

INDIGENOUS CULTURAL SAFETY:

An environmental scan of cultural safety initiatives in Canada - Chapter 5: Cultural safety initiatives in Saskatchewan

National Collaborating Centre
for Indigenous Health



Centre de collaboration nationale
de la santé autochtone

CULTURAL SAFETY AND RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS

© 2024 National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health (NCCIH). This publication was funded by the NCCIH and made possible through a financial contribution from the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), Health Canada, and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC). The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of PHAC, Health Canada, or the ISC.

Acknowledgements

The NCCIH uses an external blind review process for documents that are research based, involve literature reviews or knowledge synthesis, or undertake an assessment of knowledge gaps. We would like to acknowledge our reviewers for their generous contributions of time and expertise to this manuscript. Made possible in part with funding from Health Canada and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC).

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Citation: National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health. (2024). Chapter 5: Cultural safety initiatives in Saskatchewan. In *Indigenous cultural safety: An environmental scan of cultural safety initiatives in Canada*.

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ISBN (print): 978-1-77368-420-8
ISBN (online): 978-1-77368-421-5

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INTRODUCTION



The focus of this chapter is on cultural safety initiatives in Saskatchewan that have been identified as part of the wider environmental scan. In keeping with the change model proposed by Greenwood (2019), this includes structural-level actions, such as legislation, tripartite and bi-lateral partnership agreements, as well as policy initiatives aimed at promoting cultural safety, humility, and anti-racism in health service delivery through, for example, advancements in Indigenous self-determination over health care planning, design, and delivery. System-level responses by national Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations with a health mandate are also considered, and include strategic action plans, position statements, professional competencies, and practice standards and guidelines. The final sections provide an overview of cultural safety educational resources and training initiatives developed by Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations and governmental departments.

A note to the reader: In 2017, the federal government replaced Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) with two new departments, Indigenous Services Canada and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, to reflect its commitment to reconciliation.

LEGISLATION

Non identified.





PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

Tripartite¹ partnerships

Canada, Saskatchewan, and Federation of Sovereign Indian Nations (FSIN)

Letter of Commitment on Mental Health and Wellness Supports for Indigenous Youth, 2020

On September 23, 2020, ISC, the Saskatchewan Rural and Remote Health Ministry, and the FSIN announced a letter of commitment to work collaboratively to address the crisis of suicide among First Nations peoples in Saskatchewan, particularly children and youth, through culturally appropriate wellness supports and interventions (Government of Saskatchewan, 2020a). The work is to be informed by the FSIN *Suicide Prevention Strategy*, Saskatchewan's *Pillars of Life Suicide Prevention Plan*, and the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework.

Memorandum of Understanding on First Nations Health and Well-being in Saskatchewan, 2008

This MOU, involving the FSIN and the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan, establishes a formal partnership aimed at:

1. addressing health disparities between First Nations and other Saskatchewan residents;
2. improving the coordination of health and wellness programs for First Nations;

3. improving the recruitment, retention, and participation of First Nations in the health system;
4. establishing and defining a collaborative and coordinated tripartite partnership for improving the health of First Nations; and
5. establishing a planning process to develop a 10-year First Nations health and wellness plan.

https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/hc-sc/migration/hc-sc/fniah-spnia/alt_formats/fnihb-dgspni/pdf/pubs/services/2008-sask-mou-pde-eng.pdf

Bilateral² partnerships

Canada and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations

Memorandum of Agreement between Her Majesty in the Right of Canada and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, 2008

This Agreement renewed the operation of the Office of the Treaty Commissioner and continued work of the Treaty Table in accordance with the principles and provisions contained in the Agreement. The Office of the Treaty Commissioner works with the Treaty Table to resolve issues that affect the treaty relationship in priority areas, including health, education, and child welfare.

http://www.otc.ca/public/uploads/resource_photo/2008_MOA.pdf

¹ For the purposes of this report, tripartite activities are defined as involving any number of entities from both the federal and provincial/territorial governments plus any number of entities from Indigenous organizations or the health sector.

² For the purposes of this report, bilateral activities are defined as involving any number of entities from either the federal and provincial/territorial governments (but not both), plus any number of entities from Indigenous organizations or the health sector.

Other partnerships

Saskatchewan Health Authority and
All Nations Healing Hospital

Memorandum of Understanding to establish a partnership between SHA and the All Nations Healing Hospital, 2018

This agreement formalizes the relationship between the SHA and All Nations Healing Hospital and commits them to working together to identify common priorities and improve the health status of First Nations. The approach taken is intended to be a collaborative one that respects traditional medicine and healing practices as well as western medicine (SHA, 2018a).

Saskatchewan Health Authority and
La Loche First Nation

Memorandum of Understanding to Improve Health Outcomes in La Loche, 2019

This MOU commits the SHA to working with La Loche First Nation to develop a community-based approach to health services delivery (SHA, 2019a).

Saskatchewan Health Authority and
Meadow Lake Tribal Council

Memorandum of Understanding to Achieve Better Health Outcomes for Residents of Northwest Saskatchewan with Meadow Lake Tribal Council, 2019

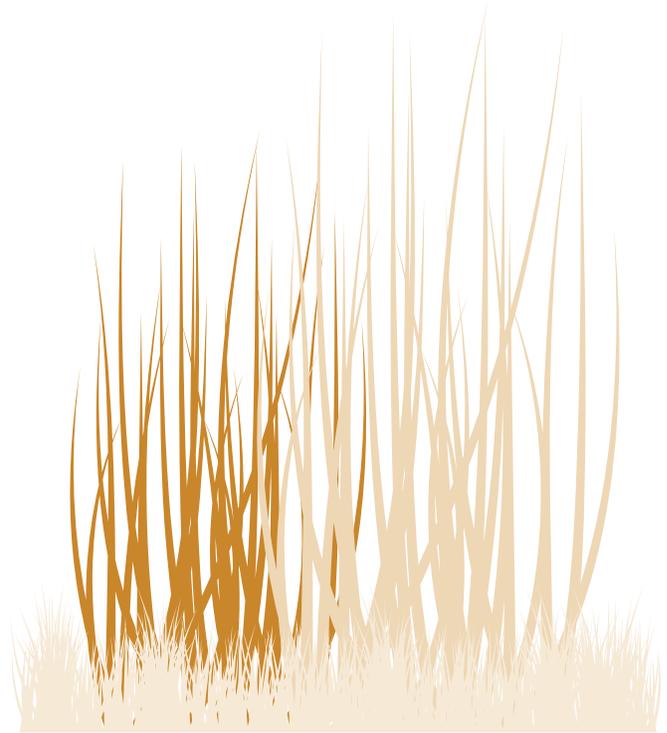
This MOU establishes a framework for the SHA and Meadow Lake Tribal Council to work collaboratively to maximize efforts to improve the health of First Nations people through diverse and targeted initiatives that include health promotion, tracking the determinants of health, and supporting efforts to access funds for new programs, services, and research (Brown, 2019).

Saskatchewan Health Authority and
Métis Nation – Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan Health Authority and Métis Nation-Saskatchewan: Memorandum of Understanding: Working toward a Healthier Population, 2018

This MOU formalizes the relationship between the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan and the SHA with respect to improving patient care for Métis people. The MOU sets out standards for achieving the mandate of each partner. It commits the partners to work together on health-related issues, partner on projects to improve the level of integration and adaptation of the health delivery system, and track progress through data collection and share this information with the public.

<https://metisnation.sk.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/MOU-Saskatchewan-Health-Authority-2018.07.pdf>



POLICY & PROGRAM RESPONSES



Tripartite policy responses

Canada, Saskatchewan, and Athabasca region First Nations

Athabasca Health Authority, 1999

Established in 1999, the Athabasca Health Authority is a partnership between federal and provincial governments and First Nations that aimed to enhance health services for northern residents by improving the integration and coordination of provincial, First Nations, and federal services (Government of Saskatchewan, 1999). The agreement included plans to construct a new federal/provincial funded health centre on Black Lake First Nation land, bringing services closer to most of the population on the region. Services are jointly administered by Athabasca First Nations bands and provincial communities in the Athabasca region, and are culturally appropriate (Athabasca Health Authority, 2021).

<https://www.athabascahealth.ca/>

Canada, Saskatchewan, FSIN, and First Nations Child & Family Services Agencies

Tripartite Working Group on Reforming Indigenous Child and Family Services, 2018

As part of six commitments made by the Government of Canada that came out of an emergency meeting on Child and Family Services held in January 2018, a tripartite working group was

established, consisting of representatives from the federal and provincial governments, the FSIN, and First Nations Child and Family Services Agencies, to work on reforming Indigenous child and family services in Saskatchewan (ISC, 2020).

Canada, Saskatchewan, and Saskatchewan First Nations

Cultural Responsiveness Framework, n.d.

In 2008, a MOU was signed between the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan First Nations with the aim to improve First Nations health status and eliminate health disparities between First Nations and non-First Nations in the province. A Project Advisory Team was established to develop this Cultural Responsiveness Framework, which is intended to inform and promote dialogue on First Nations health, health care, and the importance of culture in health and well-being of First Nations, as well as initiate actions that result in improvements in health services delivery.

<https://www.saskhealthauthority.ca/sites/default/files/2021-06/FSIN-cultural-responsiveness-framework.pdf>



Provincial responses

Government of Saskatchewan

Pillars of Life: The Saskatchewan Suicide Prevention Plan, 2020

The *Pillars of Life Suicide Prevention Plan* was informed by the FSIN's (2018) *Saskatchewan First Nations Suicide Prevention Strategy, the 10 Year Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan for Saskatchewan* (Government of Saskatchewan, 2014), as well as recommendations from the Advocate for Children and Youth's (2017) special report, "Shhh... Listen!! We Have Something to Say! Youth voices from the North." The strategy recognizes the need for community-driven solutions that take into account local history, economics and social factors of Indigenous people.

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/health-care-administration-and-provider-resources/saskatchewan-health-initiatives/suicide-prevention-plan>

Prince Albert Victoria Hospital Expansion Project, 2020

On March 6, the Government of Saskatchewan announced that it would be expanding and renovating the Prince Albert Victoria Hospital, increasing the number of beds by 40%. Extensive engagement is being undertaken with the 12 First Nations of the Prince Albert Grand Council to ensure the new space is comfortable, culturally inviting, and responsive to the needs of their communities (Government of Saskatchewan, 2020a).

Patient First Review, 2015

In 2009, the Government of Saskatchewan undertook a review of how patients experience the health system, how health services are delivered, and how the system is administered.

A report outlining progress made on recommendations was released in 2015. This includes progress achieved on: reducing wait times for patients, redirecting cost savings to front line services, expanding services for patients, increasing patient choice, improving the quality of facilities, and improving services for rural and remote residents and those of First Nations and Métis ancestry.

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/health-care-administration-and-provider-resources/saskatchewan-health-initiatives/patient-first-review>

Premier's statement on the Truth and Reconciliation Report, 2015

On June 5, 2015, the premier released a statement on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan, outlining its commitment to act on the 2015 recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) Commission.

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/news-and-media/2015/june/05/commission-report>

Progress on this commitment is presented on the Government's *Moving forward with the Truth and Reconciliation* website. This information is organized by three themes:

1. ongoing work with First Nations and Métis people;
2. First Nations and Saskatchewan's Plan for Growth; and
3. inter-ministry strategies to support reconciliation.

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/first-nations-citizens/moving-forward-with-the-truth-and-reconciliation-commission>

Working Together for Change: A 10 Year Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan for Saskatchewan, 2014

This action plan is a culmination of extensive public consultations from nearly 4000 people, including First Nations and Métis participants, who emphasized the need for community-informed and community-driven initiatives. The action plan is grounded in a set of key principles, including person-centred care, high quality accessible and equitable services, cultural responsiveness, patient choice, coordinated services, sustainable resources, accountability, integration of prevention and intervention components, and evidence-based innovation and evaluation. It identifies partnering with First Nations and Métis peoples as a system goal and outlines key actions for delivering mental health and addictions services that meet the needs of their communities.

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/health-care-administration-and-provider-resources/saskatchewan-health-initiatives/mental-health-and-addictions-action-plan>

- Updates on progress achieved on system goals and objectives related to the *10-Year Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan* have been provided in four newsletters over the period 2017-2019. <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/health-care-administration-and-provider-resources/saskatchewan-health-initiatives/mental-health-and-addictions-action-plan>

Office of Disabilities Issues

People before Systems: Transforming the Experience of Disability in Saskatchewan – The Saskatchewan Disability Strategy, 2015

This document outlines the provincial government's priorities and actions to improve the lives of people experiencing disability. The strategy includes numerous starting and future direction actions related to cultural safety and humility for First Nations people, including: providing information on culturally responsive and accessible disability programs and services; supporting culturally respectful disability programs and services for Indigenous people experiencing disability; working together to improve access to provincial disability programs and services for First Nations people experiencing disability; and building capacity and infrastructure to support the delivery of disability programs and services to First Nations people experiencing disability on-reserve.

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/family-and-social-support/people-with-disabilities/saskatchewan-disability-strategy>



Health system responses

Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA)

Governance Charter, 2020

The SHA Governance Charter builds on the document, “Ministry of Health and Saskatchewan Health Authority roles and responsibilities in a restructured health system” by detailing the roles and responsibilities, functions, and structures of the SHA. The Charter commits SHA Board of Directors members to “providing physical, psychological, social, cultural, and environmental safety”, with the objective of advancing “a culture of safety and continuous improvement that provides patient and family centred care and services” (SHA, 2020a, p. 5).

<https://www.saskhealthauthority.ca/sites/default/files/2022-12/2022-03-02-SHA-Governance-Charter.pdf>

Traditional Pathways Program, 2020

Responding to one of eight health related TRC’s Calls to Action to recognize the value of Indigenous healing practices and use them in treating Indigenous patients, in January 2020 the SHA announced the implementation of a Traditional Pathways pilot program at Grey Wolf Lodge in the Regina area. The program is offered through its FNMH portfolio and provides information to patients who wish to access traditional medicine ways and connect them to a Medicine Person for support and service (CKOM News, 2020). This pilot program will serve as a guide to longer-term efforts to offer traditional healing in other parts of the province.

Unity Framework, 2020

Funded by the federal government as part of its initiative to build a more inclusive Canada, this project focuses on the development of a unity framework and strategy to address systemic racism against First Nations and Métis people within the SHA (Canadian Heritage, 2020). The Unity Framework is modeled on Indigenous Life Circle Teachings and based on a vision that “calls for healthy relationships and true interconnectedness between all people, where everyone is working for the betterment of the whole” (SHA, 2021b, n.p.).

<https://www.saskhealthauthority.ca/your-health/conditions-diseases-services/indigenous-health>

Healthy People, Healthy Saskatchewan, Health System Strategic Plan, 2019-2020

This strategic plan summarizes the SHA’s goals and strategies for achieving their vision of a *Healthy People, Healthy Saskatchewan*. The strategy is underpinned by the core values and commitment to a philosophy of patient- and family-centred care (SHA, 2019b).

<https://www.saskhealthauthority.ca/our-organization/our-direction/mission-vision-values>

As part of its legislated requirement and commitment to transparency, accountability, and public report of performance, the SHA has released annual reports on activities and results related to achieving the provincial government’s vision of a *Healthy People, Healthy Saskatchewan*. The strategy aimed to improve team-based care in the community, reduce reliance on acute care, support a culture of continuous improvement, cultural awareness, and patient and staff safety, establish physicians as leaders in the health care system, and improve system-wide alignment of services (SHA, 2019c).



- 2021-2022 Annual report: <https://www.saskhealthauthority.ca/sites/default/files/2022-07/Report-CEC-SHA-Annual-2021-22.pdf>

Circles of Change Integrated Model of Accreditation, with Indigenous-Inspired Co-Design, 2019

As part of the SHA's commitment to quality and safety, the organization collaborated with key stakeholders across the continuum of care to develop an integrated accreditation model that can help them identify what is being done well and what needs improvement. The Circles of Change model aims to create an atmosphere of accreditation readiness that is inclusive of all First Nations and Métis voices, as well as patients, families, and healthcare providers. The model is inspired by the Medicine Wheel and embraces ongoing improvement and people-centred care (Accreditation Canada, 2019).

Indigenous Birth Support Worker Program, 2019

This program was created under the First Nation and Métis Health portfolio in response to the SHA's commitment to reconciliation and 10 Calls to Action from the Tubal Ligation External Review Commitment. The program provides comfort and doula support to women and families at Jim Pattison Children's Hospital, by First Nations and Métis women who understand traditional birthing practices and have learned how trauma affects labour and delivery. The program is a collaboration between the SHA, Dumont Technical Institute, and the Saskatoon Tribal Council (SHA, n.d.).



Quality and Safety Plan, 2019

Created by a multidisciplinary group to ensure safety, the plan sets the SHA's course towards a culture of safety and continuous improvement. It defines actions and behaviours required to advance these goals and guides the organization in providing patient- and family-centred care and services to create a climate of psychological and cultural safety (SHA, 2019d).

Saskatchewan Health Authority Commitment to Truth and Reconciliation, 2019

In this commitment, the SHA acknowledges the impact of residential schools on individuals, families, communities, and nations; and embraces diversity in the provincial health system. It also expresses the SHA's commitment to increasing the number of Indigenous employees within the Health Authority, increasing cultural responsiveness and cultural training opportunities, finding constructive ways to implement the TRC's Calls to Action that are relevant to health and healthcare, and establishing appropriate data infrastructure in collaboration with Indigenous leaders and communities.

<https://www.saskhealthauthority.ca/sites/default/files/2021-06/TRC-commitment-statement-signed.pdf>

Saskatchewan Health Authority Safety Charter, 2019

In 2019, the Board of Directors signed this charter committing the Authority and its leadership to follow actions and behaviours that advance a culture of safety and continuous improvement. This includes fostering an environment that is psychologically and culturally safe and implementing effective patient complaints and continuous quality improvement processes.

<https://www.saskhealthauthority.ca/our-organization/our-direction/our-commitment-safety>



Core Values: Provincial Consultation and Engagement Strategy, 2018

In 2018, the SHA undertook engagement activities to aid the Authority in co-creating organizational values consistent with the province's strategic direction for the health care system. They engaged with more than 5000 stakeholders and identified key foundational values to support the SHA's commitment to a philosophy of patient- and family-centred care.

<https://www.saskhealthauthority.ca/sites/default/files/2021-06/PFD-SandI-SHA-Report-Core-Values-Provincial-Consultation-and-Engagement-Strategy.pdf>

Health Networks, 2018

In 2018, provincial advisory and operational oversight groups were formed to support the development of Health Networks across the province (SHA, 2019d). Health Networks are collaborative teams of health professionals that provide fully integrated team-based community services that meet the needs of individuals and communities (SHA, 2019c). They are intended to reduce reliance on acute care services and improve health outcomes and serve as the organizational framework for all services within the SHA. They connect care between teams in the community and between the community and other parts of the health system.

Creating Safe and Welcoming Health Care Environments

Under the First Nation and Métis health portfolio, the SHA has taken a number of actions to create safe and welcoming health care environments for Indigenous people (SHA, 2021a). This includes implementing a traditional foods pilot program in a long-term care facility in northern Saskatchewan, offering various supports to all SHA employees by trying to provide culturally responsive training, and installing Indigenous art in healthcare settings.

SHA First Nations and Métis Health (FNMH) – Culturally Appropriate Health Services

FNMH services provide support to patients and their families from admission to discharge by working with a range of health professionals and departments. Services provided include Elders/ cultural support workers, advocacy, coordination of services, education, and healing centres (Regina General Hospital and Pasqua Hospital), among others.

<https://www.saskhealthauthority.ca/your-health/conditions-illnesses-services-wellness/indigenous-health/first-nations-and-metis-health-services>



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SHA First Nations and Métis Health (FNMH) – Specialty Services

The SHA’s FNMH department offers several speciality services to ensure that First Nations and Métis patients are able to access services in a culturally safe way. These include program consultations on cultural responsiveness, cultural safety, and reconciliation; professional development and learning opportunities in cultural responsiveness, safety, and reconciliation; assistance with conducting research with First Nations and Métis; ensuring that the workforce is representative and culturally responsive; and supporting staff retention.

https://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/locations_services/Services/fnmh/representative-workforce/Pages/Home.aspx

Traditional Knowledge Keepers Advisory Committee

This advisory committee is comprised of nine Elders that are representative of 9 Indigenous linguistic groups. The committee meets regularly with the SHA to provide guidance and direction to the SHA’s work.

<https://www.saskhealthauthority.ca/your-health/conditions-diseases-services/indigenous-health/traditional-knowledge-keepers-advisory>

Saskatchewan Cancer Agency

First Nations and Métis Health Cancer Surveillance Program, 2014-2017

Funded by the CPAC, this collaborative project, involving the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency in partnership with provincial First Nations, aimed to identify gaps in programs and services, and cancer prevention and early detection priorities, as well as to develop the capacity for surveillance of cancer among Status First Nations.

<https://www.partnershipagainstcancer.ca/about-us/who-we-are/first-nations-inuit-metis/foundational-work/cancer-surveillance-saskatchewan/>

Saskatchewan Health Quality Council (SHQC)

Creation of Executive Director, First Nations and Métis Health, n.d.

The SHQC created an Executive Director, First Nations and Métis Health position. This position provides leadership support to the First Nations and Métis Health portfolio within Quality, Safety and Strategy (SHQC, 2023).

Saskatoon Health Region (SHR)

Health Equity Position Statement, 2016

This position statement on health equity outlines the SHR's commitment to improving health outcomes for all people within the region, partnering to eliminate health inequities, providing equitable health services, and ensuring that patients, clients, residents, families, staff, and communities experience culturally safe care. While not specific to Indigenous Peoples, there is notable mention of improving health for First Nations and Metis populations. <https://www.saskhealthauthority.ca/our-organization/reports-publications>

Reconciliation: A Population Public Health Responsibility, 2017

This paper aimed to help facilitate engagement with the TRC's Calls to Action among population and public health practitioners. It presented a framework for action and accountability at individual, family, community, and national levels, as well as opportunities for action within partnerships, organizations, departments, and programs. <https://www.unitedwaysaskatoon.ca/me/uploads/2017/12/Dunn-Pierce-Kewistep-Neudorf-Malena-Chan-Reconciliation-Population-and-Public-Health-Responsibility.pdf>

Saskatoon Health Region Commits to Reconciliation statement, n.d.

In this statement, the SHR acknowledges past colonial harms on the health of First Nations and Métis and makes a number of commitments to transforming the health system, including providing culturally safe care, building an Indigenous health workforce, and aligning TRC (2015) Calls to Action with health programs and services.

https://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/locations_services/Services/fnmh/Documents/SHR%20Commitment%20to%20Reconciliation.pdf

Cultural Safety in the SHR Safety Hoshin, September 2015

This report confirmed the region's failure to prioritize cultural competency among its staff and showed how this prevented the delivery of equitable health care services and perpetuated health inequities that existed in the region. Though not specific to Indigenous Peoples, some First Nations and Métis concerns are identified.

<https://www.saskhealthauthority.ca/our-organization/our-direction/engagement/sha-engagement-framework/cultural-responsiveness-humility-and-safety-engagement>



**Awaken the Power of Change:
Representative Workforce Strategic Action
Plan Renewal, 2014-2018**

This document represented the SHR's renewed commitment to build a representative and culturally competent workforce, with new priorities, objectives, and actions identified.

https://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/locations_services/Services/fnmh/representative-workforce/Documents/AWAKEN%20THE%20POWER%20OF%20CHANGE%20Renewal%20OVERVIEW%202015-18.pdf

Representative Workforce and Cultural Competency Policy, May 2013

This document sets out the SHR's policy for a representative and culturally competent workforce. The document is no longer accessible publicly, but informed the *Representative Workforce Strategic Action Plans* of 2010, and 2014-2018.

- A report on progress achieved: https://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/locations_services/Services/fnmh/representative-workforce/Documents/RW-Annual%20Report-2013-14.pdf

**Awaken the Power of Change:
Representative Workforce Strategic Action
Plan, 2010**

This strategic action plan emerged from the SHR's *Representative Workforce and Cultural Competency Policy* and responds to an important call to action to build a representative workforce, as outlined in the SHR's "Commits to Reconciliation" statement. Actions in the strategic plan focused on cultural competency, recruitment, retention, and education and learning.

https://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/locations_services/Services/fnmh/representative-workforce/Documents/AwakenThePowerofChange%202010-14.pdf

**Strengthening the Circle, Partnering for
Improved Health for Aboriginal People:
Aboriginal Health Strategy, 2010-2015, 2010**

Developed by the SHR, in partnership with the Central Urban Métis Federation Inc. and Kinistin Salteaux Nation, this strategy sets out a plan aimed at improving *health* outcomes and care experiences for *Indigenous people* within the SHR.

https://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/locations_services/Services/fnmh/service/Documents/About-Us%20FNMHS/Aboriginal-Health-Strategy-full.pdf

- An update on progress achieved in building a representative workforce and providing quality, client-centred experiences to patients, clients, residents, and families within the SHR: https://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/locations_services/Services/fnmh/Documents/Aboriginal%20Health%20Strategy%20Update.pdf



ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSES



Professional organization and regulatory body responses

Saskatchewan Association of Social Workers

Cultural Humility and Standards of Practice for Social Work, 2022

Adopted by the Standards of Practice Committee on March 4, this document articulates 10 standards in cultural humility for social work practice. They were developed in collaboration with Indigenous Peoples and based on the cultural foundational inspiration of wholistic sacred teachings of love, respect, wisdom, humility, courage, truth, and honesty. The standards are intended to help social workers reflect on cultural humility and use it in their daily practice.

<https://www.sasw.ca/document/6908/Cultural-Humility-Guidance-March2022.pdf>

Saskatchewan College of Paramedics (SCP)

Framework for Building Cultural Safety, 2021

The SCP has initiated a process of building a cultural safety framework for the profession that takes a patient-centred care approach to align with the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health's patient-centred care focus. The first step in this framework is to create a Cultural Safety Policy. The policy will provide a commitment to cultural safety in the delivery of service by the paramedic profession. Once the policy has been adopted, the College will begin work on gathering input from practitioners

and culturally diverse individuals to create a cultural safety framework for the profession (Wilkinson., 2021).

Saskatchewan Registered Nursing Association

Registered Nurse Practice Standards, 2019

This document articulates five standards that practicing nurses should have and describes how nurses demonstrate they are achieving those standards. Standards related to cultural safety include: incorporating knowledge that reflects deep understanding and respect for different ways of knowing which exhibits cultural competence/cultural humility; establishing therapeutic caring and culturally safe relationships with clients and the health care team; and practicing a holistic client/family-centered approach ensuring culturally safe client care.

<https://www.srna.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/RN-Practice-Standards-2019.pdf>

Standards and Foundation Competencies for the Practice of Registered Nurses, 2013

This document articulated competencies that nurses should have related to five standards, including those related to cultural safety.

http://nperesource.casn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Standards_and_Foundation_2013_06_10_Web.pdf



Indigenous organizational responses

Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations

Saskatchewan First Nations Suicide Prevention Strategy, 2018

Developed to address the lack of a provincial or federal First Nations-specific suicide strategy, this strategy represents the voices and concerns of First Nations communities and responds to the need to address the high rates of suicide in First Nations communities through strengths- and land-based healing models and community-based interventions that reconnect individuals to the land and their cultural identities.

https://www.suicideinfo.ca/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/6-191a85f36ce9e20de2e2fa3869197735/2018/07/Saskatchewan-First-Nations-Suicide-Prevention-Strategy_oa.pdf

Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority (NITHA)

Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority (NITHA)

The NITHA is an Indigenous-led health organization that serves 33 First Nations communities in Saskatchewan. It was established in 1998 to respond to the federal government's implementation of standard negotiated mechanisms within transfer agreements to reduce the federal deficit, resulting in the decision of partners to pool their resources under financial constraints (NITHA, 2021). Key features of NITHA are: a formal role for Elders in governance, consensus-based decision-making, and longer-term flexible funding, enabling the organization to plan for the longer term and develop culturally responsive programs and services. The organization provides primary health care services and public health programs, as well as third level support services.

<https://www.nitha.com/>

Office of the Treaty Commissioner

Provincial Movement for Truth and Reconciliation in Saskatchewan

The Office of the Treaty Commissioner has been working with Indigenous communities, non-Indigenous organizations, and Saskatchewan residents to create a provincial movement for Truth and Reconciliation in Saskatchewan. Reconciliation groups have been established in Saskatoon, Regina, Treaty 6 communities, Prairie Rivers, Nipawin, and Battleford, each of which are spearheading reconciliation activities. This website identifies reconciliation related activities undertaken by the various reconciliation groups.

https://www.otc.ca/pages/reconciliation_saskatchewan.html

Saskatchewan First Nations Family & Community Institute Inc.

Voices for Reform: Options for Change to Saskatchewan First Nations Child Welfare, 2017

This report stemmed from a federally funded project that aimed to engage First Nations child welfare stakeholders in discussions about reforms to federal First Nations child welfare services. Recommendations were made to reform programs and services, including a shift in practice approaches towards a culturally respectful child welfare framework.

https://cwrp.ca/sites/default/files/publications/en/sk_sfnfci_child_welfare_report.pdf

[Mainstream \(non-Indigenous\) organizational responses](#)

None identified.





EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES & TRAINING INITIATIVES



Provincial educational resources and training initiatives

None identified.

Health system educational resources and training initiatives

Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA)

Cultural Safety in the Saskatchewan Health Authority, 2022

This tool is designed to help advance cultural safety in the Saskatchewan Health Authority. It provides an overview of key terms and describes how the SHA is using them to help create conditions that support culturally safe experiences and workplaces.

<https://www.saskhealthauthority.ca/system/files/2022-05/SHA-Cultural-Safety.pdf>

Nipawin Improving Cultural Competency Initiative, 2019

This program provided Cree language training to physicians and staff from Primary Health Care, Nipawin Hospital, and Pineview Lodge (SHA, 2019e).

Cultural Safety and Humility in Perinatal Care: Health Actions related to TRC of Canada webinar, 2018

Presented by Leah Thorp of the SHA, objectives of this webinar are to:

1. recognize how Indigenous people are self-reliant, vibrant, healthy people following the historical and present effects of colonization;
2. explore the impact of the TRC Calls to Action as they pertain to perinatal and women's health;
3. share the CAPWHN Position Statement on Cultural Safety/Humility in response to the TRC Calls to Action; and
4. develop and commit to individual and organizational strategies for reconciliation and building relationships to improve health and wellness.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=giFyXETLGIY&feature=youtu.be>

Cultural Awareness Training

The SHA implemented cultural responsiveness training for staff of FNMH as part of their commitment to establishing a culturally responsive system. In 2019, they made cultural responsiveness training a mandatory part of orientation for newly hired employees. Over the period 2019-20, 95% of newly hired employees (about 3000 staff) received the training as part of workplace orientation (SHA, 2020b).



First Nations and Métis Health Cultural Competency and Safety Resource Centre

This website provides information about services and resources related to health equity, cultural safety, and building a representative and culturally competent workforce.

https://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/locations_services/Services/fnmh/Pages/Cultural-Competency-Safety-Resource-Centre.aspx

Saskatoon Health Region (SHR)

Health Equity and Cultural Safety Network News, 2017

This monthly newsletter is designed to spark learning, dialogue, and health system decisions that reflect SHR's commitment to health equity and cultural safety.

- **October:** https://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/locations_services/Services/Health-Observatory/Documents/Resource-Centre/Health%20Equity%20Cultural%20Safety%20Network%20News%20-%20October.pdf#search=cultural%20safety%20and%20humility
- **September:** https://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/locations_services/Services/Health-Observatory/Documents/Resource-Centre/Health%20Equity%20Network%20News%20-%20September%202017.pdf

Cultural Competency and Cultural Safety Toolkit, 2016

This fact sheet provides links to resources that will help practitioners engage in reflection, relationship building, and reconciliation.

https://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/locations_services/Services/Health-Observatory/Documents/Resource-Centre/CCCS%20Toolkit%20%20Reflection%20Infographic%20-%20combined.pdf

Cultural Competency Framework – 7 domains, 2014

This fact sheet highlights a cultural competency framework used by the SHR to move towards a culturally competent organization. The framework includes practices within seven domains: leadership environment, integrate into management systems and operations, patient provider communication, care delivery and support mechanisms, diversity and training, community engagement, and data, accountability and quality.

https://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/locations_services/Services/fnmh/representative-workforce/Documents/Cultural-Competency/CCFramework_Oct%202014.pdf

Professional organization and regulatory body educational resources and training initiatives

College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan

Caring for Indigenous Patients: Cultural Humility/Safety in Practice

This website provides information on how to care for Indigenous patients, with tips and resources related to cultural humility/safety in practice, responding to the TRC's Calls to Action, and Elders and traditional medicine.

https://www.cps.sk.ca/iMIS/CPSS/For_Physicians/Patient_Care/Caring_for_Indigenous_Patients_Landing_Page.aspx

Saskatchewan Registered Nursing Association (SRNA)

Webinar Series, 2018

The SRNA provides members with access to new educational webinars, with up-to-date information and resources on topics of importance to the nursing community. Several webinars have focused on topics related to cultural safety including:

- Trauma-informed care (October 30, 2019)
- Truth and Reconciliation, What it is and Honouring the Calls to Action (September 4, 2019)
- Nisohkmatowak: Helping Each Other (August 22, 2018)
- Planting a Seed for Reconciliation (June 20, 2018)
- Cultural Safety and Cultural Humility in Perinatal Care (February 14, 2018)

<https://www.youtube.com/c/TheCRNS/videos>



Indigenous-developed educational resources and training initiatives

Saskatchewan First Nations

Health and Wellness Resources, n.d.

This website provides information on organizations and resources related to First Nations health and wellness, including information on culturally appropriate health and wellness services.

<https://skfn.ca/health-wellness-programs/>

Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre

Cultural Awareness Training Handbook, 2011

The purpose of this handbook is to be a resource guide that enhances cultural awareness among non-Indigenous people. It provides an overview of First Nations history, cultures, values, and basic cultural teachings; discusses contemporary First Nations issues; and educates participants on the importance of cultural awareness.

http://thegatheringteachers.weebly.com/uploads/3/2/1/0/32109417/sicc_cultural_awareness_training_handbook.pdf

Other educational resources and training initiatives

City of Saskatoon

ayisiyiniwak: A Communications Guide, 2019

As part of its response to the TRC's Call to Action #57, the City of Saskatoon developed an educational resource to enhance knowledge about Indigenous culture and practices among City employees, though the guide has broader utility. The resource was developed in partnership with the Saskatchewan Indigenous Cultural Centre and the Office of the

Treaty Commissioner, and includes information on First Nations, Inuit, and Métis culture and local history, Cree translations, the 60s Scoop, Two-Spirit people, urban reserves, ceremonies, and protocols.

<https://www.saskatoon.ca/community-culture-heritage/cultural-diversity/indigenous-initiatives/community-resources>

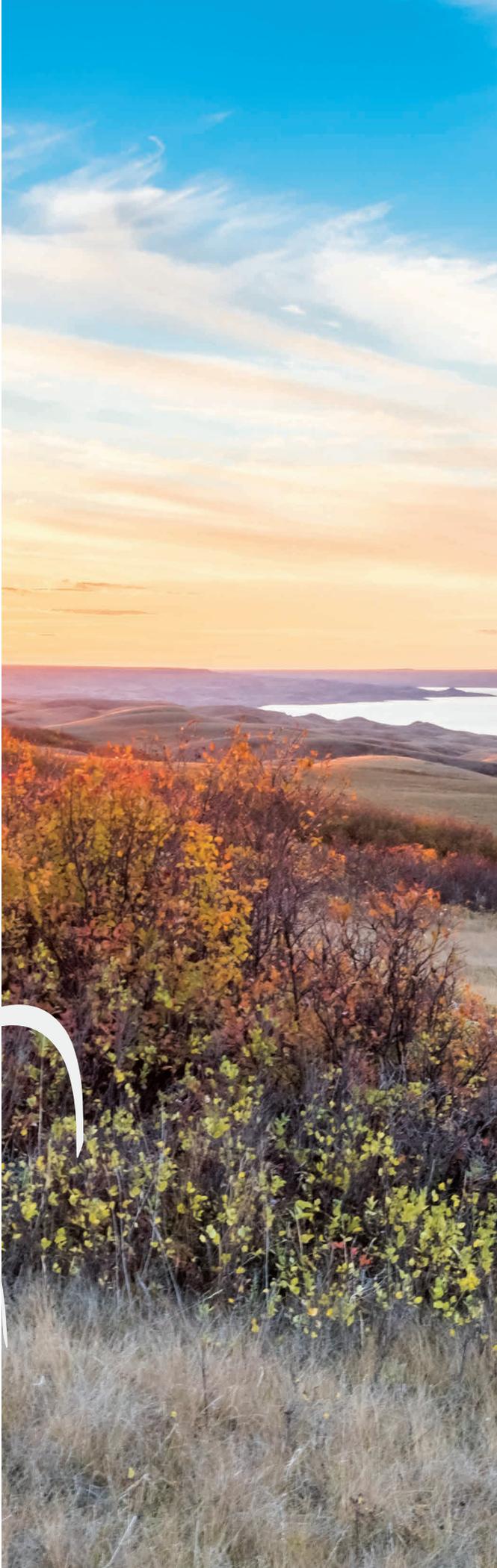
Reconciliation Saskatoon

#BeAConnectR, n.d.

Reconciliation Saskatoon, a community of organizations, non-profits, businesses, and other partners who have come together to advance reconciliation in the city, developed Connect R, an online tool that helps residents choose their own path to reconciliation in a variety of areas, including health and wellness. The tool allows residents to learn more about Indigenous Peoples' experiences through a variety of activities, including reading a book, learning about Indigenous protocols, visiting a cultural site, or going to a local workshop.

<https://www.beaconnectr.org/>





SUMMARY



In 2017, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Health amalgamated 12 separate regional health authorities into a single provincial entity – the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) – with the aim of improving patient care through better integration and coordination of health services. Despite this amalgamation, “maintaining local connections and preserving strong community relationships” remains a priority for the government and the SHA (Government of Saskatchewan, 2017, para. 5), a commitment that is reflected in several local cultural safety initiatives implemented by the SHA. The development and implementation of cultural safety initiatives in Saskatchewan is influenced by the nature of this health system structure, as well as by the longstanding relationship that First Nations in Saskatchewan have had with both provincial and federal governments and their dedication to resolving issues together, including in health specifically. These bodies’ extensive collaborations are reflected in at least five specific health initiatives: the signing of a 2008 tripartite Memorandum of Understanding with the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations³ (FSIN) to improve coordination of and address gaps in health services (Government of Saskatchewan, 2008); the signing of a tripartite letter of commitment to work together to enhance the delivery of culturally appropriate wellness supports and effective interventions to address the crisis of suicide among First Nations people in Saskatchewan (Government of Saskatchewan, 2020b); the development of a

³ Formerly the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations.

Cultural Responsiveness Framework to inform and promote dialogue on First Nations health care and improve health services delivery (FSIN, n.d.); the creation of a working group to reform Indigenous Child and Family Services (ISC, 2020); and the establishment of the Athabasca Health Authority in 1999.

At the provincial level, the Government of Saskatchewan, its various departments and agencies, and its provincial health authority have undertaken several broad initiatives to address reconciliation and embed principles of cultural safety into health and social services systems, especially through the SHA's First Nation and Métis health portfolio. Both the provincial government and the SHA declared their commitments to and outlined actions to address reconciliation. They regularly engage with First Nations and Métis communities, both rural and urban, throughout Saskatchewan, with a goal of achieving high quality healthcare in a culturally responsive and safe environment. This engagement led to the incorporation of First Nations and Métis perspectives in broad strategies and action plans to address specific health issues (i.e., mental health and addictions, suicide prevention, disability) and in initiatives to transform the health system, including in the development of core values for the SHA's commitment to a philosophy of patient- and family-centred care (SHA, 2018b) and strategies and action plans that aim to optimize and integrate patient-centred care. Engagement with First Nations and Métis communities is also reflected in smaller-scale initiatives, such as in the co-design of a new hospital addition and the development of pandemic responses.

The SHA has undertaken numerous other initiatives to advance cultural safety and humility in health care. This includes signing several Memorandums of Understanding to work in partnership with various Indigenous groups to improve health services delivery and health status and developing a unity framework and strategy to enable a representative health system workforce to address systemic racism. Principles of cultural safety, cultural humility, and health equity have been embedded in the SHA's Building a Culturally Responsive Health Service Strategy, the Healthy People, Healthy Saskatchewan, Health System Strategic Plan, the Quality and Safety Plan, Health Networks, the SHA's Safety Charter, and its Governance Charter. The SHA has also implemented various initiatives to create a safe and welcoming care environment in specific health settings, including implementing traditional food programs, displaying Indigenous art in healthcare settings, providing Cree language training to physicians and healthcare staff, incorporating Indigenous healing and traditional medicine into health care, and implementing an Indigenous Birth Support Worker program. Their First Nations and Métis Relations department offers specialty services, training, and educational tools and resources that aim to promote cultural safety in the workforce. Additionally, the SHA's First Nations and Métis Health portfolio receives guidance from a Traditional Knowledge Keepers Advisory Council on culturally appropriate and responsive programs and services.



At the regional level, the only cultural safety work identified in the Internet search focused on the Saskatoon Health Region (SHR), which predates the reorganization of the health system. These initiatives included a position statement on health equity, a declaration of commitment to reconciliation and associated framework for action, an Aboriginal Health Strategy, several action plans to build a representative workforce, an assessment of the effects of the SHR's failure to prioritize cultural competency among staff on the delivery of equitable health care services, an organizational Cultural Competency Framework, and a Cultural Competency and Cultural Safety Toolkit.

While Saskatchewan's health system has been actively working to promote cultural safety, health professional organizations in the province appear to be lagging behind in this work. The Internet search revealed only two such organizations undertaking cultural safety initiatives over the 2012-2022 time frame covered in this environmental scan. The Saskatchewan Registered Nursing Association developed nursing standards related to cultural safety and hosted webinars on related topics, while the College of Physicians and Surgeons created a website of cultural safety related resources. Several Indigenous organizations undertook cultural safety related work. As a result of a Memorandum of Understanding between the federal and provincial governments and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, an Office of the

Treaty Commissioner and a collaborative Treaty Table were created to ensure Treaty First Nations were involved in decisions affecting their health and well-being (Canada and the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, 2008). In 1998, 33 First Nations joined together to establish the Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority (NITHA). This Indigenous-led health organization provides culturally appropriate health services for the region, is guided by the wisdom of Elders, and is based on consensus decision-making (NITHA, 2021). Indigenous organizations have also taken the lead in advocating for strategies to address health issues of concern, such as suicide prevention and reforming child welfare. They have also created a provincial reconciliation movement and created their own cultural safety tools and resources.

Fewer non-Indigenous health organizations have been undertaking cultural safety work, and what they have done has focused entirely on the development of cultural safety tools and resources. Nevertheless, these efforts are unique and innovative, including the development of a communications guide to enhance knowledge about Indigenous culture and practices, the development of an online tool that helps Saskatoon residents choose their own path to reconciliation, and the creation of a website with culturally appropriate resources for palliative care professionals.



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