

Ministry of Health

MANDATE

To guide and enhance the province's health services to ensure British Columbians are supported in their efforts to maintain and improve their health.



EXECUTIVE COMMITMENT TO MULTICULTURALISM

The Ministry of Health has overall responsibility for ensuring quality, appropriate, cost effective and timely health services for all British Columbians. The ministry works with health authorities, care providers, agencies and other groups to provide customized care that addresses the unique needs of patients and specific patient groups. Health system values that guide policies, programs and services include:

- » Citizen and patient focus, which respects the needs and diversity of all British Columbians.
- » Equitable access to services delivered by government for all British Columbians.

KEY PROCESSES, POLICIES AND STRUCTURES IN SUPPORT OF MULTICULTURALISM

The ministry invests on an ongoing basis in building cultural competency, increasing awareness and understanding among employees about the diverse cultural backgrounds of British Columbians, their unique health needs and service requirements. Following are some related ministry actions:

- » Takes the diversity of British Columbians and their health needs into account when developing strategies, policies and programs to address the needs of ethnocultural and Aboriginal populations.
- » Consults the Aboriginal Health Directorate on documents and reports produced to ensure that they include a culturally appropriate Aboriginal perspective.
- » The Deputy Provincial Health Officer and Executive Director of Aboriginal Health Directorate provide updates to ministry staff on First Nations Health Governance, the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) and work promoting and advancing health of First Nations in B.C.
- » Provides expertise on the Tripartite Framework Agreement Evaluation.
- » Ensures First Nations data are available to the Physical Activity Leadership table.

EMBRACING MULTICULTURALISM IN THE WORKPLACE

- » Ministry staff has diverse cultural backgrounds and speak a variety of languages. Some of the languages spoken are Afrikaans, Bosnian, Cantonese, Croatian, English, Farsi, French, German, Hindi, Hokkien, Italian, Mandarin, Malay, Malayalam, Punjabi, Rumanian, Russian, Serbian, Shanghainese, Spanish and Tamil. Discussion and sharing of cultural backgrounds, experiences and their significance is part of the ministry's inclusive culture and contributes to employees' awareness and understanding of the requirements of culturally responsive service and regulation.
- » The ministry purchased seats for staff to take Indigenous Cultural Competency training offered through the Provincial Health Services Authority. To date 700 staff have completed the training.

- » Implemented the BC Public Service Agency's Aboriginal relations behavioural competencies and hosted two Aboriginal youth interns.
- » Videos, books, inspiring profiles and data on health characteristics and needs of diverse groups are made available to staff through the Diversity @ Work ministry web page.
- » Health and Human Services Library book and video acquisitions included topics about the wellness of Aboriginal, multicultural and multiracial communities of B.C. and Canada. Examples are: diversity, culture and counselling; a Canadian perspective, empathy, dignity, and respect; creating cultural safety for Aboriginal people in urban healthcare; 21st century girls; and how female minds develop.
- » Multiculturalism Week and National Aboriginal Day are celebrated through communications, cultural activities and storytelling.
- » Partnering with diverse organizations helped ministry staff to promote health and wellbeing and serve the health needs of diverse communities. Examples are:
 - Participating in health promotion and wellness through diversity health fairs across the province with community based organizations such as Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Services Agencies of BC (AMSSA).
 - Partnering with the Aboriginal Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity Partners Council to increase focus on healthy lifestyles at the annual provincial Gathering Our Voices Aboriginal youth conference and to deliver the Aboriginal Healthy Living Activities projects.
 - Partnering with FNHA, academic institutions and the ministry of Advanced Education to develop an Aboriginal Practice Education Guide and Toolkit.

- Collaborating with Perinatal Services BC (PSBC) and FNHA to improve Aboriginal maternal health services through practice and infrastructure supports for trained and certified Aboriginal Doulas.
- The ministry and the FNHA Joint Project Board provide leadership, direction and key decision-making to ensure timely progress and action on implementation of strategic priorities under the Transformative Change Accord: First Nations Health Plan and Tripartite First Nations Health Plan.
- Partnering with FNHA and service providers on an oral health strategy for B.C. First Nations.
- Partnering with Directorate of Agencies for School Health (DASH) and Action Schools! BC to engage Aboriginal schools in communication, leadership development and collaboration.
- Partnering with the First Nations Health Authority to support a fully inter-connected and unified Telehealth network. The two year Canada Health Infoway funded First Nations Telehealth Expansion Project started planning in 2012 and the project formally launched in 2013. This project will build and expand Telehealth capacity and increase access to services in up to 30 First Nations communities.
- Sending information packages for service providers and individuals to multicultural, Aboriginal and First Nations organizations as part of a provincial elder abuse prevention program, Together to Reduce Elder Abuse – B.C.'s Strategy.

HIGHLIGHT OF INITIATIVES

Examples of ongoing programs:

- » Multicultural visuals and stories are included in the ministry's HealthyFamilies BC (HFBC) websites and social media channels that engage British Columbians in a dialogue about health care.

- » HealthLink BC's 24/7/365 service for B.C. residents provides non-emergency health information via phone (8-1-1) in more than 130 languages and online. HealthLink BC also promotes ministry programs via the BC HealthGuide Handbook, other culturally appropriate material for ethnocultural and Aboriginal people and through fairs and other venues.
- » Incorporating cultural safety in the recent provincial competency review for Health Care Assistants. The competency review will inform the curriculum review that is currently underway, led by the ministry of Advanced Education.
- » Identifying opportunities to better align health and settlement services to meet newcomer immigrant women's health needs and settlement through the Newcomer Immigrant Women's Project.
- » The ministry engages the ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation in the Human Health Risk Assessment of Oil and Gas Development in Northeastern B.C. project.
- » The Seek and Treat for Optimal Prevention of HIV/AIDS (STOP HIV/AIDS) provincial program supports culturally safe approaches to prevention, testing, care, treatment, and support for immigrants as well as engages First Nations and Aboriginal partners.
- » The ministry works with FNHA, regional health authorities and the BC Centre for Disease control to coordinate immunization services to Aboriginal communities.
- » Culturally relevant resources to increase awareness of infant safe sleep practices for First Nations and Aboriginal children were developed in partnership with PSBC and FNHA.
- » The ministry engages with the federal government on new federal drinking water legislation: the Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act.
- » The Emergency Management Unit co-chairs, with the FNHA and Public Health Agency of Canada, the First Nations Health Emergency Management (HEM) Working Group to ensure integration of emergency response in First Nations communities in B.C. from a health perspective.
- » The Tripartite Mental Wellness and Substance Use Strategy Table released A Path Forward: BC First Nations and Aboriginal People's Mental Wellness and Substance Use Plan. The plan is a provincial approach to facilitate regional and local planning and action.
- » Provides culturally appropriate resources for Aboriginal people and ethnocultural seniors to support planning for healthy aging and end-of-life care.
- » Continues efforts to attract and retain internationally educated health professionals through the B.C. Provincial Nominee Program and the Internationally Educated Health Professionals Initiative. They include competency based assessment of nurses and care aides, regulatory reform to enable conditional licensing and expansion of postgraduate medical education program for internationally educated physicians.
- » The ministry promotes health literacy events to make program information more accessible to residents with multiple cultural and educational backgrounds.
- » The Mental Health Review Board pays for interpreters at hearings when requested or suggested by the patient's advocate, the hospital representative or ministry staff. Hearing panel members are trained to accommodate patients whose first language is not English.
- » Patient Safety and Care Quality Review Board Secretariat has an ongoing contract with Provincial Language Services to provide language translation.
- » The Informed Dining program provides support to ethnic restaurant operators for nutritional analysis and adjustment of menus.

- » Health Insurance BC's Contact Centre offers registration services for Fair PharmaCare in Mandarin, Cantonese, French, Punjabi and English.
- » Information pamphlets and tear-off pads about the new BC Services Card are available made in four languages. Both Health Insurance BC and ICBC provide related multilingual customer service.
- » Providing funding for a variety of food and nutrition programs. Examples are: BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional program for First Nations schools; Food Skills for Families program which teaches cooking and healthy eating skills in a manner that is culturally suitable for multicultural, new immigrant and Aboriginal families and community gardens in remote First Nations communities.
- » The Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program provides coupons for B.C. produced healthy foods for low income families, and seniors from diverse backgrounds.

A number of ministry telephone, print, audio, video and internet resources have been translated into multiple languages. Some examples are:

- » A provincial patient brochure on health care in four languages to help patients and families understand what services are available and what they are personally responsible for.
- » Patient experience surveys printed in multiple languages.
- » Healthy Families BC breastfeeding web articles in Simplified and Traditional Chinese and Punjabi.
- » Promotional material translated into French, Cantonese, Mandarin, Persian, Korean and Punjabi languages about the QuitNow phone service available in 130 languages, to help adults quit smoking.
- » Information sheets about Fair PharmaCare Plan in Chinese, French, Punjabi, Farsi, Korean, Vietnamese and Filipino.
- » Diabetes management information and BC Smoking Cessation Program information provided online in Chinese, French, Punjabi, Farsi, Korean and Vietnamese.
- » Strategies and Actions for Independent Living (SAIL), Home Activity Program instructions in Chinese and Punjabi.
- » Healthy Eating for Seniors Handbook is available in Chinese, Punjabi and French.
- » Baby's Best Chance Parents' Handbook of Pregnancy and Baby Care in French.
- » Vital Statistics Agency provides translations in French, German, Punjabi, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Tagalog and Vietnamese.

Examples of new initiatives introduced in 2013/2014:

- » The ministry worked in collaboration with the FNHA and the Tripartite Suicide Prevention, Intervention and Postvention Working Group to develop a culturally relevant planning toolkit for First Nations and Aboriginal communities to prevent and respond to suicide.
- » The FNHA is now a full member of the Health Emergency Management Council and the Pandemic Response Planning Work Group.
- » Provided funding for the adaptation of the fall prevention program: Strategies and Actions for Independent Living (SAIL) resource, for First Nation communities.
- » Public Health 101 training module for divisional staff includes an Aboriginal perspective.
- » The Aboriginal Health Directorate used the BC Public Service Agency's Aboriginal behavioural competencies in job postings.
- » The ministry is working with the BC Centre for Disease Control and provincial partners to evaluate technologies and strategies used to screen for tuberculosis in foreign born populations.

- » The ministry is working with the Childhood Obesity Foundation to design, implement and evaluate a ShapedownBC program for ethnic Chinese families in Richmond.
- » The ministry is leading a review of provincial parent publications to determine future needs for translated and culturally adapted resources.
- » The ministry, Perinatal Services BC (PSBC), BC Women's Hospital and HealthLink BC are partnering to develop an inventory of translated resources for pregnant and expecting women and their families.
- » The ministry is participating in Equity Lens in Public Health research to ensure programs and the health system has supports to address health equity for vulnerable cultural groups.
- » The ministry is providing relevant health data for Aboriginal Women's Health report and the Growing Up in BC report.
- » ParticipACTION activities involve Aboriginal and multicultural communities.

Ministry of International Trade and Minister Responsible for Asia Pacific Strategy and Multiculturalism

MANDATE

The Ministry of International Trade and Minister Responsible for Asia Pacific Strategy and Multiculturalism (MIT) provides trade and investment programs and services to increase British Columbia's exports, develop international partnerships, increase awareness of B.C.'s competitive advantages, negotiate trade deals, deliver venture capital programs and attract investment, head offices and other business to the province. The ministry also promotes multiculturalism and engages in initiatives to eliminate racism and intolerance.

These efforts promote economic prosperity in communities across the province, creating new jobs and positioning the province for long-term growth. To accomplish this, the ministry works to:

- » Open and expand priority markets for B.C. goods and services, particularly in Asia, and engage B.C. exporters in new opportunities;
- » Attract increased investment to B.C.'s priority sectors;
- » Leverage investment capital programs, including venture capital and infrastructure, to support a competitive business environment; and
- » Promote multiculturalism in B.C. communities and leverage our relationships to do business in international priority markets.