

"Optimizing accessible primary care service delivery with coordinated, team-based, culturally safe approaches."



From the beginning stages of planning, cultural safety has been foundational for the Central Interior Rural Primary Care Network (CIR PCN). The PCN partners continue to embrace an ongoing commitment to enhance cultural safety in primary health care in our region, and have developed the following shared definition of cultural safety to guide ongoing work in the PCN:

The outcome of cultural safety is for patients to determine when they feel safe when accessing equitable care. Practicing in a culturally safe way requires us to approach our relationships and interactions with a willingness to meet people where they are. It isn't just on the shoulders of Indigenous people to do the work of cultural safety – we all have roles and responsibilities.

Cultural safety isn't just about learning. We can't know everything about a person and their culture, and we may not always understand or agree with another person's culture, health, or wellness beliefs. Rather, practicing cultural safety requires openness and creating space for ways of being and culture to happen, allowing people to bring their knowledge and ways of being into the healthcare system. Cultural safety asks us to be open to learning and to listen to each other with our hearts.

Cultural safety requires us to work from a place of cultural humility. Cultural humility is an ongoing process of becoming comfortable with our own selves in order to be comfortable in our relationships and interactions with others. This requires us to understand our own beliefs and think critically about them and be open to learning from others.

Practicing in a culturally safe way means acknowledging everyone has stereotypes and negative beliefs and teaches us to shift our way of thinking. Cultural safety also asks us to think critically and understand our own power and privilege, an ongoing and lifelong process.

Cultural safety is an action call for us to use our power and privilege to stand up to culturally unsafe acts.

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Dahooja / Dzin Guzun / Weyt-kp / Good Day!

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Cultural Safety Initiatives

Community Visits Provide a Firsthand Experience



Practitioner visiting Ulkatcho

L to R: Tanya Kielpinski, the late Herbie Squinas, Dr. Ghaida Radhi, Carl John and Jane Barnett

The PCN partners are encouraged by the positive feedback received from physicians and nurses who participated in a cultural safety pilot project where healthcare practitioners visited each of the three local Nation's territories. The trips were coordinated by the Division of Family Practice and First Nation representatives over the summer of 2019 and focused on learning about health care services in communities and the rich cultural history and traditions of the three local Indigenous Nations.

PCN plans to build on this work and possibly expand it to include other members of the PCN healthcare team. Stay tuned for more on this!

In the words of one practitioner;

"I feel that this experience has given me the understanding of the difficulties that some have to overcome to receive the medical care they need. I feel that mutual respect between the client and the health care system may help improve the experience they have. I can do my part in respecting them and their culture. Explaining things in a way that is understood is a big step in improving the patient's experience."

Cultural Safety Training in Action

Stemming from the planning partners' commitment to enhancing cultural safety in primary care, an environmental scan of cultural safety and humility learning opportunities available in the region was conducted. The list is extensive as each of the nations provides opportunities for people to learn about their culture and traditions. PCN is compiling this information and developing a user-friendly 'menu' for providers joining the PCN team to facilitate their individualized journey and delivery of culturally safe care.

In addition, all PCN Steering Committee Members have completed the San'yas Indigenous Cultural Safety Training Program delivered by BC's Provincial Health Services Authority. This foundational training is also available to all new PCN hires.

Because all PCN Allied Health Professionals will be Interior Health employees, they also have access to *iLearns*, a program developed by Interior Health. *iLearns* is an extensive training program that includes online modules that explore health and wellness as a cultural experience for both practitioners and recipients of care, focusing on Aboriginal people in the interior region.



Indigenous Patient Supports

During PCN planning, the need to support Indigenous patients' access to healthcare services was identified. In this regard, the addition of a Traditional Wellness Coordinator in Ulkatcho was prioritized and staffing this position is currently underway. Likewise, enhancements to the Aboriginal Patient Navigator program were initiated during this year of PCN implementation. (See details on the next page)

Aboriginal Patient Navigator (APN) Program

The Primary Care Network's expansion of the Aboriginal Patient Navigator program is being implemented in two phases. With the addition of Jackie Mattice's position, there are now 2 positions in Williams Lake, giving patients access to these services 12 hours/day, 7 days a week. Phase 2 will extend the APN program to 100 Mile House next year with the implementation of a second PCN APN position.

What is an Aboriginal Patient Navigator?

APNs are a resource for Aboriginal patients/clients and families to help them connect to the right services to meet their health care needs. They are also a resource to health care providers to help them connect with Aboriginal services and make health care services culturally safe.

What does an APN do?

For Patients/Clients:

- Help patients understand and access health services and provide or facilitates language interpretation
- Provide connections to religious and spiritual services
- Provide advocacy and emotional support for patients and families during a crisis
- Work as part of the multidisciplinary team to connect services on discharge
- Connect acute care with community-based health services
- Visit with families to build relationships and assess needs
- Assist patients and their families to navigate the complaints process
- Connect with First Nations (FN) communities and services and stay up to date on FN resources
- Facilitate and supports access to traditional healers, ceremonies and practices such as smudging
- work with hospital staff to ensure family's wishes are respected
- Provide support for viewing of a body

For Health Care Providers:

- Provide Knowledge about cultural and spiritual practices
- Help identify and eliminate barriers to health care services
- Link Aboriginal services with non-Aboriginal services

Introducing Jackie Mattice, APN

*Jackqueline (Jackie)
Mattice, APN
Weyt-kp xwexweytep
(Hello everyone)*



Jackie Mattice joined the PCN team as an APN at Cariboo Memorial Hospital on June 28, 2021.

Jackie recently completed her Bachelor of Social Work and spent her practicum as an APN for Royal Inland Hospital. She is from the Williams Lake First Nation community (Sugar Cane).

As a wife, mother and grandmother, Jackie loves to spend time with her family. She enjoys the outdoors, hiking, biking, jogging and camping. She is also artistic with beading and sewing, glass mosaic work and carpentry work keeping her busy. Jackie has a great sense of humour and likes to see people laugh.

APN Contact

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