



In Plain Sight - One Year Later

NNPBC's offices are on the traditional and unceded territories of xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7meshulh Temíxw, Səl'ílwata?/Selilwítlh (Tsleil-Waututh), and Syilx Nations. NNPBC humbly acknowledges all the unceded and traditional territories that we live, work, learn, and play on for which we are eternally grateful.

December 2021

In 2020, the BC Government commissioned Dr Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond to conduct an in-depth investigation into reports of Indigenous-specific racism in BC's health care system. This was in response to widespread reports of racist incidents taking place in hospitals and clinics throughout the province. Upon completion, the report entitled [*In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care*](#) (herein referred to as *In Plain Sight*) was published and made available to the public in November 2020. As part of this report, a series of 24 recommendations were made with specific focus on addressing systems, behaviours, and beliefs, with the goal of improving access to a culturally safe health care system for BC's Indigenous peoples.¹

The report concludes that the vast majority of Indigenous peoples (84%) have experienced racism and/or discrimination in the health care system, and that this racism has negatively and disproportionately impacted the health outcomes of Indigenous peoples. *In Plain Sight* also includes a series of recommendations to be applied at all levels of health care from government to point of care. Professional associations, regulatory colleges and unions have a responsibility to play an active role in being accountable for addressing these problems, using appropriate language, and ensuring that Indigenous leadership tables are established to oversee these recommendations.

As the professional association, NNPBC wholeheartedly commits to this work to ensure that we enact each of these important recommendations. Nurses have a foundational responsibility to practice nursing ethically and to provide safe and competent care. The racism described in the *In Plain Sight* report violates the public's trust by neglecting the most fundamental nursing duty: to provide safe care. NNPBC condemns systemic racism perpetuated on patients and understands that nurses interact with people in all sectors, across all domains of practice from first to last breath and have an opportunity to not only learn from the experiences of Indigenous peoples in health care, but to continue to uphold our first principle to provide safe, ethical and competent care.

NNPBC and its predecessor professional nursing associations have taken a number of actions to date that represent our collective commitment in realizing this vision as outlined in our [*Commitment to Indigenous Health*](#) published in December 2020. These include:

- Creating a designated appointed Indigenous Board Director from the pool of Indigenous councillors. The individual in this position ensures ongoing informed representation on matters affecting Indigenous health, Indigenous nurses and nurse practitioners, and the health of Indigenous peoples of British Columbia.
- Building capacity for Indigenous leadership and engagement by advocating at the local, provincial, and national levels of nursing and nurse practitioner associations and nursing professional regulatory bodies.
- Initiating and supporting a team whereby NNPBC members working in Indigenous health are recognized as expert voices for providing advice to NNPBC on matters related to Indigenous health nursing practice and policy.

¹ ME Turpel-Lafond, 'In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care' (Nov 2020). <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/613/2020/11/In-Plain-Sight-Full-Report.pdf>



- Preparing resolutions with respect to issues associated with Indigenous health to the NNPBC Annual General Meeting.
- Continuing to address institutional racism and institutional barriers encountered by Indigenous peoples.

NNPBC recognizes that there are still additional avenues that must be explored so that the association can better represent the unique and diverse interests of Indigenous nurses as well as inform and educate other nurses with respect to cultural safety and humility as led by our Indigenous colleagues.

Current Status

NNPBC has ensured that Indigenous health and Indigenous nursing issues are high priority policy areas for the association.

Policy statements include:

- [NNPBC Commitment to Indigenous Health](#)
- [Resources and Support for Indigenous Peoples](#)
- [Upholding Truth & Reconciliation Recommendations](#)
- [Understanding Allyship](#)

Our team is also currently working on creating an Indigenous health and nursing section on the NNPBC website. As part of this defined area of work, NNPBC will create a new 'Indigenous Nursing & Health Resources' webpage that will function as the centralized location for issues briefs, position statements, education opportunities, resources and other advocacy work the association undertakes. Moreover, in September 2021, NNPBC launched the [Truth Before Reconciliation webinar series](#), available to all nurses.

NNPBC continues its work with partner agencies on a variety of longer-term strategies in order to continue this important work. These include:

- Hiring an Indigenous Diversity and Inclusion staff member
- Implementing an Indigenous scholar in residence program
- The ongoing support and administration of an Indigenous-led Policy Table
- Sourcing out Continuing Professional Development for Indigenous nurses
- Indigenous health nursing conference and 'think tank'

NNPBC will keep members apprised of the status of these initiatives via our website, newsletters, and social media channels.

Resources:

- [In Plain Sight- Full Report](#)
- [NNPBC Board Statement- In Plain Sight](#)