

INDIGENOUS CULTURAL SAFETY:

*An environmental scan of cultural safety initiatives
in Canada - Chapter 9: Cultural safety initiatives
in New Brunswick*




National Collaborating Centre
for Indigenous Health



Centre de collaboration nationale
de la santé autochtone

CULTURAL SAFETY AND RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS



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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 9: Cultural safety initiatives in New Brunswick. In *Indigenous cultural safety: An environmental scan of cultural safety initiatives in Canada*.

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ISBN (print): 978-1-77368-436-9
ISBN (online): 978-1-77368-437-6

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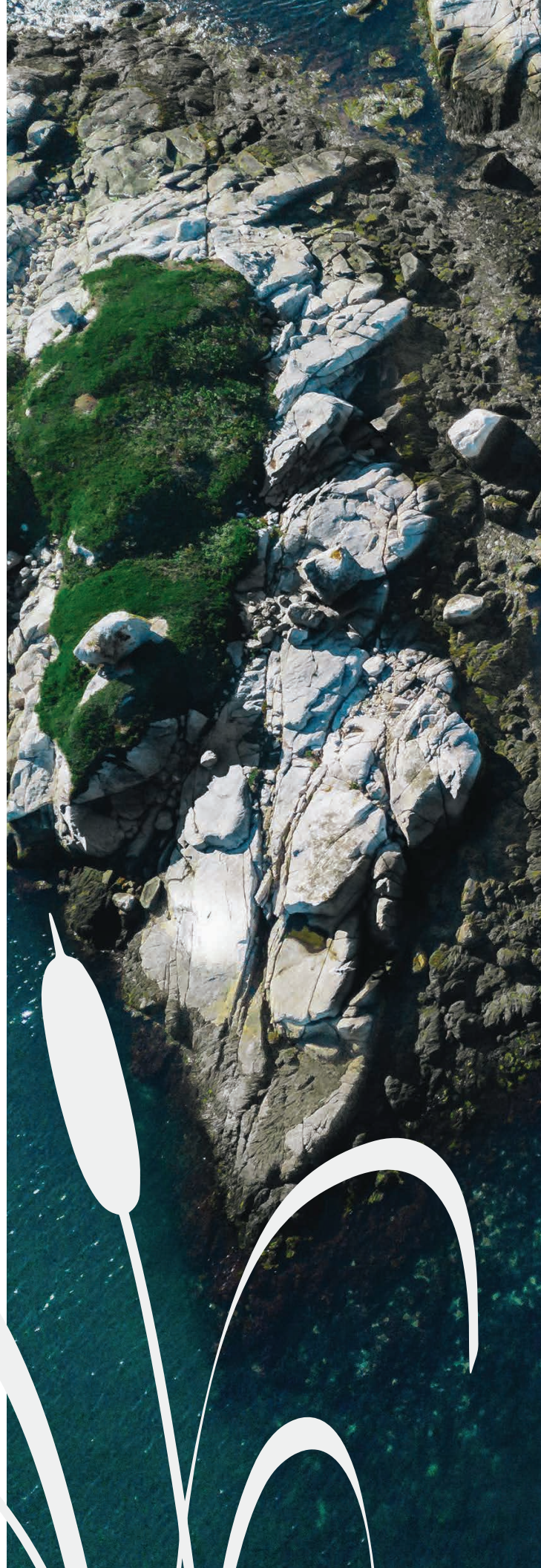
INTRODUCTION

The focus of this chapter is on cultural safety initiatives in New Brunswick 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

None identified.







PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

Tripartite¹ partnerships

None identified.

Bilateral² partnerships

Government of Canada and Elsipogtog
First Nation

Canada and Elsipogtog First Nation Memorandum of Understanding to Advance Reconciliation, 2019

This MOU commits the two parties to “work together to advance reconciliation and renew their relationship based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation and partnership” (Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, 2019, para 1). It establishes a table for working collaboratively to find solutions to close socio-

economic gaps and advance reconciliation, as well as explore the possibility of entering into negotiations for the recognition and implementation of Mi’kmaq Title, Treaty rights, and environmental protection in Sikniktuk.

Government of Canada and New Brunswick

Canada – New Brunswick Home and Community Care and Mental Health and Addictions Services Funding Agreement, 2016

This funding agreement committed the federal and provincial governments to work together to improve access to home and community care and strengthen access to mental health and addiction services in New Brunswick. In addition to supporting initiatives that build community capacity in relation to the planning and delivery of supports and services and increasing access to mental health and

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.



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addiction services, the agreement also stipulated that additional federal funding would be used to develop and implement a culturally appropriate and competent framework for the delivery of mental health services to First Nations people.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/corporate/transparency/health-agreements/shared-health-priorities/new-brunswick.html>

Government of New Brunswick and Mi'kmaq and Maliseet First Nations

Mi'kmaq and Maliseet – New Brunswick Relationship Building/Bilateral Agreement, 2007

This agreement commits the Mi'kmaq and Maliseet and the New Brunswick Government to work together on a government-to-government basis to resolve bilateral issues identified by the parties. It establishes a formal process for discussing, negotiating, and resolving these issues and ensuring accountability.

<https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/aas-saa/pdf/bilateral-agreement.pdf>





POLICY AND PROGRAM RESPONSES



Bilateral policy responses

Government of Canada – Health Canada
and Government of New Brunswick

Canada – New Brunswick Home and Community Care and Mental Health and Addictions Services Funding Agreement, 2016

This funding agreement commits the federal and New Brunswick governments to work together to improve access to home and community care and strengthen access to mental health and addiction services in New Brunswick. Specifically, it stipulates that additional federal funding will be used to:

1. build community capacity in relation to the planning and delivery of support and services;
2. provide additional training for primary health care providers to better integrate addictions and mental health into primary health care;
3. expand or implement after-hours mobile mental health, e-mental health, and mental health senior care services; and
4. develop and implement a culturally-appropriate and competent framework for the delivery of mental health services to First Nations people.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/corporate/transparency/health-agreements/shared-health-priorities/new-brunswick.html>

Provincial responses

Aboriginal Affairs

Appointment of a commissioner mandated to address systemic racism in the province, 2021

On March 24, 2021, the Government of New Brunswick announced that it would be appointing an independent commissioner to address systemic racism in the province (Post Secondary Education, Training and Labour and Aboriginal Affairs, 2021). The commissioner is tasked with engaging with stakeholders to understand the nature and impact of systemic racism and provide recommendations for developing a provincial strategy and action plan to address the issue across various sectors.

All Nations and Parties Working Group on Truth and Reconciliation, December 2020

On December 2020, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs announced the creation of a new working group to examine and address the TRC's Calls to Action, with members from the Mi'gmaq, Wolastoqey, and Peskotomuhkati Nations and all four political parties in the legislative assembly. The Working Group, which reports to the Standing Committee on Social Policy, will provide the government with a greater understanding of First Nations' priorities (Aboriginal Affairs, 2020).

New Brunswick Plan to Prevent and Respond to Violence against Aboriginal Women and Girls – 2017-2021

This strategy outlined priorities and actions for preventing and responding to violence against Indigenous women and girls for the period 2017-2021. The plan was guided by five principles:

1. be Indigenous woman centered;
2. be respectful of the values, cultures and traditions of Indigenous people in New Brunswick;
3. partner with Indigenous people and incorporate and use the knowledge of Indigenous women and Elders;
4. complement current and future work done by Indigenous communities and organizations, and federal and provincial governments; and
5. partner with community-based organizations working in areas of violence prevention, intervention and training to implement actions outlined in the plan (Government of New Brunswick, 2017, p. 2).

<https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/aas-saa/pdf/NBPPRVAWG2017-2021.pdf>

Keeping Children and Youth Safe from Harm in New Brunswick: A Five Year Strategy for New Brunswickers, 2015

Based on foundational principles of children's rights and UNDRIP, and developed through comprehensive public engagement, including with First Nations, this strategy outlined priorities and actions for ensuring that children have the right to live free from all forms of harm, and identified indicators to be used to measure success in relation to each priority (Government of New Brunswick, 2015). It adopted a social determinants of health approach to keeping children and youth safe from harm.



Health system responses

Horizon Health Network

A Healthier Future for New Brunswick, Strategic Plan 2015-2020

This strategic plan identified challenges in providing health services in New Brunswick, and articulated goals for addressing these challenges over a five-year period. Cultural competence in helping health system personnel work effectively with First Nations' patients was identified as one challenge. The strategy aimed to embed a culture of patient and family centred care, break barriers to care, and partner with other governments and organizations to support population needs.

<https://horizonnb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Horizons-Strategic-Plan-2015-2020.pdf>

Indigenous Patient Navigators

The Indigenous Patient Navigator role was created in 2022 to enhance culturally safe care for First Nations (Anchan, 2022). They work to overcome barriers clients may face when accessing care, including assistance with referrals for in-patients, informing patients of care options, and community engagement.

Indigenous Liaison Committee

Reporting to the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Committee, the Indigenous Liaison Committee aids the Horizon Health Network's management team and health care personnel in obtaining a good understanding of the health care needs and concerns of First Nations to assure consistent quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of health, and to promote cultural sensitivity in the provision of health care. The committee includes one member from each of the First Nations in the Horizon Health Network, as well as representatives from the Network's management team and others (Anchan, 2022).

Vitalité Health Network

Community-Based Services

First Nations have access to all of Vitalité Health Network's services, with services in the community provided in both English and Mi'maq. These services include traditional healer services, culturally appropriate mental health services and substance abuse treatment centres, as well as child and family support services.

<https://vitalitenb.ca/en/services-and-locations/service-directory/mental-health-services-for-first-nations>



ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSES

Professional organization and regulatory body responses

Association of New Brunswick Licensed Practical Nurses

Cultural Competence Standards Regarding Practical Nursing with Indigenous Peoples, 2021

This document responds to the TRC's Call to Action #23, which calls upon health regulators to provide cultural competency training for healthcare professionals. It defines cultural competence, describes the objectives of cultural competence standards, and sets out five standards for providing culturally competent and safe services to Indigenous clients. These standards focus on:

- grounding culturally competent nursing practice in the ethics and values of the nursing profession;
- recognizing and appreciating the importance of being aware of one's own cultural identity and experiences in cross cultural practice;
- seeking to understand the values, beliefs, traditions, and historical context of Indigenous clients and incorporating this knowledge into practice;
- integrating effective intervention skills when working with Indigenous clients;
- and engaging in continuing professional development to further knowledge, skills and abilities in working with clients in a cross-cultural context.

https://www.anblpn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/ANBLPN_Cultural-Competence-Standards-EN.pdf

Nurses Association of New Brunswick (NANB)

Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses, 2022

This document outlines competency standards that Registered Nurses should have. Included in these standards, under Standard 3: Client-Centered Practice, are standards that pertain to the delivery of safe, competent, compassionate and ethical care; using client-centered practice; and respecting diversity and promoting cultural competence and a culturally safe environment for clients and members of the health care team.

https://nanb.nb.ca/media/documents/NANB2019-RNPpracticeStandards-E-web_1.pdf

Entry-Level Competencies (ELCs) for the Practice of Registered Nurses in New Brunswick, 2020

This document articulates competencies related to the diverse roles of nurses, including those related to cultural safety.

https://nanb.nb.ca/media/documents/NANB-ELC-Mar_19-ENGLISH.pdf



Continuing Competence Program: Learning in Action, 2013

Based on the NANB's "Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses" and the "Standards of Practice for Primary Health Care Nurse Practitioners," the Continuing Competence Program articulates competencies that need to be maintained by nurses to provide safe, competent, and ethical care, including those related to cultural safety (NANB, 2013). Nurses are required to maintain continuing competence, which must be met annually to renew registration.

New Brunswick Association of Social Workers

Code of Ethics, 2007

This document discusses the core values that social workers should uphold, including the pursuit of social justice, and the profession's ethical obligations to clients. This includes giving priority to clients' interests, demonstrating cultural awareness and sensitivity, respecting, and promoting the client's right to self-determination, and ensuring the client's informed consent. Because it is a code of ethics, it can be used to evaluate professional conduct, with violations forming the basis of a complaint that could result in disciplinary action.

<https://www.nbasw-atsnb.ca/assets/Uploads/Complete-Code-of-Ethics2.pdf>



Indigenous organizational responses

New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council (NBAPC)

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Community Engagement Session, 2020

The NBAPC conducted a two-day community engagement session focused on how to move forward on acting on the Calls to Justice from the final report of the National Inquiry into MMIWG. This report summarizes feedback from the engagement session and provides recommendations for acting on the Calls to Justice, which focus primarily on the need to address programs and services for Indigenous people who live off-reserve and non-status individuals.

<https://nbapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/MMIW.pdf>

“Looking Out for Each Other Project,” 2019

This collaborative project involved the NBAPC, other Native Councils, Friendship Centres, Indigenous women’s organizations, and Indigenous service organizations holding Sharing Circles for the purpose of developing a network of culturally appropriate resources and supports for families and communities of missing Indigenous people, including provincial hotlines. The project involved developing and implementing appropriate and responsive tools for police and others, as well as conducting an environmental scan to assess the current status of cultural sensitivity training.

- **Information about the project:** <https://nbapc.org/programs-and-services/lofeo>
- **Environmental Scan report:** <https://nbapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/MUN-Final-Report-MUN.pdf>

Final Written Submission to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, 2018

This written submission, filed on behalf of the NBAPC and the Native Council of Nova Scotia, provides recommendations for federal and provincial governments, researchers, educators, policy makers, service providers, and others to address the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls across the various sectors.

<https://nbapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/NBAPC-NCNS-FINAL-SUBMISSION-DEC-2018.pdf>

Elsipogtog Health and Wellness Centre

Improving the Journey for Elsipogtog First Nation Patients Along the Cancer Care Continuum, 2016-2017

Funded by the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer, this collaborative project aimed to improve the cancer patient journey for Elsipogtog First Nations by identifying needs, creating solutions to improve quality patient-centred navigation and discharge planning, generating ways to provide culturally responsive care, and developing a community-based physical activity and cancer survivorship program.

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

Mainstream (non-Indigenous) organizational responses

New Brunswick Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Centre of Excellence

“Dreamcatcher” Model, n.d.

Developed in partnership with First Nations Elders, the New Brunswick FASD Centre of Excellence developed the “Dreamcatcher” model of care, a holistic model that merges traditional Western medicine with First Nations science into service delivery for First Nations clients, families, and communities affected by FASD. The model is based on the Eight Feathers of Humanity (respect, courage, honesty, wisdom, confident, humility, love and spirit). It promotes collaboration and respect in service delivery, and utilizes an approach focused on prior trauma.

<https://vitalitenb.ca/en/services-and-locations/service-directory/fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorder-fasd/first-nations>



EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES AND TRAINING INITIATIVES

Provincial government educational resources and training initiatives

Aboriginal Affairs

Aboriginal Awareness Training, n.d.

This document lists organizations that provide Indigenous cultural awareness training that are accessible to individuals and organizations in New Brunswick.

<https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/aas-saa/pdf/AboriginalAwarenessTrainingPrograms.pdf>

Health system educational resources and training initiatives

Public Health New Brunswick

Cultural Competency and Sensitivity: A Guide for Health Care Providers Caring for New Brunswick's Cross-Cultural Populations, 2021

This guide is intended as a resource for health professionals to increase their cultural competence and sensitivity when providing care for individuals of diverse cultural backgrounds. It defines what culture is, why cultural competency and sensitivity are important to nursing practice, the difference between cultural competence and cultural sensitivity, common myths, elements of cultural assessment, and important considerations in day-to-day practice (Public Health New Brunswick, 2021).

Professional organization and regulatory body educational resources and training initiatives

None identified.



Indigenous-developed educational resources and training initiatives

Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network (UAKN)

Let's Get it Right: Creating a Culturally Appropriate Training Module and Identifying Local Urban Aboriginal Resources for Non-Aboriginal Caregivers of Aboriginal Children in New Brunswick, 2018

This report aimed to identify gaps and needs around accessing culturally safe supports for Indigenous children by non-Indigenous caregivers, and make evidence informed recommendations that aimed to realize the TRC's Calls to Action.

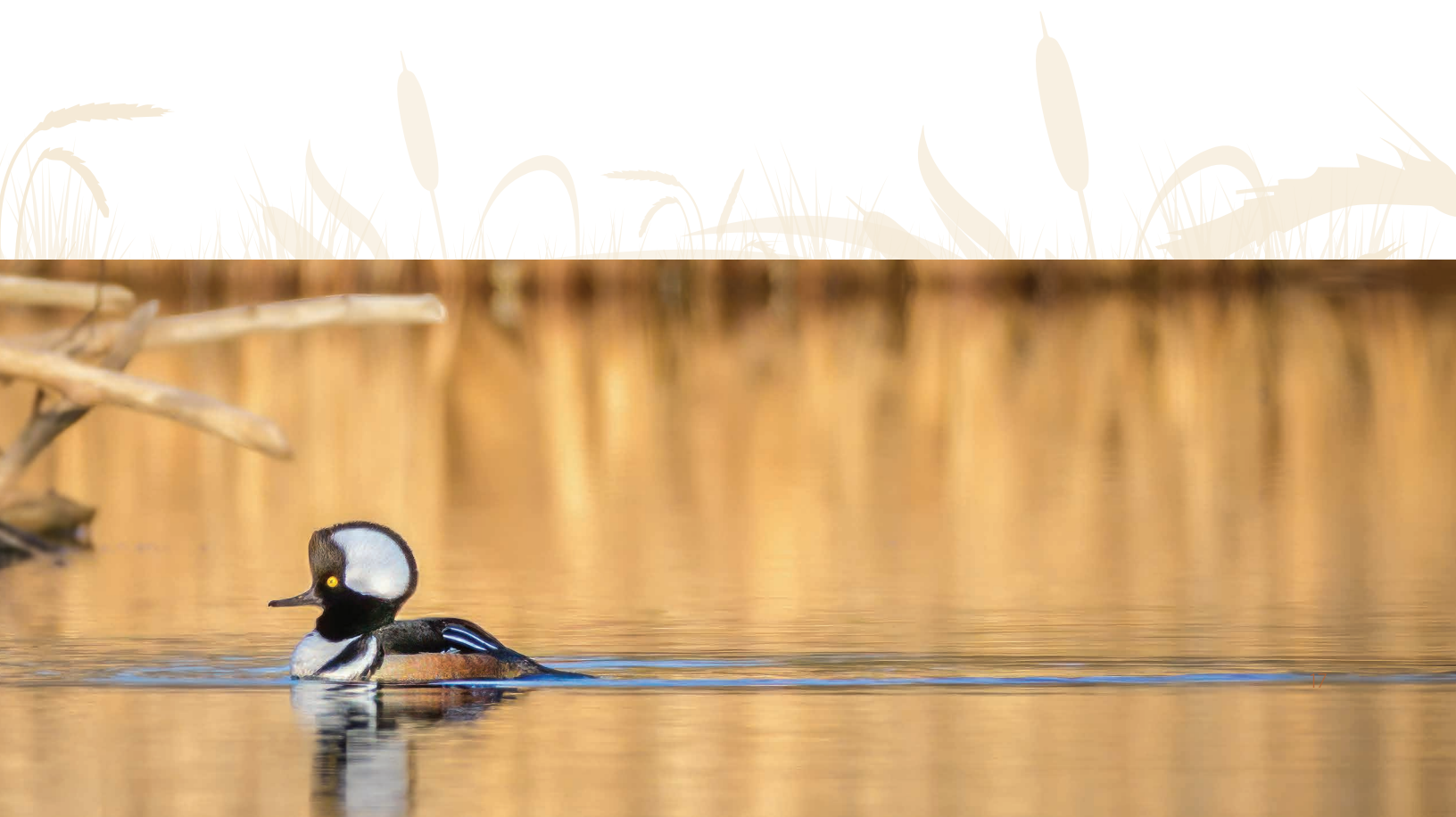
<https://uakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Lets-Get-It-Right-FINAL-Report-Oct-2-1.pdf>

Bear Waters Gathering

Kanó:ron Koniá:wi (The Sacred Gift) Indigenous Cultural Safety Program

This program provides a safe learning space for individuals who wish to embark on a journey of cultural awareness and competency, based on a foundational understanding of Indigenous ways of knowing and being. The program entails three levels (Awareness, Competency, and Engagement), consisting of four modules each, delivered online with interactive Talking Circles.

<https://www.bearwatersgathering.ca/indigenous-competency-program>



SUMMARY

In 1993, the Union of New Brunswick Indians (UNBI) entered into Health Transfer agreements with the federal government's First Nations and Inuit Health Branch. This resulted in First Nations control in every area of health and social programming. First Nations living in New Brunswick also participate in the Atlantic First Nations Health Partnership (AFNHP), which aims to improve the health and well-being of all First Nations living in the Atlantic provinces.

These presences are significant in the face of deep gaps in tripartite and bilateral partnership agreements and policy initiatives in New Brunswick. There appear to be no trilateral cultural safety initiatives. At the provincial level, there have been two initiatives: a relationship building agreement between the Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) First Nations and the Government of New Brunswick in 2007; and a funding agreement in 2016 which required federal and provincial cooperation on priority issues related to culturally appropriate home and community care and mental health and addictions services for Indigenous people living in New Brunswick. The province has also developed two cultural safety related training resources: Aboriginal Awareness Training (last updated 2020) and a cultural competency and sensitivity guide (2021). The province's health professional organizations and regulatory bodies have demonstrated a similar lack of output: this scan found only three cultural safety initiatives, two instigated by the Nurses Association of New Brunswick in 2020 and 2019 and one by the New Brunswick Association of Social Workers in 2007. Two cultural safety initiatives led by other health organizations with a health mandate were also identified.

There have been some initiatives and collaboration by Vitalité Health Network and Horizon Health Network, the regional health authorities who manage health services delivery under the purview

of New Brunswick's Ministry of Health. Vitalité provides several culturally appropriate services, some of which are in Mi'kmaq, including, among others, traditional healing services and child and family support services. Horizon established an Indigenous Liaison Committee to assist the network's management team and health care personnel in obtaining a good understanding of the health care needs and concerns of First Nations, and created Indigenous Patient Navigator positions to help First Nations patients and their families navigate the healthcare system more easily.

In the face of a paucity of structural-level actions and system-level responses, there are nevertheless several cultural safety initiatives led by Indigenous organizations. For example, in 2020, the New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council undertook engagement sessions to inform recommendations for acting on the Calls to Justice from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Two Indigenous organizations undertook initiatives that aimed to embed cultural safety principles into programs and policies (Elsipogtog Health and Wellness Centre in collaboration with Canadian Partnership Against Cancer and other stakeholders in 2016–2017; New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council in 2020). In 2018, the Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network developed a report on gaps and needs related to accessing culturally safe supports for Indigenous children by caregivers to inform the creation of a culturally appropriate training module and, in the same year, Bear Waters Gathering began offering cultural safety training.

What is abundantly clear is that more effort needs to be made at the federal and provincial levels, as well as by the province's health professional organizations, to ensure that the burden of achieving health equity does not land exclusively on the shoulders of the Indigenous individuals and organizations who live in New Brunswick.

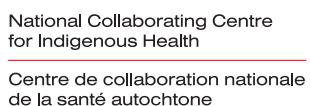


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The background image shows a wide expanse of water, likely a lake or bay, stretching towards a distant horizon. The sky is filled with soft, grey clouds, suggesting an overcast day. In the foreground, dark, jagged rock formations are visible on both sides of the frame. At the very bottom, there are stylized white line-art illustrations of tall grasses and reeds, some with seed heads, growing from the water's edge. Centered in the upper half of the image is text in three languages: English, French, and Ojibwe. The English and French phrases are in italics, while the Ojibwe phrase uses traditional syllabics.

sharing knowledge · making a difference
partager les connaissances · faire une différence
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