

20
24/25

Providence Health Care

Indigenous Wellness & Reconciliation Action Plan Renewal

Priorities for 2024 and beyond



**Providence
Health Care**

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A Note on Terminology

Throughout Providence Health Care’s strategic plan, Mission: Forward, and this refreshed Indigenous Wellness and Reconciliation Action Plan (IWRAP) the term, “Indigenous” is used in reference to individuals of First Nations, Métis and Inuit ancestry.

Recognizing that First Nations, Métis and Inuit are diverse and are each distinct, rights-bearing Peoples, Providence commits to a distinctions-based approach to ensure that the unique rights, interests and circumstances of these three distinct groups are acknowledged, affirmed and implemented. Providence also commits to support collective efforts amongst Indigenous Peoples, honouring aspects of common philosophy and experience, and to build working coalitions towards shared health and wellness goals.

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Renewing the Action Plan: Building on Our Foundations

Addressing anti-Indigenous racism and enhancing Indigenous cultural safety requires sustained, yet adaptive and responsive, action.

As such, we are renewing the [Indigenous Wellness and Reconciliation Action Plan \(IWRAP\)](#) that we issued in 2022 – sustaining our foundational elements while sharing refreshed priorities that reflect new learning, progress made-to-date, feedback and the ongoing growth of our organization’s capacity in Indigenous cultural safety.

The progress we have made since implementing the first iteration of the IWRAP in 2022 is highlighted in our [2022-24 IWR Summary Report](#).



The 2022-24 IWR Summary Report showcases the extensive work across Providence, including improvements to physical spaces and enhanced access to cultural and spiritual care. These efforts contribute to our shared goal of advancing health equity and justice for First Nations communities and Indigenous patients and families.

The work thus far has focused on establishing the key foundations and levers for systems change. We are poised to build on this foundation through renewed actions that deepen the integration of Indigenous cultural safety into everything we do, and which focus on improvements that meaningfully and demonstrably improve patient and resident care and experience.

Indigenous Wellness and Reconciliation (IWR) Improvement Philosophy

Providence has made a steadfast commitment to invest in and prioritize actions that ensure the organization's services, settings, staff and research proactively shape culturally safe experiences for Indigenous patients, residents and families accessing care with us. This dedication aims to contribute to equity and improved health outcomes that are important to Indigenous Peoples and communities.

Indigenous cultural safety (ICS) in health care is an emerging, complex and evolving field of study and practice. It seeks to create environments where Indigenous patients and residents feel respected, valued and free from racism and discrimination during their health care journey. Rooted in the recognition of power imbalances, historical injustices and ongoing systemic inequities, cultural safety extends beyond cultural awareness and sensitivity, demanding active reflection and structural changes.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach when it comes to creating cultural safety in systems and at point-of-care; it is nuanced, challenging and thoughtful work. We believe that the most effective way to make this change is through an approach that advances along two paths:

- 1) Embedding ICS within the most core systems foundations, the areas that shape organizational behaviour and norms – planning, policy, people management, and data.
- 2) Scoping and implementing chosen improvement projects that make a difference at point-of-care in priority areas that we can measure and see.

In moving these two paths forward in parallel, with each informing the other, we accelerate the desired change, make best use of the time of our relatively small Indigenous Wellness and Reconciliation (IWR) team, and glean motivation, which keeps us engaged in the challenging and rewarding aspects of the work, and supports us to enhance the knowledge base in an emerging field.

We know that when Providence is at its best, we can change the world. We are committed to reconciliation in action in health care, and know that we have a unique opportunity and responsibility to try and get this right. We believe that the shared value of spirituality honoured by both Indigenous Peoples and Providence Health Care unifies our efforts for a more just and promising future.



Foundational Principles

How we do our work is just as important as what we do. This section of the plan draws on the Foundational Principles from Providence's [Mission: Forward strategic plan](#), and describes what they mean in the context of Indigenous wellness and reconciliation. These Principles guide how we, as Providence, will show up in the implementation of this action plan, and in our relationships with Indigenous Peoples.



Reconciliation

Reconciliation is not an outcome, but a process, and includes commitment and actions that we undertake each and every day. Reconciliation is relationship. It requires us to lay proper groundwork through hearing truth, pursuing justice, and building respectful and reciprocal relations. Reconciliation is restoration. It requires recompense and investment in reconstruction.



Mission/Vision/Values

We are driven by compassion and commitment to social justice. We are responsible for speaking up on issues of injustice and oppression, sharing truths and taking action to redress inequities. We believe that spiritual care is part of health care. We must treat the whole person — body, mind and spirit – in accordance with their own spiritual and cultural beliefs.



Ethics

Being in right relations in the territories of First Nations means respecting cultural protocols and Indigenous Law. We recognize our work is better if we draw upon all knowledges, methodologies, and ways of being. All knowledge systems are equally valid. Indigenous Peoples hold rights to intellectual property and data governance.





Sustainability

Indigenous Peoples sustained the health, wellness and prosperity of their peoples and territories for millennia. Achieving equity, dignity and Indigenous human rights requires sustained investment. Being good uninvited guests on the territories of Host Nations includes embedding environmental sustainability in everything we do.



Person and Family-Centred Care

Indigenous Peoples' wellness is supported by a holistic understanding of a human being in relationship with themselves, their kin, their environment, and their past and future generations. Models of care must reflect these understandings. Cultural safety is a desired outcome of the care relationship with Indigenous patients and residents and can only be defined by them.

Person and family-centred care means seeing oneself reflected and feeling affirmed in one's identity. This requires the vigilant application of anti-racist and cultural safety lenses across our organization and the active celebration and honouring of the culture, successes, contributions, and rights of Indigenous Peoples.



Partnerships-Forward: Partnerships

Goal: Establish meaningful reciprocal partnerships with the sovereign Host Nations.

Priorities

- Maintain regular processes of collaboration with Host Nations leadership, Knowledge Keepers and advisors.
- Implement health system improvement initiatives with the [First Nations & Aboriginal Primary Care Network](#).
- Embed meaningful opportunities for Host Nations and Indigenous businesses into our procurement processes.
- Gather input from and seek deep understanding of the experiences of Indigenous patients, families, residents, and service organizations to help improve our care delivery.

How will our actions
shape the future and
lead to change?

We will have established meaningful and reciprocal relationships that result in benefits to all, a strong Indigenous cultural and governance presence across the work of Providence, and consistent engagement processes to understand the priorities and expectations of Indigenous patients, residents and families served by Providence.





Quality-Forward: Exceptional Quality, Safety and Value

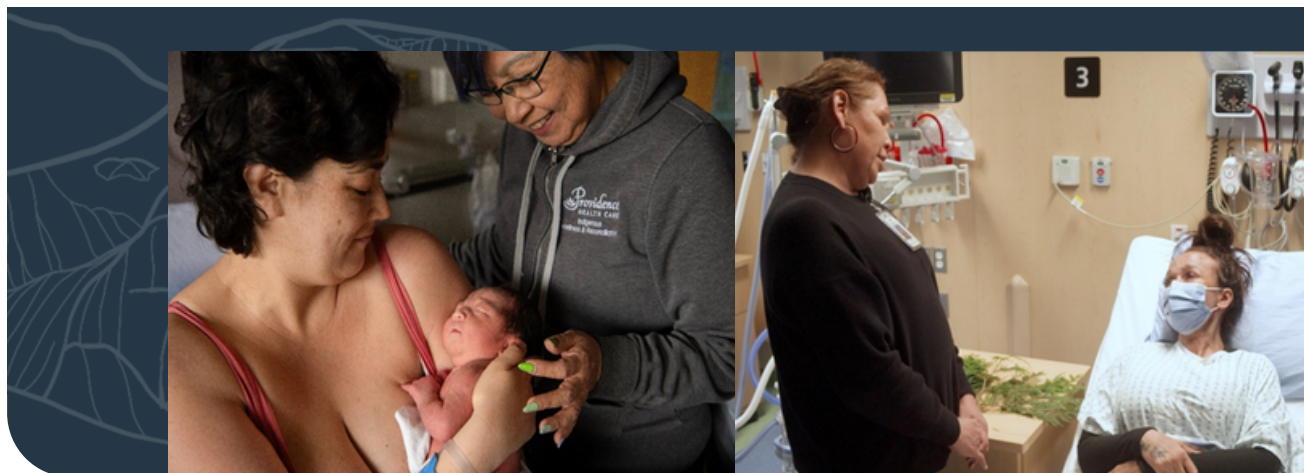
Goal: Deliver identity-affirming health care for Indigenous patients and families.

Priorities

- Expand and further develop the [Indigenous Wellness Liaison \(IWL\) program](#).
- Advance cultural safety in critical incidents and complaints investigations and responses.
- Implement and evaluate focused Indigenous cultural safety improvement projects in high priority sites and care areas.
- Increase the cultural safety of our physical spaces.
- Expand access to cultural and traditional foods in Providence facilities.
- Advance a shared vision and service planning with the Host Nations for a new Indigenous Wellness and Welcoming Centre.

How will our actions shape the future and lead to change?

Within five years, we will have enhanced our Indigenous-specific services, implemented visible improvements to our facilities, and undertaken initiatives to address the unique and pressing needs of Indigenous women. Still, we know that despite this commitment, patients and residents may still experience harm. We are committed to ensuring that we are transparent, accountable and learn from those events and will improve the safety and cultural relevance of our processes for complaints and incidents.





People-Forward: Inspiring People and Teams

Goal: Deliver identity-affirming health care for Indigenous patients and families.

Priorities

- Undertake practical and actionable Indigenous Cultural Safety education.
- Improve safety and quality of Indigenous self-identification (ISI) processes.
- Advance cultural safety reviews of Providence policies.
- Embed the Cultural Safety and Humility Standard (HSO) and Indigenous Cultural Safety Policy into organizational and care delivery practices.
- Promote Indigenous recruitment and retention measures that make Providence a great place to work for Indigenous employees and medical staff.

How will our actions shape the future and lead to change?

Within five years, we will have increased our recruitment and retention of Indigenous staff due to our multi-faceted support of Indigenous dignity and identity, and our active anti-racism culture. Our staff will have received training as well as practical practice-based supports and coaching in anti-racism and cultural safety. Our governance and operations are enriched by Indigenous thought leadership at all levels.





Learning-Forward: Discover, Learn & Innovate for Impact

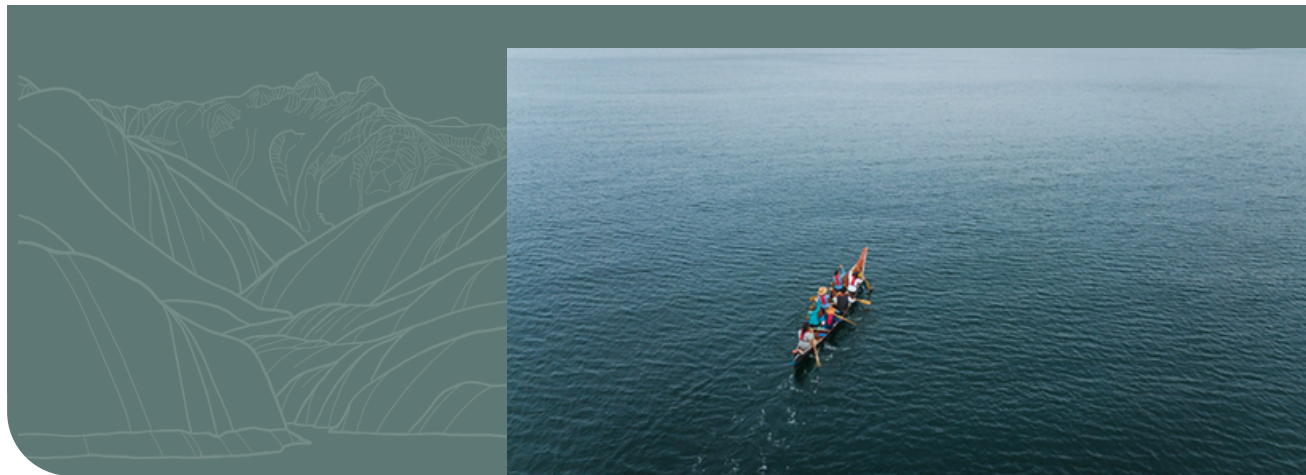
Goal: In accordance with Indigenous data governance principles, gather and utilize data to eradicate anti-Indigenous racism and contribute to health system performance for Indigenous patients and families.

Priorities

- Embed Indigenous leadership and decision-making structures into our research systems and processes.
- Lead the development and publication of actionable and reliable ICS indicators that illuminate patient experience, health system performance, and the effectiveness of our efforts and investments.
- Provide safe and identity affirming ways for Indigenous peoples to share their experiences of care at Providence sites.
- Uphold Indigenous data governance principles, policy, and protocol in our knowledge gathering, analysis, and dissemination.

How will our actions
shape the future and
lead to change?

Within five years, we will have supported our workforce with the required Indigenous cultural safety knowledge and tools to perform at their best, made safe and equitable space for Indigenous knowledge and methodologies, privileged Indigenous-led research and data projects on Indigenous-led priorities, and deployed our strong research and data platforms to amplify regular reporting on health system and service performance for Indigenous patients.



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