authentic selves to work, spiritually, emotionally, intellectually, and physically.

Improved employment equity for Indigenous Peoples.

Indigenous job seekers and employees feel they have equitable access to employment and career development opportunities at IH.

Improved relationships with Indigenous Nation Partners.

Indigenous Nation Partners determine their involvement in hiring, education and training, and engagement with IH through respectful, open, and reciprocal relationships.

Equitable Indigenous leadership representation at IH.

IH has an equitable representation of Indigenous leaders relative to the Indigenous employee population, with Indigenous-specific leadership roles filled by Indigenous employees.



Strategic Implementation Overview

IH is committed to upholding commitments and implementing actions identified within the Indigenous Employee Experience Strategy over the upcoming five years through the development of a multi-year tactical plan. In the spirit of reconciliation, IH will demonstrate reciprocity with Indigenous employees and Indigenous Nation Partners through meaningful engagement, transparent communication, and the continuous sharing of knowledge.

Accountability

While IH maintains accountability for actioning this Strategy and implementing the objectives, assessment of these efforts and the impact can only be determined by Indigenous employees and communities. Reconciliation is grounded in meaningful relationships, and IH recognizes we must maintain collaboration and follow the guidance of Indigenous Nation Partners and Indigenous employees.

Feedback mechanisms

To confirm the Strategy outcomes are progressing over the five-year lifespan, we will implement regular internal feedback mechanisms, including Indigenous employee feedback forms, sharing circles and exit and stay feedback mechanisms in addition to existing reports, such as Indigenous employee data reports.

IH will empower meaningful relationships and reciprocity with Indigenous Nation Partners, including Interior Region First Nations, MNBC, Métis Chartered Communities, urban Indigenous organizations, and governing bodies through regular engagement and feedback mechanisms to confirm the success indicators of the Partnership Agreements and the IH Strategic Priority of “improved health and well-being for Indigenous populations” are being met.

Reporting

IH will create transparency and accountability by sharing information and progress in a meaningful way. Reporting on implementation will be shared broadly with all IH staff and to Indigenous Nation Partners through Indigenous governing structures, including the Partnership Accord Technical Table, Partnership Accord Leadership Table, All Nations Health Caucus, and the Métis Nation-IH Leadership Table.



Conclusion

Recognizing the diverse experiences of Indigenous Peoples in the health-care system, as both employees and recipients of care, IH will work diligently to improve the employment experience of Indigenous employees. We acknowledge the current and historical challenges as a colonial health-care system and continue on a journey of reconciliation to address gaps and remove barriers as we work collectively to cultivate a culturally safe and inclusive work environment for Indigenous Peoples in the Interior region.

We honour the voices that have given life to this Strategy through meaningful engagement, and we acknowledge the voices that informed the calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls*, and *In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care*.

It will take dedicated action, humility, and accountability to create transformative change within IH and the broader health-care system. When we work collectively and build on our cumulative strengths, knowledge, and experience, we will establish a future where employees feel safe, valued, and supported, and improve the health and well-being for Indigenous populations.

Reconciliation is an ongoing journey, and we will continue to grow as an organization to meaningfully increase Indigenous representation in the workforce, create a culturally safe and inclusive work environment, and support the development of Indigenous leaders within IH.

By achieving the outcomes of this Strategy, we will honour our commitment to reconciliation as we build, repair, and improve relationships with Indigenous Peoples, Partners, and communities in the Interior Region. Each staff member has a personal role to play in advancing the Strategy, and we look forward to working with you to weave an organizational approach to a positive employment experience.



Appendix A: Foundational documents

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action

To address the legacy of residential schools and advance reconciliation, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) called on the government to address the 94 calls to action identified in its final report. Federal and provincial governments committed to implementing the calls to action and establishing a renewed relationship with Indigenous Peoples based on recognition of rights, respect, and partnership.

Call to Action #22

We call upon those who can effect change within the Canadian health-care system to recognize the value of Indigenous healing practices and use them in the treatment of Indigenous patients in collaboration with Indigenous healers and Elders where requested by Indigenous patients.

Call to Action #23

We call upon all levels of government to:

- i. Increase the number of Indigenous professionals working in the health-care field.
- ii. Ensure the retention of Indigenous health-care providers in Indigenous communities.
- iii. Provide cultural competency training for all health-care professionals.

Call to Action #92

We call upon the corporate sector in Canada to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous Peoples and their lands and resources. This would include, but not be limited to, the following:

- i. Commit to meaningful consultation, building respectful relationships, and obtaining the free, prior, and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples before proceeding with economic development projects.
- ii. Ensure that Indigenous Peoples have equitable access to jobs, training, and education opportunities in the corporate sector, and that Indigenous communities gain long-term sustainable benefits from economic development projects.
- iii. Provide education for management and staff on the history of Indigenous Peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Indigenous rights, Indigenous law, and Indigenous–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.



In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care (In Plain Sight)

In June 2020, the B.C. Minister of Health appointed a team to investigate Indigenous-specific racism in the provincial health-care system. Widespread, systematic racism against Indigenous Peoples was confirmed through thousands of voices heard in surveys, interviews, and submissions from Indigenous Peoples and health-care practitioners and leaders. The findings describe a significant problem of Indigenous-specific racism which has considerable impacts on Indigenous patients, communities, and health-care workers.

The review is detailed in a final report: *In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care*. The report outlines 24 recommendations for B.C. health authorities to advance an integrated and comprehensive change approach by addressing actions, systems, behaviours and beliefs.



Recommendation #8

That all health policymakers, health authorities, health regulatory bodies, health organizations, health facilities, patient care quality review boards and health education programs in B.C. adopt an accreditation standard for achieving Indigenous cultural safety through cultural humility and eliminating Indigenous-specific racism that has been developed in collaboration and cooperation with Indigenous Peoples.



Recommendation #10

That design of hospital facilities in B.C. include partnership with local Indigenous Peoples and the Nations on whose territories these facilities are located, so that health authorities create culturally appropriate, dedicated physical spaces in health facilities for ceremony and cultural protocol, and visibly include Indigenous artwork, signage, and territorial acknowledgement throughout these facilities.



Recommendation #11

That the B.C. government continue efforts to strengthen employee “speak-up” culture throughout the entire health care system so employees can identify and disclose information relating to Indigenous-specific racism or any other matter, by applying the Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA) to employees throughout the health care sector without further delay.



Recommendation #14

That the B.C. government, PHSA, the five regional health authorities, B.C. colleges and universities with health programs, health regulators, and all health service organizations, providers and facilities recruit Indigenous individuals to senior positions to oversee and promote needed system change.



Recommendation #20

That a refreshed approach to anti-racism, cultural humility and trauma-informed training for health workers be developed and implemented, including standardized learning



expectations for health workers at all levels, and mandatory, low-barrier components. This approach, co-developed with First Nations governing bodies and representative organizations, MNBC, health authorities and appropriate educational institutions, to absorb existing San'yas Indigenous Cultural Safety training.

National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Final Report: Calls for Justice

The National Inquiry's final report reveals that persistent and deliberate human and Indigenous rights violations and abuses are the root cause behind Canada's staggering rates of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, and asexual (2SLGBTQIA+) people. The two-volume report calls for transformative legal and social changes to resolve the crisis that has devastated Indigenous communities across the country.

Colonial violence directed toward cultural practice, family, and community creates conditions that increase the likelihood of other forms of violence, including interpersonal violence, through its distinct impacts on the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health of Indigenous Peoples.

As a health organization, IH must address the challenges experienced by Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people in accessing safe, accessible, and equitable health-care services to support their overall health and well-being.

Call for Justice #7.1

We call upon all governments and health service providers to recognize that Indigenous Peoples – First Nations, Inuit, and Métis, including 2SLGBTQIA people – are the experts in caring for and healing themselves, and that health and wellness services are most effective when they are designed and delivered by the Indigenous Peoples they are supposed to serve, in a manner consistent with and grounded in the practices, world views, cultures, languages, and values of the diverse Inuit, Métis, and First Nations communities they serve.

Call for Justice #7.2

We call upon all governments and health service providers to ensure that health and wellness services for Indigenous Peoples include supports for healing from all forms of unresolved trauma, including intergenerational, multigenerational, and complex trauma. Health and wellness programs addressing trauma should be Indigenous-led, or in partnership with Indigenous communities, and should not be limited in time or approaches.

Call for Justice #7.6

We call upon institutions and health service providers to ensure that all persons involved in the provision of health services to Indigenous Peoples receive ongoing training, education, and awareness in areas including, but not limited to:

- i. the history of colonialism in the oppression and genocide of Inuit, Métis, and First Nations Peoples;



- ii. anti-bias and anti-racism;
- iii. local language and culture; and
- iv. local health and healing practices.

Call for Justice #7.7

We call upon all governments, educational institutions, and health and wellness professional bodies to encourage, support, and equitably fund Indigenous Peoples to train and work in the area of health and wellness.

Call for Justice #7.8

We call upon all governments and health service providers to create effective and well-funded opportunities, and to provide socio-economic incentives, to encourage Indigenous Peoples to work within the health and wellness field and within their communities. This includes taking positive action to recruit, hire, train, and retain long-term staff and local Indigenous community members for health and wellness services offered in all Indigenous communities.

B.C. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan

In a landmark commitment to uphold the inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)* was ratified by the UN General Assembly in 2007. Canada became a signatory in 2016 and made a national commitment to implement the 46 articles in *UNDRIP*, including rights to health care.

In Nov. 2019, the [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act \(DRIPA\)](#) was passed by the B.C. Legislative Assembly and became the first jurisdiction in Canada to enshrine *UNDRIP* into law. As such, all B.C. health authorities including IH, are accountable for developing and implementing policies, programs and practices which promote and advance the articles and directives in *DRIPA* and as outlined in the B.C. *DRIPA* Action Plan.

Action #3.2

Establish an operational approach to set and achieve targets for equitable recruitment and retention of Indigenous Peoples across the public sector, including at senior levels.

Action #3.7

Implement recommendations made in the *In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care* report, striving to establish a health-care system in B.C. that is culturally safe and free of Indigenous-specific racism.

Action #4.9

As a part of the implementation of the *Accessible British Columbia Act*, support the identification, prevention, and removal of barriers for Indigenous Persons with disabilities. This includes ensuring that the development of accessibility standards considers the rights recognized and affirmed by the UN Declaration.



Appendix B: Resources

In scanning the environment, we identified foundational and legislative documents and IH strategies, plans, roadmaps, frameworks, and policies to pull and weave together to create the Indigenous Employee Experience Strategy.

External resources

- [In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care](#)
- [Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: Calls for Justice](#)
- [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action](#)
- [2022-2027 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan](#)

Internal resources

- [IH Indigenous Health and Wellness Strategy](#)
- [IH Aboriginal Mental Wellness Plan](#)
- [IH Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan](#)
- [IH Employee Retention Strategy](#)
- [IH Policy AV3000](#): Psychological health and safety in the workplace
- [IH Policy AD0100](#): Welcome and acknowledgement of First Nation traditional territory
- [IH Policy AD0200](#): Aboriginal cultural safety & humility
- [IH Policy AU2200](#): Anti-racism

