

**Report to  
Rapport au:**

**Ottawa Board of Health  
Conseil de santé d'Ottawa  
17 June 2019 / 17 juin 2019**

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Soumis le 6 juin 2019**

**Submitted by  
Soumis par:**

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**Ward: CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE      File Number: ACS2019-OPH-KPQ-0003**

**SUBJECT: OTTAWA PUBLIC HEALTH RECONCILI-ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

**OBJET: MISE À JOUR SUR LE PLAN DE RÉCONCILI-ACTION DE SANTÉ  
PUBLIQUE OTTAWA**

## **REPORT RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit receive this report and accompanying video for information.**

## **RECOMMANDATION DU RAPPORT**

**Que le Conseil de santé de la circonscription sanitaire de la Ville d'Ottawa prenne connaissance de ce rapport et du vidéo qui l'accompagne.**

## **COMMITMENT TO RECONCILI-ACTION**

Ottawa Public Health honours the Algonquin Anishinabe people on whose unceded traditional territory the City of Ottawa is located, and the history of

this territory being a gathering place for many peoples. OPH extends this respect to all First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, their ancestors, their Elders, and their valuable past and present contributions to this land. OPH recognizes the impact and legacy of colonization and ongoing systemic racism on the health and well-being of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, and is strongly committed to public health actions that promote reconciliation and the health of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people and communities.

## BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to update the Board of Health (BOH) on Ottawa Public Health's (OPH) actions to promote reconciliation and advance health equity for First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in Ottawa. Specifically, this update includes: a *Reconcili-ACTION Plan Evaluation Framework* (attached at Document 1) and stories (video) about OPH's progress towards becoming a culturally safe and humble organization. The [video](#) will be viewed at the Board of Health meeting where this report is presented, then posted on OttawaPublicHealth.ca for public access.

The [OPH Reconcili-ACTION Plan](#) was approved by the BOH in June 2018. As an identified 'next step', OPH pledged to design a cross-departmental evaluation framework to facilitate continuous monitoring of organizational progress and impacts of OPH's reconciliation journey on Indigenous Peoples in Ottawa. The Evaluation Framework is rooted in four principles that are understood as foundational to become a culturally humble and safe organization. OPH is working toward a place where these principles of Respect, Relationship, Reciprocity and Reflection are embodied in all activities and ways of working.

The four principles are defined as follows:

**Respect** – Understand colonial history and its impact in the contemporary and local context, and impacts of colonization on Indigenous communities, traditions and cultures

**Relationship** – Foster meaningful two-way connections with Indigenous Elders, clients, communities and partners

**Reciprocity** - Value Indigenous knowledge, promote two-eyed seeing (defined below) and learning by promoting culture-based programs and services

**Reflection** – Practice humility, appreciate Indigenous ways of knowing and doing, and commit to lifelong learning

Mainstream knowledge translation practices sometimes reinforce colonial ways of transferring knowledge.<sup>i</sup> As identified in the literature, and in the spirit of reconciliation, OPH was encouraged to implement knowledge exchange practices that:

- Draw on Indigenous ways of knowing and doing - i.e. methods that are participatory, communal and experiential; ecologic, holistic, relational, intergenerational, pluralistic, timeless, oral, narrative-based; reflective of local geography; and respect self-determination;<sup>ii,iii,iv</sup>
- Embrace “Two-Eyed Seeing”, which encourages learning to see from one eye with the best in the Indigenous ways of knowing and from the other eye with the best in the Western (or mainstream) ways of knowing and, moreover, that we learn to use both these eyes together, for the benefit of all;<sup>v</sup> and
- Represent messages, mediums, and practices that demonstrate socio-cultural congruency with local cultural knowledge, languages, attitudes and belief systems (e.g. story-telling). This is especially important for many Indigenous Peoples and communities where colonial policies have been premised on the marginalization and devaluing of Indigenous ways of knowing and doing.<sup>vi</sup>

Knowledge exchange strategies with a visual focus are more effective than written strategies for some Indigenous communities. In Ottawa, co-created video projects are an innovative and preferred method for knowledge exchange amongst many local Indigenous partners (e.g. [Story of Impact: OAC History Project](#); [OAC Homelessness Project](#)). Using this medium to share our collective story is also an opportunity to use Indigenous ways of knowing and doing to promote cultural continuity as one of the [TRC Calls to Action](#).

## DISCUSSION

OPH developed a Reconcili-ACTION Plan Evaluation Framework to monitor the health unit’s progress on its journey to become a culturally humble and safe organization. Informed by First Nations consultants, Indigenous partners and OPH employees, the Journey and Framework (Document 1, attached) are intended to reflect Indigenous culture, principles, and knowledge translation practices as well as engagement with Elders and the community.

Respecting the value and power of oral traditions, OPH has embraced storytelling to document progress towards Reconciliation. Honouring Indigenous ways of knowing, OPH engaged in talking circles with employees, that were facilitated by a local First

Nation's consultant, to gather data on how OPH is progressing towards becoming a culturally safe and humble organization. It is important also to hear from clients and the community with respect to how OPH is progressing on this journey. In that spirit, OPH collected stories from Indigenous partners, reflecting on OPH's progress to becoming a culturally safe and humble organization. These stories and perspectives have been documented in the form of a video.

Two-eyed seeing approaches recognize the value of both Indigenous ways of knowing and Western practice, and how they may be in fact complimentary. OPH encourages and supports professional development and learning about Indigenous history. Many employees have taken training related to Indigenous health, (i.e. Indigenous cultural safety training - ICST). To date, nearly one third of OPH employees have completed the ICST course. By the end of 2019 an additional 100 people, including the entire senior leadership team, will have completed the training course. In addition, employees have been taking part in opportunities such as Inuit Cultural Safety Training, Indigenous-hosted forums and symposia and attending Indigenous events such as Reconciliation Learning Day activities, and tours of First Nations, Inuit and Métis agencies.

OPH recognizes that ICST and other learning opportunities can help OPH advance towards becoming a more culturally safe and humble organization, but there is more that can be done. For this reason, we asked our Indigenous partners what else could and should be done to reach our goal of becoming a more culturally safe and humble organization. These recommendations from our partners have also been documented in the video.

Stories, as told in the accompanying video, convey personal accounts of progress and identify areas for future growth for OPH. The stories capture reflections about the four principles of Respect, Relationship, Reciprocity and Reflection that are considered foundational to becoming a culturally humble and safe organization. OPH will monitor ongoing progress as it pertains to each of these four principles.

Going forward, OPH is committed to:

- Continue to implement the Reconcili-ACTION Plan and monitor progress as outlined in the Evaluation Framework; and
- Ensure ongoing inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in OPH activities and initiatives.

**RURAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no rural implications associated with this report.

**STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

The content of this report, and accompanying video, were informed by conversations with, and feedback received from the following groups:

- First Nations, Inuit and Métis Elders and community partners
- OPH Reconcili-ACTION Network
- OPH employees

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal impediments to receive this report, and accompanying video, for information.

**RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

**ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS**

There are no accessibility impacts associated with this report.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

Document 1 – OPH Reconciliation Journey and *Reconcili-ACTION Plan Evaluation Framework*

**DISPOSITION**

This report, and accompanying video, are provided to the Board of Health for information.

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- <sup>i</sup> Morton Ninomiya, M. et al. (2017). *Effective knowledge translation approaches and practices in Indigenous health research: a systematic review protocol*. Retrieved March 31, 2019, from [https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5319191/pdf/13643\\_2017\\_Article\\_430.pdf](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5319191/pdf/13643_2017_Article_430.pdf)
  - <sup>ii</sup> Ellison, C. (2014). *Indigenous Knowledge and Knowledge Synthesis Translation and Exchange (KTSE)*. Retrieved March 29, 2019, from [http://www.nccah-ccnsa.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/127/2354\\_NCCAH\\_KTSE\\_report\\_web.pdf](http://www.nccah-ccnsa.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/127/2354_NCCAH_KTSE_report_web.pdf)
  - <sup>iii</sup> IBID.
  - <sup>iv</sup> Rikhy, S., Jack, M., Campbell, L., & Tough, S. (2007). *Knowledge exchange as a vehicle to improve the health of Aboriginal communities*. Retrieved March 31, 2019, from [https://journalindigenousewellbeing.com/media/2018/10/6\\_Rikhy.pdf](https://journalindigenousewellbeing.com/media/2018/10/6_Rikhy.pdf)
  - <sup>v</sup> Bartlett et al. 2014. *Integrative Science and Two-Eyed Seeing: Enriching the Discussion Framework for Healthy Communities*, from [http://www.integrativescience.ca/uploads/files/Bartlett-et al2015\(Chap10\).pdf](http://www.integrativescience.ca/uploads/files/Bartlett-et al2015(Chap10).pdf)
  - <sup>vi</sup> Smylie, J., Olding, M., & Ziegler, C. (2014). *Sharing what we know about living a good life: Indigenous approaches to knowledge translation*. Retrieved March 27, 2019, from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4716829/pdf/nihms5290.pdf>