

RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

● “In Plain Sight” 2020

The *In Plain Sight* report was instigated by the need to address and rectify the pervasive racism faced by Indigenous communities within the B.C. health care system, ultimately aiming for equitable and respectful care.

- Described findings of widespread systemic racism against Indigenous Peoples.
- Based on first-hand accounts from patients, witnesses, and health-care workers.
- Reported approximately 84% of Indigenous individuals incurred personal experiences of racism and discrimination.
- Highlighted need for anti-racist practices, cultural safety training, and improved data governance.

● Respectful Language

- Has a significant impact on relationships.
- Plays a crucial role in shaping perspectives, communication, and inclusivity.
- Use terminology preferred by each person, community, or organization. If you do not get it right the first time, ask and be open to receive feedback.

● Terminology

Indigenous

- Used when collectively referring to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.
- Gained worldwide acceptance and replaced term Aboriginal in many organizations and governments.
- Three main groups of Indigenous Peoples:
 - First Nations
 - Métis
 - Inuit

First Nations

- May include status and non-status First Nations people.
- Some First Nations have replaced words “band” and “reserve” in their community name with “First Nation”. Example: *First Nations in the Cariboo region*.

Méti

- A distinct group of Indigenous people with unique language, culture, and government structure who predate the creation of Canada.
- Métis National Council defines Métis as a person who:
 - Self-identifies as Métis
 - Is distinct from other Aboriginal peoples
 - Is of historic Métis Nation Ancestry
 - Is accepted by the Métis Nation

Inuit

- Indigenous people living in Arctic regions of Canada, Greenland, Alaska and Russia.
- Inuit = plural for the people. Inuk = singular; one individual. Inuuk = two individuals.
- Term “Eskimo” is considered derogatory.

Settler

- Most common interpretation is a term used to describe non-Indigenous individuals who moved, either themselves or their ancestors, and continue to move to Canada and settle here.
- Settlers are guests on traditional lands which they reside and it is therefore important they honor the land and traditional stewards of the lands.

Indian

- Refers to legal identity of a First Nations person registered under the Indian Act. Should only be used within legal or constitutional context. Example: a local Nation using the term - *Adams Lake Indian Band*; part of legislation - *the Indian Act*.
- Term is outdated outside of context and may be deemed derogatory.

Native

- General term for a person or thing which originated from a particular place. Becoming an outdated collective term and has largely been replaced by Indigenous.

● Grammar

- Avoid possessive terms as it implies Indigenous people are owned and can perpetuate a history of paternalism and control. Example: do not use *British Columbia's Métis Nation*. Use *Métis Nation British Columbia*.
- Do not use *Indigenous Canadian* as many Indigenous people do not identify with a Canadian national identity.

● Land Acknowledgments

Land acknowledgments are important for:

- **Historical Context:** Acknowledges colonization and dispossession.
- **Respect and Recognition:** Honors Indigenous Peoples' presence and contributions.
- **Reconciliation:** A step toward healing and understanding.
- **Education:** Opportunity to learn about Indigenous nations and histories.
- **Relationship Building:** Bridges between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

Appropriate situations:

- **Public Gatherings and Events:**
 - At the beginning of conferences, workshops, or community gatherings.
 - During public ceremonies, such as graduations or official openings.
- **Educational Institutions:**
 - In schools, colleges, and universities during assemblies or special events.
 - At the start of classes or lectures.
- **Organizational Meetings and Workplaces:**
 - Before meetings, especially if they involve discussions related to land, resources, or Indigenous issues.
 - In workplace settings to foster awareness and respect.
- **Cultural and Artistic Events:**
 - Before performances, art exhibitions, or cultural festivals.