

McMaster University **HEALTH SCIENCES**  Indigenous Health
Education Strategy
February 2020 Interim Report



BRIGHTER WORLD

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About the Faculty of Health Sciences Indigenous Health Initiative

In its 2012 Interim Report, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) recommended that the federal, provincial, and territorial governments, and all parties to the Settlement Agreement, undertake to meet and explore the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), as a framework for reconciliation in Canada.

A reconciliation framework is one in which Canada's political and legal systems, educational and religious institutions, the corporate sector and civil society, all function in ways that are consistent with the principles outlined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Canada endorsed and formally committed to adhering to the UNDRIP in 2017. The work of translating the UNDRIP document and self-determining goals into a framework requires the alignment with local Indigenous relational frameworks. For example, these relational frameworks are articulated and expressed by the Haudenosaunee People in the 'Dish with One Spoon Wampum Agreement' and 'Between the Lakes Treaty' agreements governing sustainable interactions on the territory. For Anishinaabe people, the 'Medicine Wheel' acknowledges all races as equal and having their own gifts and teachings. Responding to Indigenous community health entails aligning their diverse cultural values and sustainable relationships with reconciliation efforts.

Vision Statement

The Faculty of Health Sciences at McMaster University strives to respond to the significant health disparities that exist between Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous Canadians. The Faculty is committed to the development and implementation of a comprehensive, 'whole-of-Faculty' Indigenous health initiative that reflects the principles and values of a reconciliation based approach as documented by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

Mission Statement

The Faculty of Health Sciences as a whole will work towards creating a culturally safe and humble environment to enable sustainable systems change to advance the work and concepts of truth, reconciliation and anti-colonization with all aspects of Indigenous health and well-being.

Guiding Principles

- *Reconciliation based:* aligned with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's reconciliation principles and relational aspirations;
- *Truth based:* committed to a change process that is inclusive of decolonizing strategies towards influencing change in the areas of policy, education, and clinical practise
- *Self-determination focused - 'by and with' Indigenous People:* aligned with McMaster's broader Indigenous led systemic reform objectives and local Indigenous community aspirations with respect to health careers and education at McMaster for Indigenous students;
- *Interdisciplinary approach:* guide all FHS programs, policies and strategies with respect to Indigenous health science education and training;
- *Facilitates equity in education:* that aims to close the gaps in health for Indigenous populations; acknowledges and commits to addressing racism at all levels within the Faculty;
- *Promotes and supports administrative and faculty leadership:* that is in keeping with the notion of 'authentic Indigenous partnership'
- *Upholds and facilitates awareness, respect and inclusion of Indigenous knowledge systems:* within the curriculum, research and health service delivery.
- *Fosters relationality and reciprocity:* among the various community organizations, Haudenosaunee and Anishnaabe community members, and University stakeholders; and
- *Fosters decolonial Indigenization:* counter colonization in our actions and move towards greater "Indigenisation" of our Faculty

FOCUS AREA | Administration

1. To develop and sustain a reciprocal relationship with Indigenous communities at the regional, provincial, and national level by collaborating with clinical partners and other post-secondary institutions
2. To support and sustain Elders' and Knowledge Helpers' work within the Faculty of Health Sciences.
3. To support Indigenous student recruitment and retention in the Faculty of Health Sciences.
4. To develop a strong Indigenous presence within the Faculty of Health Sciences - at both structural and policy levels.
5. To achieve sustainability objectives related to the long-term operational goals of Indigenous Health in collaboration with local Indigenous communities
6. To develop a centralized communication tool within the Faculty of Health Sciences.

FOCUS AREA | Education and Curriculum

1. To develop and incorporate core Indigenous education curriculum into the existing Faculty of Health Science undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate curriculum.
2. To increase institutional capacity to educate students and faculty members about Indigenous health and well-being through experiential education opportunities.
3. To collaborate with the other programs to review and supplement the delivery of core Indigenous health education curriculum.
4. To influence reform among cross-professional regulatory bodies and health education stakeholders.

FOCUS AREA | Research

1. To develop research partnerships on campus and with Indigenous communities to advance Indigenous health research initiatives across the Faculty of Health Sciences.
2. To increase awareness, understanding, and capacity of both undergraduate and graduate students regarding Indigenous health research.
3. To foster innovative learning and research opportunities through national and international partnerships.
4. To develop an Indigenous knowledge and health research archive to educate students, staff, and faculty on Indigenous healing and wellness.

FOCUS AREA | Faculty Leadership and Support

1. To foster the development of culturally safe skills for non-Indigenous faculty, staff, and administrators through the implementation of formal cultural safety training.
2. To foster the development of a culturally safe learning environment for all Indigenous learners within the Faculty of Health Sciences.
3. To increase the number of Indigenous faculty members within the Faculty of Health Sciences and foster a culturally safe environment and experience for them.
4. To increase Indigenous cultural awareness among all faculty through the arts and experiential learning activities.
5. To support new scholars engaged in Indigenous health research in collaboration with the McMaster Indigenous Research Institute.

FOCUS AREA | Student Support and Services

1. To develop academic and financial support services for Indigenous students to enhance Indigenous student learning experiences within the Faculty of Health Sciences.
2. To develop a positive and culturally safe environment where Indigenous students can achieve academic and social success, and mental health and well-being.
3. To improve and evaluate current services provided to Indigenous students
4. To recognize and eliminate factors that limit Indigenous students from participating in learning and working opportunities.
5. To support Indigenous students explore education opportunities in Health Sciences

FOCUS AREA | Indigenous Ways of Knowing

1. To foster an ongoing collaborative and supportive working relationship with our Go di we na wa she/ Shkaabewis - Knowledge Helpers and their networks in the implementation of the FHS Indigenous health strategic plan
2. To co-create protocols, policies, and guidelines related to Indigenous ways of knowing that support and protect Knowledge Helpers, Elders, students, and community members.

