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@TheNCCIH and the @UNBC are working to increase safety and respect for Indigenous Peoples in Canada's health systems @GCIndigenous

News release

For immediate release

University of Northern British Columbia institutes working to increase safety and respect for Indigenous Peoples in Canada's health systems

July 6, 2022 — Prince George, unceded lands of the Lheidli T'enneh people, British Columbia — Indigenous Services Canada

The National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health (NCCIH) and the Health Arts Research Centre (HARC), both housed at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC), are receiving new funds to support health care professionals to address anti-Indigenous racism, practise in anti-oppressive ways, and foster cultural humility.

The Hearts-based Education and Anticolonial Learning (HEAL) health care project, which is a joint initiative between the NCCIH and HARC, is anchored in training and education focused on health care students and professionals to create better health outcomes for Indigenous people. The two-year project will promote cultural safety and recognize Indigenous knowledge and anti-colonial approaches in health service provision—central to achieving the goal of eliminating anti-Indigenous racism in health systems.

Indigenous Services Canada is proud to support this important project with a \$1-million contribution over two years, starting in 2022.

The Government of Canada is committed to continuing to work with provincial and territorial governments, Indigenous partners, and all those who work in health care to increase safety and respect for Indigenous Peoples in Canada's health systems.

Quotes

“I congratulate the National Collaborating Centre and the University of Northern British Columbia for their important work to make health care safer for Indigenous Peoples. The Hearts-based Education and Anticolonial Learning (HEAL) project will train health care professionals to recognize and end racism and discrimination in health systems. This critical work will hopefully inspire other organizations across the country and spur faster changes that result in compassionate and competent care for Indigenous Peoples in all health care systems across Canada.”

The Honourable Patty Hajdu
Minister of Indigenous Services



“We need to remember that achieving optimal health has always involved both the arts and sciences. We need to remember that transformational change, including much-needed anti-colonial change in health care, requires shifts in both feelings and thoughts. It’s about head and heart work. We’re excited to put arts and humanities to work in the service of cultural humility and anti-oppression.”

Dr. Sarah de Leeuw, Canada Research Chair, Humanities and Health Inequities Health Arts Research Centre and the Northern Medical Program (UNBC), UBC’s Faculty of Medicine.

“The National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health is proud to be partnering in this absolutely critical work with and for Indigenous Peoples in Canada and beyond. The initiative takes a strength-based approach and creates a safe learning environment for all. The goal is to realize transformation and change in the health care system that supports everyone’s optimal health and well-being.”

Dr. Margo Greenwood, Academic Leader
National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health

“Addressing anti-Indigenous racism in our colonial systems is key to advancing conversations and actions around Truth and Reconciliation. Access to health care in a system that is free of bias is fundamental to advancing the well-being of Indigenous people and communities. I’m excited to follow the work of all involved, and thank Dr. Greenwood and Dr. de Leeuw and our colleagues at the National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health and the Health Arts Research Centre for their ongoing commitment to this critical area of need.”

Dr. Geoffrey Payne, President and Vice-Chancellor
University of Northern British Columbia

Quick facts

- In Budget 2021, the Government of Canada committed to providing \$126.7 million over three years to take action to foster health systems free from racism and discrimination, where Indigenous Peoples are respected and safe.
- This included \$33.3 million to improve access to culturally safe services, with a focus on services for Indigenous women, 2SLGBTQQIA+ people, persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups who may experience intersecting discrimination. This includes expanding support for Indigenous midwifery and doula initiatives and strengthening funding for national Indigenous women’s organizations, as well as regional and grassroots organizations.



Related products

- [Statement by Ministers on the work to eliminate racism against Indigenous Peoples in the health systems](#)
- [Minister of Health and Minister of Indigenous Services Announce Funding & Federal Response to support efforts to address racism in health systems](#)

Associated links

- [Government of Canada actions to address anti-Indigenous racism in health systems](#)
- [Addressing anti-Indigenous racism in health systems: Federal response](#)

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