

Ontario Health Teams and Primary Care Networks

The value proposition for Indigenous Participation in OHTs and PCNs

This resource is part of a series of information pamphlets and supports for Ontario Health Teams (OHTs), Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and all those working to advance integrated health and care services for First Nations, Inuit, Métis populations.

Core Objectives:

1. To enhance the capacity and effectiveness of Indigenous Primary Health Care Organizations (IPHCOs) through active participation in OHTs and PCNs, ensuring they deliver high-quality, culturally safe, and wholistic health care services.
2. To create a collaborative health care environment where IPHCOs are empowered with resources, influence, and support to lead and innovate the delivery of Indigenous health care.
3. To ensure IPHCOs are entrenched in the local primary care sector and OHT planning, and that Indigenous voices are heard and influence decision-making.

Did You Know

PCNs have been organically evolving for the past several years, all operating at different stages. This means that the governance structures of PCNs are vastly different. Many PCNs originally emphasized Family Physician (FP) membership. However, it is imperative they evolve and break down siloes to bring FPs together with other primary care providers, such as Pharmacists, Nurse Practitioners, Registered Nurses, and Traditional Practitioners (Traditional Healers, Knowledge Keepers, etc.) to inform primary health care from a wholistic perspective.

The goal of this approach is to better represent the sector, provide a more wholistic viewpoint, and incorporate an Indigenous perspective into health system planning and service delivery.

Additional Resources can be found at [IPHCC.ca](https://iphcc.ca) or scan the QR code
[Ontario Health Teams - Indigenous Primary Health Care Council](#)
[PCN Self-Assessment Toolkit](#)
[ICS-OHT ACTION Framework](#)



The Value of Indigenous Participation in OHTs and PCNs

Value Propositions

- 1 Enhanced Resource Access:** gain access to a wider range of resources, including funding, technology, and specialized services to expand and improve health care offerings.
- 2 Collaborative Opportunities:** a platform to collaborate with other health care providers, fostering partnerships that can lead to innovative solutions and shared best practices
- 3 Increased Influence & Advocacy:** amplify Indigenous voices within the health care system to increase influence and drive policy changes and resource allocation.
- 4 Data & Research Integration:** participate in shared data and research initiatives to enhance the ability to make evidence-based decisions and develop targeted health interventions.
- 5 Capacity Building:** opportunity to engage in capacity-building activities, training, and professional development to strengthen organizational capabilities and improve service delivery.

Promote Culturally Informed & Equitable Solutions

It is essential for PCNs to cultivate and maintain strong, positive relationships with Indigenous partners. To accomplish this, we have communicated the importance for OHTs and PCNs to invite leaders from FNIM communities and Indigenous-led organizations, including Traditional Wellness Practitioners, to engage as genuine and equal partners in the work of the OHT/PCN.



Why Participate

Participation can keep you informed and engaged in discussions and decisions related to advancing integrated, person-centered health care solutions for your communities. Authentic partnerships ensure Indigenous stakeholders have meaningful opportunities to lead and shape community-driven solutions and that Indigenous voices are integral to shaping equitable healthcare.

Next Steps - Learn about and connect with an OHT or PCN

Identify the OHTs operating in your region with contacts details at the [Ontario Health website](#).

Next, connect to learn more about their structures and priorities.

Attend Information Sessions: to learn more about their goals, initiatives, and how you can get involved.

Connect with Representatives: to express your interest in participating.

Join Working Groups or Committees: to contribute your expertise and collaborate with other stakeholders.

Participate in Surveys & Consultations: to share your insights and help shape the direction of OHT initiatives.

Stay Informed: on OHT and PCN activities and opportunities for engagement.

Collaborate with Other IPHCOs: to share experiences, strategies, and best practices for engagement.

The Value of Indigenous Participation in OHTs and PCNs

OHTs

Honoring Indigenous wisdom, fostering trust and building inclusive healthcare solutions for stronger, healthier communities.

To promote culturally informed & equitable solutions for FNIM individuals, OHTs aim to:

Integrate Indigenous knowledge, traditions, and healing practices into the health care system.

Enhance cultural safety and humility to foster trust and improve the quality of care for FNIM individuals.

Address social determinants of health that disproportionately affect FNIM populations.

Facilitate access to services by reducing barriers, including mobile health units and telehealth services.

Promote community engagement and empowerment.

Foster collaborative partnerships to create a coordinated and integrated health care system.

How your local OHT ensure that Indigenous knowledge and practices are integrated into the health care delivery model?

Some questions that you may wish to bring to OHT leadership tables include:

What measures are in place to promote cultural safety within OHTs?

How does the OHT plan to address the social determinants of health that disproportionately affect FNIM populations?

What strategies are being implemented to improve access for FNIM individuals, especially in remote areas?

How will FNIM communities be engaged?

What data sovereignty protocols are in place to ensure FNIM data is used and shared ethically and respectfully?

What KPIs are used to measure success in delivering culturally informed equitable care to FNIM populations?

PCNs

PCNs have been asked to commit to creating safe and inclusive spaces for Indigenous participation.

To accomplish this the following IPHCC tools and resources have been provided through the ministry and OH communications:

[ReconciliACTION - An Indigenous Perspective](#)
(Co-Led by the IPHCC and Team Primary Care)

[IPHCC's Indigenous Cultural Safety: Anishinaabe Mino'Ayaawin - People in Good Health.](#)

[Ontario Health's Indigenous Relationships & Cultural Awareness Courses](#)

[IPHCC's Indigenous Patient, Family, and Community Engagement Toolkit](#)

How will your local PCN ensure Traditional Wellness Practitioners and FNIM leaders are included in a purposeful way?

Some questions that you may wish to bring to OHT and PCN leadership tables include:

How will the PCN ensure Indigenous health care continues to be planned, designed, delivered, and evaluated by Indigenous communities?

What is the PCN's membership composition and how will they ensure that FNIM Individuals and Wellness Practitioners, are included at decision-making tables and appropriately engaged in initiatives to improve integrated clinical pathways?

What measures are in place to ensure that FNIM organizations and Wellness Practitioners are leading discussions related to meeting the primary health care needs of FNIM populations in the community?