



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

First Nations Health Authority Action Plan:
A Response to the Recommendations in
*Review of First Nation Youth and Young Adult
Injury Deaths: 2010 – 2015*

February 13, 2018

Introduction

On November 15, 2017, the BC Coroners Service (BCCS) and the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) released a joint review of First Nations Youth and Young Adult Injury Deaths (2010-2015). The Panel reviewed the circumstances of unexpected deaths of 95 First Nations youth and young adults aged 15 to 24, who died between January 1, 2010, and December 31, 2015. These deaths are a loss deeply felt by family, friends and their community. The review of the circumstances that resulted in these deaths provided panel members with valuable information to help determine what could be done to prevent similar deaths in the future.

The panel has made specific recommendations and actions to partners within four areas:

- Promote Connectedness to Peers, Family, Community and Culture
- Reduce Barriers and Increase Access to Services
- Promote Cultural Safety and Humility and Trauma-Informed Care
- Elicit Feedback through Community Engagement

The review states that these First Nations unexpected deaths are preventable, and that prevention approaches must consider the unique cultural diversity, community strengths and protective factors, as well as factors that wear away at resilience. While many youth and young adults had previous contact with supporting systems such as schools, health care, and community services, they nonetheless experienced barriers to accessing the supports, representing missed opportunities for young First Nations people.

The review found that the mortality rate for First Nations youth and young adults is almost two times the rate of their non-First Nations peers. The review considered the historical legacy of colonization, the impact of the social determinants of health, and the First Nations perspective on health and wellness when analyzing the facts and circumstances of deaths, as well as to identify public safety opportunities, including those specific to First Nations peoples, and to prevent similar deaths in the future.

Purpose

The FNHA formally accepts the recommendations set out in the report. In response, the FNHA has developed an action plan to outline key activities that will be taken in response to the recommendations. This report provides a high level overview of the action plan to address issues which are leading to injuries or untimely deaths of First Nations youth and young adults.

Death Review Panel Recommendations to FNHA at a Glance

Recommendation 1: Promote Connectedness to Peers, Family, Community and Culture:

- Encourage communities applying for wellness grants to incorporate traditional healing and ensure that applicants consult and engage with First Nations youth as part of the community wellness grant process.
- Facilitate at First Nations gatherings such as 'Gathering Our Voices' and other community events eliciting youth views about how to increase connectedness, wellness and safety and resilience in their communities.
- Partner with BC Injury Research and Prevention Unit regarding a project whereby youth identify safe/unsafe places in their community.

Recommendation 2: Reduce Barriers and Increase Access to Services:

- Review alcohol education and further develop First Nations harm reduction activities specific for alcohol.
- Achieve the target for trauma informed care training for all FNHA staff.
- Work with partners to increase access to culturally safe treatment services.
- Continue to partner on overdose crises response.

Recommendation 3: Promote Cultural Safety and Humility and Trauma-Informed Care:

- Collaborate with Ministry of Education and Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training service partners to sign the Declaration of Commitment to advance cultural safety and humility within their organizations.
- Develop an injury surveillance and monitoring strategy.

Recommendation 4: Elicit Feedback through Community Engagement:

- Complete a community engagement process to elicit feedback on how the broad recommendations can further be adopted within local community actions. An addendum will be created and added to the report with the community responses.

Response to Recommendations

The FNHA is committed to working in partnership with First Nations people and communities to reduce unexpected and preventable injury-related deaths. The FNHA will take specific actions in response to the four recommendations put forward by the Death Review Panel, as outlined below.

RECOMMENDATION 1: Promote Connectedness to Peers, Family, Community and Culture

By December 31, 2018, the FNHA will take the following actions in response:

| Recommendations: | FNHA Response/Action: |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage communities applying for wellness grants to incorporate traditional healing and ensure that applicants consult and engage with First Nations youth as part of the community wellness grant process. • Facilitate at First Nations gatherings such as 'Gathering Our Voices' and other community events eliciting youth views about how to increase connectedness, wellness and safety and resilience in their communities. • Partner with BC Injury Research and Prevention Unit (BCIRPU) regarding a project whereby youth identify safe/unsafe places in their community. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage communities applying for wellness grants to incorporate traditional healing and ensure that applicants consult and engage with First Nations youth as part of the community wellness grant process. • At Gathering Our Voices 2018 and other community events, engage youth on how to increase connectedness, wellness, safety and resilience in their communities, along with injury prevention. • Through the FNHA's Office of the Chief Medical Officer, lead a partnership with BC Injury Research and Prevention Unit (BCIRPU) to develop a collaborative research project that will aim to identify safe and unsafe places for youth in communities. |

RECOMMENDATION 2: Reduce Barriers and Increase Access to Services

By December 31, 2018, the FNHA is taking or will take the following actions in response:

| Recommendations: | FNHA Response/Action: |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review alcohol education and further develop First Nations harm reduction activities specific for alcohol. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to focus on minimizing the impacts of substance use, including alcohol usage, through policy, communications, public health and health promotion activities, including increasing and improving health promotion and harm reduction education campaigns. |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve the target for trauma informed care training for all FNHA staff. • Work with partners to increase access to culturally safe treatment services. • Continue to partner on overdose crises response. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop culturally safe resources for staff training and encourage its health system partners to include a trauma-informed practice approach in their response. The FNHA has hired the Justice Institute of BC (JIBC) to develop and deliver trauma-informed care training for its community-facing staff. • Continue working with signatories of Declarations of Cultural Safety and Humility (and future signatories) to implement training as well as other commitments to enhance cultural safety and humility. • Continue to work with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions, Health Authorities and other health system partners to implement our joint principles including cultural safety and humility & trauma-informed care. Current examples of this work include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Operationalizing cultural safety and humility through the work on primary care networks, patient medical homes and mental health and substance use specialized community services programs ○ Working with JIBC to develop a trauma-informed care curriculum for our community-facing staff which may have applicability/utility for our health system partners and their staff who work with First Nations communities. • Continue to implement the Opioid Crisis Framework for Action with communities and health partners, including the province and BCCS. • Continue appropriate linkages between BCCS overdose death data to the First Nations Client File, and continue collaboration on associated analysis and interpretation. • Work as a partner to ensure that the new Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions' Plan for a Comprehensive Child & Youth Mental Health & Addictions System (in development) includes commitments and provisions for cultural safety and humility, and trauma-informed care training for all staff working with First Nations young people. |
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| RECOMMENDATION 3: Promote Cultural Safety and Humility and Trauma-Informed Care | |
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| By December 31, 2018, the FNHA is taking or will take the following actions in response: | |
| <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with Ministry of Education and Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training service partners to sign the <i>Declaration of Commitment to advance cultural safety and humility</i> within their organizations. FNHA will develop an injury surveillance and monitoring strategy. | <p>FNHA Response/Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue working with multiple health partners and stakeholders to advance the signing of declarations on cultural safety and humility, which includes the development of specific plans of action. Identify opportunities to engage the Ministries of Education and of Advanced Education, Skills and Training to discuss current efforts and potential opportunities to respond to the recommendations. Identify opportunities with BCIRPU to conduct a First Nations Client File linkage to the robust BCIRPU dataset to get timely access to First Nations specific injury and surveillance data |

| RECOMMENDATION 4: Elicit Feedback through Community Engagement | |
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| By March 31, 2018, the FNHA will take the following actions in response | |
| <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FNHA will complete a community engagement process to elicit feedback on how the broad recommendations can further be adopted within local community actions. An addendum will be created and added to the report with the community responses. | <p>FNHA Response/Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the First Nations Health Directors Association and other partners to develop an engagement approach to elicit feedback on how the broad recommendations can further be adopted within local community actions. Through the 2018/2019 community engagement planning process, identify other avenues to engage with youth and communities regarding injury prevention. Include opportunities in the proposed workshop at Gathering Our Voices to elicit feedback from youth on how the recommendations can be adopted in their communities. |

Monitoring and Accountability

In addition to undertaking the actions noted, the FNHA is establishing an internal monitoring and reporting process to track progress of its action plan commitments, and to coordinate with the First Nations Health Council and the First Nations Health Directors Association as related to their mandates and responsibilities.