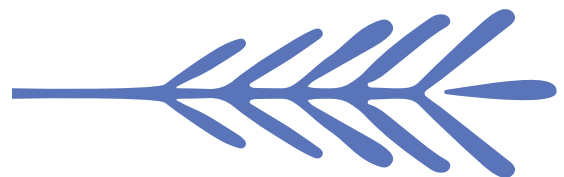




Annual Report

2019 / 2020



Message From The Ceo & Chairperson

What an exciting time to work with First Peoples Wellness Circle! We are finding ourselves on a journey – a journey of growth, development, building new and renewing existing partnerships, and new learning. In June 2019 we released the Mental Wellness Teams Comprehensive Needs Assessment and began the work of developing a comprehensive support network for these teams. In our first year developing the network we have learned so much about our skills and capacity as a team, an organization, and as individual staff members. In many ways, we are growing right alongside the Teams we are serving! We have been invigorated by the connections we are making with Mental Wellness Teams and excited by the stories of pride, knowledge, and successes that these teams have experienced.



We cannot wait to help them share these stories and practices as it highlights so much about the importance of culture, knowledge, and practices in achieving wellness. We are so grateful for all the dedicated Mental Wellness Team members who are sharing their knowledge, have faith in our work and are helping us to create a network that can truly elevate the amazing work happening in our communities. Most of all, we look forward to forging strong relationships with Mental Wellness Teams and to be their advocate and supporter to continue their important work.

In many ways we are in an inaugural year; a year of many firsts. With this comes our own organizational growth and development. We have welcomed new staff and new members to the Board of Directors and look forward to their contributions to First Peoples. This year has taught us that it's important to dream big and more important to do what is possible. It has reminded us that relationships are built on trust and a willingness to take risks, they must be nurtured and how important connections are to everything we do. We are fortunate for the strong friendships and relationships we have with our partners at Thunderbird Partnership Foundation and the Assembly of First Nations who supports our work and our development. We are humbled by the trust so many of our partners have in us and what we can do to advance implementation of the First Nation Mental Wellness Continuum Framework. For all of this, we are grateful, and we look ahead to the next part of our journey together.

Brenda M Restoule, Ph.D., C.Psych
Chief Executive Officer

William J Mussell, LLB (Hons)
Chair of the Board

First Peoples Embarks On Delivering Comprehensive Supports For Mental Wellness Teams

In June 2019 we released the Mental Wellness Teams Comprehensive Needs Assessment that outlined areas for growth, development and improved capacity for Mental Wellness Teams. The needs assessment outlined many of the critical factors noted in the First Nation Mental Wellness Continuum Framework; culture as foundation to their work, enhanced flexible funding, quality health systems and competent workforce and need for collaboration and partnership. The needs assessment highlighted the need for the development of a comprehensive support network for Mental Wellness Teams. In our inaugural year of providing comprehensive supports to Mental Wellness Teams we focused our energies on establishing relationships, creating a database on the Teams and providing resources related to training, networking and capacity building. A nation where First Peoples and our communities experience holistic health and wellness, through living our diverse cultural values, beliefs, and practices.

Engagement and Relationship Development

Mental Wellness Teams were brought together in April 2019 in Winnipeg, MB to participate in the Mental Wellness Forum that was co-sponsored by Assembly of First Nations, Thunderbird Partnership Foundation and First Peoples Wellness Circle. Teams were brought together prior to the Forum for a half day of networking, sharing and validation meeting. We were fortunate to have the planning work for comprehensive supports for Mental Wellness Teams guided by Danny Manitowabi (pictured below), the original creator of the Mental Wellness Team concept and founder of the first Mental Wellness Team in Canada. He joined the meeting and provided words of support and gratitude for the work of the Teams who use cultural practices and knowledge to bring mental wellness to First Nation communities.



Teams from coast to coast to coast highlighted the innovative work they are doing in the communities through rapid-fire presentations. A central tenet to their work is the foundational component of culture to providing mental wellness services. In some cases, this was through inclusion of language, on the land activities, cultural practices and access to cultural workers and Elders. These teams have identified and developed resources to attend to cultural meaning and knowledge that ensures community needs are met effectively and highlighted the need to share best practices and cultural resources across teams.

Approximately 50 people from Mental Wellness Teams validated the information collected through the Comprehensive Needs Assessment noting important priorities related to:



Access to Cultural Supports



Enhanced Flexible Funding



Training and Capacity Building



Engagement opportunities to build relationships, learn more about their strengths and needs, and validate the outcomes of the needs assessment was a main activity for FPWC team in this initial year of creating the Mental Wellness Team (MWT) Network. A total of 10 engagement sessions through regional and national gatherings were completed throughout the year with a total of 239 participants. Sessions were held in Northwest Territories, Manitoba, Ontario, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Alberta and Quebec.

It is anticipated in the coming fiscal year that further efforts will be made to engage with MWTs in those regions where there was limited relationship building. Engagement sessions are also being used to build a database of MWTs that will catalogue key information including First Nations served, number of team members, and specialty or expertise of the team.

Engagement produced opportunities for FPWC to hear more stories of successes and challenges of the MWTs. These challenges were also noticeable during the engagement phase when retention issues and limited human resources made it difficult to establish and/or maintain connections with the Teams across the regions. Since MWTs work in isolation in most regions, there were very few natural opportunities to connect with them at shared gatherings or meetings.

FPWC team worked diligently throughout the year exploring creative ways to connect with and build relationships with MWTs across the country through webinars, attendance at stakeholder meetings, and having a presence at some national gatherings or conferences. FPWC attended 4 national gatherings and 2 regional meetings to meet with MWTs and to raise awareness of the comprehensive supports being developed.

Governance

An intention in this initial year is to support the development of a governance model for the network that will ensure Mental Wellness Teams provide guidance and direction to First Peoples Wellness Circle on the design and delivery of the comprehensive supports set out through the needs assessment. During engagement sessions, MWTs were supported to develop Regional Advisory Committees. Although the original intention was to host 8 Regional Advisory Committees, Atlantic First Nations indicated their desire to be able to share and network they opted to host 3 separate Regional Advisory Committees (RAC) in Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia. With gradual engagement occurring at varied rates across the country,

the development of RACs has also been a gradual process. By the end of the fiscal year, there were 3 Regional Advisory Committees established; New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Ontario. All of these areas had pre-existing regional collaborative efforts that led to the capacity to quickly create RACs. There are currently 3 RACs in development in Alberta, Manitoba and Prince Edward Island regions. Until RACs are created across the country the establishment of a National Advisory Committee has been stalled. FPWC is currently holding three (3) seats on the Board of Directors for MWTs that are intended to be filled by members of the National Advisory Committee.

Capacity Building and Networking

Consistently voiced throughout the needs assessment, validation and engagement phases, MWTs shared a need to have access to culturally relevant training and to be able to network across Teams in order to build their capacity. During the April 2019 validation session, 7 of the Teams shared details about who they are, First Nations they serve and some key successes of their work. Participants who attended the April session voiced their desire to have more opportunities with more time to network, learn about the innovation and share best practices happening across Teams.

New Brunswick MWTs hosted the first MWT Regional Gathering in February 2020 in Fredericton, NB. This gathering focused on sharing of best practices and worker self-care. All 3 MWTs that are established in New Brunswick attended the gathering with a total of 30 team members participating. A number of topics were discussed that examined ways to improve effectiveness and capacity of the teams. Some key highlights of the gathering included members sharing their gifts to promote self-care within the teams, an action plan for ongoing collaboration between the teams and a recommendation that their Team model may be a template on establishing effective Mental Wellness Teams.



Participants of the New Brunswick Regional Gathering included members for the 3 Mental Wellness Teams



Self-care activities for the 2 days included painting and making ash baskets, these activities were led by Mental Wellness Team members who carry these gifts



We recognized the need to immediately invest in capacity development for MWT workforce. Regional and/or national trainings were offered to MWTs on:

- Implementation of the First Nation Mental Wellness Continuum Framework
- Culture as Foundation
- Land Based Healing

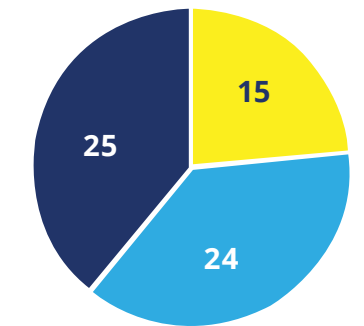
Working closely with our partners at Thunderbird Partnership Foundation, these trainings were offered between January and March 2020.

Training Participants

A total of 64 participants were trained across the 3 training sessions to be able to use cultural knowledge and practice to improve mental wellness in First Nation communities. Notably, the Land Based Healing was offered as a national training using a train the trainer model which received considerable interest by Teams to build their capacity and share this knowledge back in their home territories and regions. Efforts to support the spread for land-based healing knowledge will be further undertaken in the upcoming year.



Participants and facilitators from the Land Based Healing Train the Trainer session held in Enoch, AB in March 2020



- Land Based Healing
- Culture as Foundation
- FNMWCF



Another way to network and share best practices is through a Community of Practice site. While FPWC continues to explore the design and development of a Community of Practice the 25 participants who completed the Land Based Healing training were introduced to a similar site hosted by Thunderbird Partnership Foundation. As a response to the COVID-19 pandemic MWT members were invited to a Community Wellness Hub that intends to provide a platform for sharing of innovations, best practices and resources for the workforce to have access to information that can increase the efficacy of their response to community needs during a pandemic. It is expected that in the coming year we will learn how a Community of Practice site has improved capacity, learning opportunities and networking for MWTs.

A specific set of skills, tools and resources are required for Mental Wellness Teams who specialize in and offer crisis response and crisis support services. This multi-year project to build competency of MWTs in the area of crisis support, response and planning uses the service delivery model from Thunderbird Partnership Foundation to examine what type of skills, resources and competencies are required to respond to multiple and complex traumas in First Nation communities. This year, FPWC team focused on an environmental scan of models and best practices that could aid in the design of resources that can create a competent workforce in complex crisis support, response and planning.

To meet the needs of Teams, FPWC embarked on development of curriculum and resources to support capacity development.

Below is a short description of the work carried out in 2019 - 2020.

Community Engagement - Training: This curriculum focuses on key concepts and skills that are fundamental for Mental Wellness Teams members in building an effective service. This training will provide participants with the tools and resources to facilitate community engagement sessions and to build relationships that can assist in developing services to meet community needs.

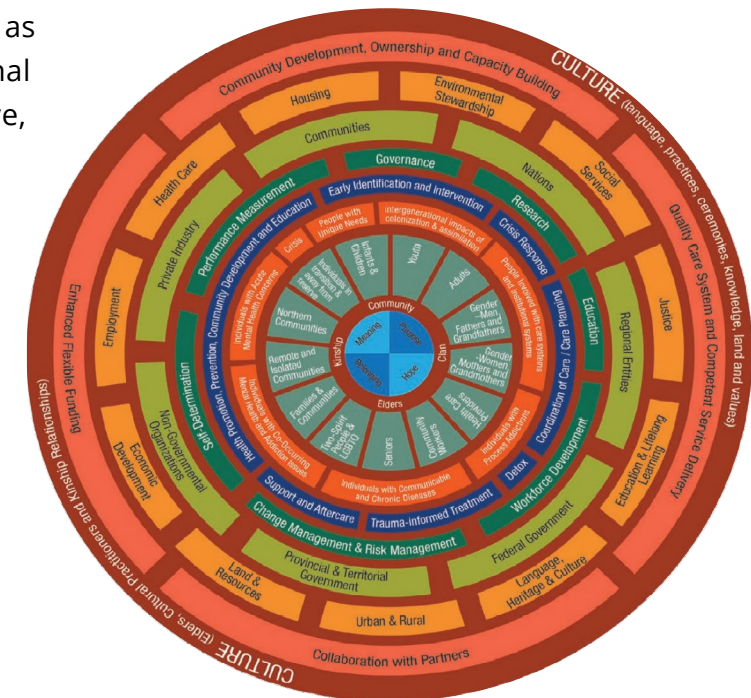
Collaboration and Partnerships: A Toolkit: Mental Wellness Teams are required to work across multiple sectors including within, across and outside of First Nation communities with multiple agencies and organizations. This toolkit will define the differences between partnerships and collaboration and identify requisite skills and tools necessary to build these important relationships. Members will learn how to apply these skills and tools in different contexts with different types of partners. Strategies on how to design effective collaborative initiatives will also be taught in the toolkit.

Trauma Informed Care - Train the Trainer: The original Trauma Informed Care training has been revised to a train the trainer model that will support increased capacity of Mental Wellness Teams and First Nation community workers. The training will increase skills of participants to be able to deliver training on trauma informed care and how to support First Nations people to heal from trauma.

Working to Support First Nations Mental Wellness

For several years, First Peoples has worked alongside its partners – Thunderbird Partnership Foundation, Assembly of First Nations, First Nation and Inuit Health Branch of Indigenous Services Canada - to ensure mental wellness for First Nations people is built on a strong foundation as outlined in the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework. The Framework is based on a First Nations worldview that recognizes the interconnected, holistic, strengths-based approach to achieve wellness. It is a tool that demonstrates the complexity of what is already working in First Nations communities and promotes First Nations knowledge and evidence as foundational to community, regional and national systems level change. We continue to work with the Implementation Team to bring about systemic changes and see ongoing investments in mental wellness, including investments for Mental Wellness Teams and enhanced crisis response. A progress report from the first 3 years of implementation was released that have several highlights including:

- Resources and tool development – service delivery models and training models, implementation guide and training, trauma informed care training, Wise Practices website, Connecting with Culture for Life youth website
- Investments in resources for First Nations to plan and implement services using the Framework as a guide and tool
- The new Health and Wellness Planning Guide for planning and evaluation based on First Nations knowledge and evidence including use of the indicators from the Framework
- Integration and alignment of mental wellness services within ISC
- Achievements by partners and regions such as Indigenous Community Development National Strategy, Promote Life Together Collaborative, FNHA's cultural competency training, enhancing the circle of mental wellness care in PEI.
- Links and shifts across federal departments to support community planning, changes in paradigms and links to physical health.



In 2019/2020 First Peoples continued to lead or support implementation work related to:

- Design of an evaluation framework for implementation
- Expand practices and protocols on Emergency Management to include mental wellness in the design and delivery of community-based plans
- Safe policy pathways to address childhood sexual abuse
- Ensuring key tenets of the Framework are embedded into mental health promotion research involving First Nations funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada
- Training on use of implementing the Framework as it relates to policy development and in the development of the Indigenous language strategy
- Advocating for equitable funding for Indigenous organizations to create a systems shift in the equity of mental wellness services to First Nations
- Supporting First Nation partners in the Saskatchewan region to develop an opioid strategy alongside Thunderbird Partnership Foundation.

Special Projects

We recognize the value of partnership and collaborative efforts in advancing the dialogue and actions on First Nation mental wellness that is rooted in good cultural ways and evidence. This past year First Peoples undertook projects that would highlight First Nation evidence and joined research projects that held strong cultural evidence around mental wellness. Our efforts were focused on trauma, life promotion and child and youth wellness. A short description of each of these projects are highlighted below:

Post-Traumatic Stress: In 2019 Public Health Agency of Canada was legislated by the Government of Canada to develop the [Federal Framework on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: Recognition, Collaboration and Support \(www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/federal-framework-post-traumatic-stress-disorder.html\)](http://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/federal-framework-post-traumatic-stress-disorder.html).

First Peoples developed a briefing note on *Post-Traumatic Stress and First Nations* that was used to frame considerations for the First Nation workforce. The briefing note was guided by a working group that identified unique challenges for this workforce and how use of culture practices and evidence can support healing from trauma of individuals, families and communities. The briefing note can be found here: [Briefing Note https://11d19480-8ac9-4dee-a0f8-02f67b6947c6.filesusr.com/ugd/0265aec211634a1b04691aadf6ae72ab7dc1b.pdf](https://11d19480-8ac9-4dee-a0f8-02f67b6947c6.filesusr.com/ugd/0265aec211634a1b04691aadf6ae72ab7dc1b.pdf)

Life Promotion Initiatives

Feather Carriers: The Youth Hope Fund is administered by a Youth Council through First Nation and Inuit Health Branch of Indigenous Services Canada and is intended to invest in empowerment, healing and wellness youth led initiatives. First Peoples was honored by the youth recognition of our dedication to these pillars when awarded funding and we invested our fund in the Feather Carriers program.

Between December 2019 and March 2020 Feather Carriers provided four full days of youth life promotion workshops and had 28 Indigenous youth from across the North Simcoe Muskoka region participate in the workshops. All four days of workshops incorporated cultural knowledge and teachings, and two days of workshops involved land-based activities and a youth directed outdoor video shoot. Through this process a partnership was developed with We Matter Campaign, an Indigenous youth-led organization focused on life promotion, who co-facilitated a 2 day youth retreat in March with Feather Carriers: Leadership for Life Promotion. As part of this retreat youth had the opportunity to create art and record life promotion videos, which will be shared through the We Matter resource library. In total there were 2 life promotion videos and 2 art pieces created that will be uploaded to the We Matter website. The youth who attended the retreat also had the opportunity to learn about opportunities through We Matter; Ambassadors of Hope program and Ontario Support Network Program. This included participation in a planning session for the Ontario Support Network program to designing a youth-led culture-based life promotion event. The planning for this event was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, but youth expressed interest in revising delivery to a virtual format. In addition to the partnership with We Matter, Feather Carriers also developed a relationship with the #NotOurMedicine Campaign, which is an Indigenous youth-led campaign to raise awareness about the opioid epidemic in North Simcoe Muskoka. Feather Carriers collaborated with a group of 16 Indigenous youth and Indigenous staff from 7 organizations to create a poem titled The Promise of Spring. Youth were engaged in all aspects of the recording and directing a video shoot of the poetry video that will be publicly released and will be part of the life promotion online video series. Recordings were also completed for two of our knowledge keepers sharing teachings with youth on:

- 1) the Life Promotion Eagle Staff and
- 2) teachings of the Two-Row Wampum.

These videos are also in the final editing stage and will be released as part of the life promotion video series for youth in summer 2020. The youth video can be viewed here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vO2bOwpD_4I&feature=youtu.be

Plans to partner with Pikangikum First Nation to deliver life promotion workshops to youth and community members was disrupted and postponed due to COVID-19 with the intention of engagement later in the 20/21 fiscal year.

A full report of the work of Feather Carriers is included as an addendum to the annual report.

Promote Life Collaborative:

First Peoples completed an 18-month partnership with the Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement on a life promotion project. This project focused on supporting 6 teams of Indigenous and non-Indigenous partners to establish life promotion projects. These projects were guided by coaches who supported the teams to use the First Nation Mental Wellness Continuum Framework in the design and implementation of the projects. Some key successes of this project included shifts in health systems regarding interventions from a cultural perspective, First Nations culture being honored and at the center of a project that created safety for community members to openly demonstrate their culture, youth empowerment, and investments in relationships that created strong partnerships leading to changes in actions within the health system. In the coming year, First Peoples will work with CFHI and other partners in the design of the knowledge translation document.

Child and Youth Mental Wellness:

- **School Mental Health Ontario:** First Peoples provides consultation services to School Mental Health Ontario facilitating webinars on First Nation mental wellness for students to increase the capacity of school mental health professionals and teachers, consultation on resources and participation in the national roundtable on systemic approaches to student (K-12) wellbeing
- **I AM WELL - Pathways Research Grant:** First Peoples is a research partner with Wikwemikong Unceded First Nation, Laurentian University and other Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars investigating Anish Naa Gigi: Aboriginal Child Wellbeing Measure; a child and youth wellness measurement completely designed and developed by First Nation children. The tool can be used by Indigenous communities (it has been validated in Inuit and Metis communities) in ways that meet their local needs, provide opportunities to identify children's needs earlier in the illness trajectory and, create pathways to support and provide children with a safe space to talk about their wellness with immediate connection to local resources. This research grant is exploring the validity and reliability of the measure as an early intervention tool.
- **Knowledge Development and Exchange (KDE) Hub:** This Hub is supporting projects from the Mental Health Promotion Innovation Fund of the Public Health Agency of Canada in knowledge development and exchange. First Peoples is part of the leadership team and holds the role of ensuring First Nations knowledge and evidence is built into the projects and to assist in connection to First Nation resources.

Organization Growth and Development

Organizational growth has brought some new faces at the governance and staff level. In November 2019 First Peoples welcomed a new staff to the team, Paula Naponse, as the Knowledge Exchange Facilitator. New board members were welcomed in January 2020; Denise McCuaig (Metis, BC), Paul Andrews (Dene, NWT), Carla Cochrane (Ojibway/Cree, MB) and Roseanne Sark (Mi'kmaq, PEI). All new members to the organization bring knowledge and regional perspectives that will assist in meeting the mandate of First Peoples. These new board members join existing board members Dr. William (Bill) Mussell (Chairperson), Dr. Ed Connors (Vice Chair), Dr. Caroline Tait (Secretary/Treasurer), Dr. Carol Hopkins and M. Terry Adler. Board training was held in February 2020 that focused on corporate structure and responsibilities, the fiduciary responsibilities of the Board of Directors, FPWC's accomplishments since incorporating and initial development of a comprehensive work plan for the Board of Directors.

Ongoing investments in the infrastructure and operational management of FPWC continued throughout the year to allow for increased capabilities and accountability to the funders and stakeholders. Investments occurred in the area of financial management systems, operations and governance.

Conferences and Committees

Working Groups

- Co-Chair of the First Nation Mental Wellness Continuum Framework Implementation Team
- Elder to the First Nation Mental Wellness Continuum Framework Implementation Team
- Co-Chair of the Assembly of First Nations Mental Wellness Committee
- Committee member to the National Collaborative on Suicide Prevention
- Guidance group members and coaches for Promote Life Collaborative with Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement
- Leadership team member for the Knowledge Development and Exchange Hub of the Mental Health Innovation Fund projects.

Invited Speaker

Assembly of First Nation - National Mental Wellness Forum.

- Indigenous Knowledge to Address Trauma (*keynote*)
- Safe Policy Pathways to Address Child Sexual Abuse in First Nations Communities (*worksp*)
- Mental Wellness Team competency development (*workshop*)
- First Nation Mental Wellness Continuum Framework Progress Report (*workshop*)

PrevNet Conference. Creating Hope, Belonging, Meaning and Purpose in the Lives of Indigenous Children and Youth. (*concurrent workshop*)

First Nation Health Association. Returning to the Teachings for Health and Wellness (*keynote*)

Disaster Psychiatry Canada. First Do No Harm: How to Help Prevent Potential Mental Health Impacts on First Nations Communities During Emergencies.

Canadian Mental Health Association National Conference. Promoting Life Together Collaborative: Life Promotion, Partnership Building & Engagement (*concurrent workshop*)

Assembly of First Nation's Annual General Assembly. First Nation Mental Wellness Continuum Framework Progress Report (*workshop*)

Within Between Around: YSDRB Mental Health Conference. Children and Youth Wellness in a Diverse World: What Does Indigenous Knowledge Have to Offer All of Us? (*keynote*)

Southeast Resource Development Council. Mental Wellness Team Comprehensive Needs Assessment. (*presentation*)

International Initiative on Mental Health Leadership. International Leadership Panel on how each country and organization is leading the way forward on access, accountability and action.

AFN's Joint Forum on Administrative & Operative Tools. Mental Wellness Indicators & the First Nation Mental Wellness Continuum Framework (*presentation*)

First Nation Health Managers Association.

Comprehensive Needs Assessment of Mental Wellness Teams (*concurrent workshop*)

Indigenous Services Canada – National Health Emergency Management Network Meeting.

Mental Health Needs During Emergencies (*presentation*)

First Nation Inuit Health Branch – Mental Wellness Cluster Lead Meeting.

First Peoples Wellness Circle (*presentation*)

New Brunswick Mental Wellness Team Regional Gathering. Building the Foundation for Mental Wellness in Our Communities.

Assembly of First Nation’s National Climate Gathering. Climate Change, Emergency Management and Mental Wellness. (*panel presentation*)

Other

- Assembly of First Nation’s National Mental Wellness Forum. April 2019. *Booth participant.*
- Assembly of First Nation’s Annual General Assembly. July 2019. *Booth participant.*
- International Initiative on Mental Health Leadership. September 2019. *Wharerata (Indigenous) exchange participant.*
- First Nation Health Managers Association. November 2019. *Booth participant.*
- Assembly of First Nation’s Special Chiefs Assembly. December 2019. *Booth participant.*

Covid-19 and Our Pandemic Response

In March 2019 a global pandemic was declared that has work, home and community implications. Many of the everyday activities were put on hold as work and schools shut their doors, First Nation communities set up community boundary checkpoints or closed their borders to all non-essential travel and personal and work activities were cancelled. First Peoples immediately responded to the shifts in needs for First Nation communities by providing the following to Mental Wellness Teams:

- Webinars/video training offered weekly to Mental Wellness Teams and frontline mental wellness workers to promoting and providing mental wellness support during the pandemic.
- Development of resources in the form of info sheets on supporting mental wellness during a pandemic.
- Submitted a successful proposal that secured a virtual care platform with 190 clinician accounts and access to devices to ensure access to services and continuity of care for community members
- Working with partners on how to support and promote mental wellness including inclusion of youth voice and needs
- Linking Mental Wellness Teams to Thunderbird Partnership Foundation’s Community Wellness Hub for access to resources and dialogue on mental wellness service responses to COVID.

Looking Forward

First Peoples was awarded a four-year funding proposal that will allow longer term planning and projects. Some of these projects were initiated in this fiscal with completion intended for the 2020-2021 fiscal year and beyond; these are listed below.

Mental Health Resource Guide: An E-Guide: Mental Wellness Teams are often faced with explaining the systemic differences of mental wellness for First Nations people as it relates to a health construct as well as a service delivery model, when navigating non-Indigenous health systems. In many instances, this work is necessary to ensure that mental wellness services are adequately meeting the needs of First Nations who must access non-Indigenous services. This e-guide will act as a handy resource for Mental Wellness Team members to share with service providers in non-Indigenous systems to improve understanding and assist in service navigation. The e-guide will provide information on Mental Wellness Teams and provide Teams with the ability to tailor the information to their particular territory and region.



- **Mental Wellness Team Toolkit:** this toolkit will serve to provide details on necessary steps in the design of Mental Wellness Teams with a focus on organizational development, organizational capacity and community capacity. The toolkit will aid communities and perhaps, Teams requiring review or restructuring, to consider how these elements are necessary for individual team member capacity. Information related to program resources, differences in Team compositions and funding will also be included. Some wise practices of existing teams will be highlighted as examples of team resources and capacity. This will be a digital toolkit that will be available on the Community of Practice site for accessibility by Teams. A working group made up of MWT members will guide this work.
- **Wise Practices website:** This website highlights First Nation community initiatives on life promotion and suicide prevention that focus on community defined strategies with culture as a foundation. First Peoples is supporting the design of an evaluation framework for the site hosted by Thunderbird Partnership Foundation. The Wise Practices Advisory Group plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the Wise Practices website including all accompanying activities that the website facilitates such as guidelines on Life Promotion. Using new and existing data collected on the website a baseline report that will show impact of the website, impact stories and impact reports for multiple audiences. Finally, a measurement and evaluation strategy that include a visualization of the theory of change, the creation of indicators for success, and all the necessary methodological tools needed to measure progress.
- **Indian Residential School Resolution Health Support Program:** First Peoples has begun work on a survey that will assess the impacts of the Resolution Health Support Program (RHSP) for those who accessed the program. The project will use Indigenous research practices to gather stories of healing and other impacts the RHSP have had to survivors, their families, communities and the nation. This work will be used to support recommendations on the continuation of this program for First Nations to address the impacts of trauma.

Research:

- **Holistic Indigenous Mental Health and Wellness:** Transforming Health Care Strengths and Solutions. This Network Environments for Indigenous Health Research (NEIHR) grant will support collaborative work in the area of mental wellness between scholars and Indigenous communities. First Peoples will be exploring how Mental Wellness Teams strengths can be highlighted as a transformative health care practice. This research grant is led by University of Toronto and Dr. Suzanne Stewart.
- **Health and Wellness Research, Training, and Knowledge Mobilization Network & National Coordinating Centre.** This Network Environments for Indigenous Health Research (NEIHR) grant will support collaborative work in the area of mental wellness between scholars and Indigenous communities. First People will explore the development of an online mental wellness resource with a cultural foundation. This research grant is led by University of Saskatchewan and Dr. Caroline Tait.
- **Valuing Indigenous Emotional Wellness -** Reviewing programs to enhance support for children in rural and remote communities. This Canadian Institute of Health Research (CIHR) Knowledge Synthesis grant is focused on supporting work during COVID-19. This project will promote children's emotional wellness in geographically isolated communities, both during and following the Covid-19 pandemic. This goal will be achieved through two objectives: (a) to synthesize, evaluate, translate and share information on effective emotional health programs; and (b) to develop positive messaging, for use in Indigenous communities and to promote healthy attitudes towards seeking and receiving emotional health supports. First Peoples will support the development and implementation of the project and share the deliverables with Mental Wellness Teams for distribution in the communities they serve. This research grant is led by Dr. Nancy Young, Laurentian University and Mary Jo Wabano, Wikwemikoong Unceded First Nation.



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