

# NORTH

NORTHERN FIRST NATIONS HEALTH AUTHORITY NEWS | SEPTEMBER 2023



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness

*A DECADE OF SERVING  
FIRST NATIONS*

*2013-2023*



## STORIES FROM THE LAND

# DTES OUTREACH WORKER GETTING SUPPORT FROM FNHA TO CONNECT MORE

**“SIX MONTHS AGO HE LIVED IN A TENT AND WAS HEAVY INTO THE LIFE.** Now he has a construction job and his kids are back with him,” says James Harry, talking about one of his outreach clients on Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside.

A member of the Haisla Nation, James is expanding his outreach network for Indigenous people living away from home to Haisla, Terrace and Homalco. His approach, based on his own recovery experience, is to build connections without judging.

“We plant seeds and build relationships, we don’t blame. We pick them up and take them for a walk or a coffee, get them out of their comfort zone and get to know them,” says Harry, the director of the All Nations Outreach Society (ANOS). “I am just happy the ones who loved me didn’t give up on me.”

The First Nations Health Authority’s Northern Region is supporting Harry’s work with funding for a new outreach worker in Vancouver to create the connections of trust needed to help people break the destructive cycle of addiction. The new synthetic substances available are making it more difficult than ever to connect with people.

“These new drugs make it hard to get out of bed,” says Harry, “let alone walk out the door to go talk to somebody.”

The work is a vital part of the response to the ongoing toxic drug emergency that is causing more and more overdose incidents and deaths. Indigenous people are affected more than the rest of the population due to the ongoing impacts of colonialism and systemic racism.

The constant flow of unpredictable substances is increasing the number of overdose events, especially in the cities.

ANOS’ work includes taking a current or potential client out for a meal or for some other bonding activity to break the usual routine and provide an opportunity for a different experience. If clients indicate they are ready for a change, ANOS will provide transport, connection to detox and ensure supports and services are in place in a client’s home community.

There is also a volunteer-driven lunch program that serves 300-400 clients a week at Hastings and Main in downtown Vancouver. As well as providing nutrition, the lunches serve to build relationships with community members living away from home.

Future plans include a West Coast Pow Wow, barbecues in Crab Park and other cultural activities that can provide opportunities for people to begin a new way of life.



Download a digital copy of NORTH:  
<https://fnha.bmeurl.co/1032F6B8>

## OUR BACKGROUND



**THE FNHA IS THE HEALTH AND WELLNESS PARTNER TO OVER 200 DIVERSE FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES AND CITIZENS ACROSS BC.** In 2013, the FNHA began a new era in BC First Nations health governance and health care delivery by taking responsibility for the programs and services formerly delivered by Health Canada. Since then the FNHA has been working to address service gaps through new partnerships, closer collaboration, health systems innovation, reform and redesign of health programs and services for individuals, families, communities and Nations.

The FNHA is also a champion of culturally safe practices throughout the broader health care system. Taking a leadership role, the FNHA actively works with its health partners to embed cultural safety and humility into health service delivery and improve health outcomes for First Nations people.

The FNHA's community-based services are largely focused on health promotion and disease prevention and include:

- primary health care through more than 130 medical health centres and nursing stations
- children, youth and maternal health
- mental health and wellness
- communicable disease control
- environmental health and research
- health benefits
- e-health and telehealth
- health and wellness planning
- health infrastructure and human resources

The FNHA is part of a unique health governance structure that includes political representation and advocacy through the First Nations Health Council, and technical support and capacity development through the First Nations Health Directors Association. Collectively, this First Nations health governing structure works in partnership with BC First Nations to achieve our shared vision.

Our work does not replace the role or services of the Ministry of Health and Regional Health Authorities. The First Nations Health Authority collaborates, coordinates, and integrates our respective health programs and services to achieve better health outcomes for BC First Nations.



**We are led by our Nations.**

[Read "Our Story: The Made-in-BC Tripartite Health Transformation Journey"](#)

# HAVE WE GOT A JOB FOR YOU!



- ✓ **POSITION:** Traditional Wellness Specialist
- ✓ **LOCATION:** Prince George, BC
- ✓ Leads the integration of traditional wellness into the overarching wellness plan

You will be involved hands on in the design and delivery of a traditional wellness program.

**CULTURE IS HEALING.** Here is what the FNHA says about how we value culture: “We are here because of those that came before us, and to work on behalf of First Nations. We draw upon the diverse and unique cultures, ceremonies, customs, and teachings of First Nations for strength, wisdom, and guidance. We uphold traditional and wholistic approaches to health and self-care and strive to achieve a balance in our mental, spiritual, emotional, and physical wellness.” How do you see that translating into our wellness plan? Could you help do that? If so, [check out our traditional wellness specialist position](#).

The FNHA offers employee benefits from day one, a good pension plan, ample vacation plus 14 stats and 5 personal days.

## FNHA JOB OPENINGS IN THE NORTH

### (click for more info)

[Aboriginal Head Start Advisor](#)

[Admin Assistant, Nursing:](#)

- [Lax Kw'alaams \(casual\)](#)
- [Lax Kw'alaams](#)
- [Lheidli T'enneh](#)
- [Fort St. John \(casual\)](#)

[Advisor, Crisis & Emergency Response](#)

[Community Engagement Coordinator, True North](#)

[Environmental Health Officer](#)

[Executive Director, North](#)

[Family Practitioner, Virtual Doctor of the Day](#)

[Family Practitioner, Virtual Substance Use & Psychiatry](#)

[Financial Consultant](#)

[Indigenous Educator, Harm Reduction \(2\)](#)

[Project Coordinator, Mental Wellness](#)

[Project Manager, Land Based Healing](#)

[Psychiatrist, Virtual Substance Use & Psychiatry](#)

[Reg. Mental Health & Wellness Liaison](#)

[Regional Addictions Specialist](#)

[Regional Clinical Lead, eHealth](#)

[Regional Planner](#)

[Regional Primary Care Coordinator](#)

[Senior Facilities Technician](#)

[Senior Planner](#)

[Traditional Wellness Specialist](#)

[Wellness Navigator, Substance Use](#)

### NURSING

[Community Health Nurse:](#)

- [Gitga'at](#)
- [Lax Kw'alaams](#)
- [Telegraph Creek](#)
- [Tsay Keh Dene](#)

[Nurse in Charge:](#)

- [Tsay Keh Dene \(2\)](#)

[Outreach Nurse, Harm Reduction & Substance Use](#)

**Check out all our jobs at**  
[fnha.ca/careers](https://fnha.ca/careers)

# BONFIRE CHAT

WITH JULIE MORRISON, VICE PRESIDENT, NORTHERN OPERATIONS



**WE WELCOMED 3,700 INDIGENOUS PEOPLE LAST MONTH FOR HEALING OUR SPIRIT WORLDWIDE (HOSW)**, a global Indigenous health conference in Vancouver that connected us to health workers from places like Australia, Aotearoa (New Zealand) and the United States.

The shared experiences and negative consequences of colonialism and forced assimilation gave us a common outlook and understanding of the dreadful consequences of Empire over more than seven generations. And a determination to right the wrongs.

It was inspiring to hear how Indigenous peoples globally are restoring their cultures and their connections to their traditional territories through self-determination. It made me feel less alone at a time when the opioid crisis is taking too many of our loved ones before their time.

Our brothers and sisters are overrepresented in the grim statistics of this crisis because of the ongoing impacts of colonialism and breaking this cycle of trauma is key to our future wellness. The past has left many of us disconnected, and only through reconnection can we begin to heal.

Thankfully, we heard example after example of individuals breaking the cycle of intergenerational trauma by doing

the inner work supported by our cultures and the renewed bonds with family and community that result.

David Wragge, a Wakka Wakka from Cherbourg, Australia with traditional connections to the Ghungalu, Juru, Bindal and Wulgurukba peoples shared his story of being stolen from his people at three years of age. He spent the next 15 years in a Mission school, where he suffered constant abuse, as did his friends. He estimates a third of them are now dead, in jail or struggling with addiction.

Our momentum as Indigenous peoples is growing and we have come a long way. That was my biggest takeaway, along with the knowledge that we still have a ways to go.

Here in the North, the FNHA has made addressing the toxic drug epidemic a top priority with our stigma campaigns, increased supports for those still trapped

**“We heard example after example of individuals breaking the cycle of intergenerational trauma by doing the inner work...”**

in their addictions and pressuring our partners in this to expand harm reduction outreach to help save more lives.

The next HOSW gathering is scheduled to take place in Washington State in 2025.

Email [SubscribeNorth@fnha.ca](mailto:SubscribeNorth@fnha.ca)  
to sign up for our eZine

# FYI

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Northern Perinatal FNHA Pre-Conference (Nursing)

OCT. 12, LHEIDLİ T'ENNEH TERRİTORY, PRİNCE GEORGE

Future Leaders & Knowledge Keepers Engagement Forum

OCT. 17-19, LHEIDLİ T'ENNEH TERRİTORY, PRİNCE GEORGE

Northern Indigenous Guys Gathering

NOV. 1-3, LHEIDLİ T'ENNEH TERRİTORY, PRİNCE GEORGE

Northern Regional Caucus

NOV. 7-9, LHEIDLİ T'ENNEH TERRİTORY, PRİNCE GEORGE

*For more info contact your community engagement coordinator.*

If your community has not already accessed Regional Envelope Funding, the deadline has been extended to Oct. 13.

Submit applications to [REF@fnha.ca](mailto:REF@fnha.ca)

Your community engagement coordinator can assist with any questions and more!

## FALL COVID & FLU SHOTS AVAILABLE STARTING OCT. 10

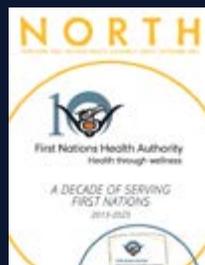
It's important that you get an influenza vaccine every year.

Influenza and COVID viruses change (mutate) from year to year, so each year, the viruses used to make the vaccine change to protect you against the viruses circulating that year.

Protection from the influenza vaccine can wear off with time, so you need a new one every year to stay protected.

## On the cover

To commemorate the First Nations Health Authority's 10th anniversary, our thunderbird logo was redesigned by a community member. Thank you to all who have worked to make our vision of Healthy, Self-Determining and Vibrant BC First Nations Children, Families and Communities a reality. There is still lots to do and we take on this work with heart and commitment.



**Have a great picture for our cover or a story idea? Send to [SubscribeNorth@fnha.ca](mailto:SubscribeNorth@fnha.ca)**

## JUSTICE FOR DAY SCHOLARS STATEMENT

[www.justicefordayscholars.com](http://www.justicefordayscholars.com)

Day Scholars Settlement Class Members can apply for an **extension until Jan. 4, 2024**. Individuals who attended Federal Indian Residential Schools as a Day Scholar have a four-month extension to apply for compensation."

If you have any questions or would like help with your Day Scholar application please reach out to your regional Day School Coordinator:

Leticia Racine, Northern Region  
778-708-3358 or [leticia Racine@irsss.ca](mailto:leticia Racine@irsss.ca)

Daniel Joe, Interior Region  
250-540-4716 or [danieljoe@irsss.ca](mailto:danieljoe@irsss.ca)

Rhianon Teegee, Fraser-Salish Region  
778-222-5963 or [rhianontegee@irsss.ca](mailto:rhianontegee@irsss.ca)

# THROUGH NORTHERN EYES

10 YEARS ALREADY?



HAVE A GREAT SNAPSHOT?  
Send your photo to [SubscribeNorth@fnha.ca](mailto:SubscribeNorth@fnha.ca)

# IMPORTANT CONTACT INFO

**FNHA Virtual Doctor of the Day**  
1-855-344-3800

**First Nations Health Benefits**  
1-855-550-5454

**National Indian Residential  
School Survivors Society**  
1-800-721-0066

**Kids Help Phone**  
1-800-668-6868  
**Text "connect" to: 686868**

**KUU-US Crisis Response**  
1-800-588-8717

**Mental Health  
(no area code needed)**  
310-6789

**Health Link BC**  
811

**BC Suicide Line**  
1-800-784-2433  
<https://crisiscentre.bc.ca/get-help/>

**Northern BC Crisis Line**  
1-888-562-1214

**Northern BC YOUTH  
Crisis Line**  
1-888-564-8336  
**Text: 250-564-8336**