

Actions to Advance Indigenous Health

Presentation to the Board of Health

January 15, 2024

- The urban Indigenous population in Toronto has a diversity of cultures, languages and health and wellness practices
- Indigenous people face higher rates of health challenges across the social determinants of health and poorer health outcomes¹



¹ [Our Health Counts, 2018](#)

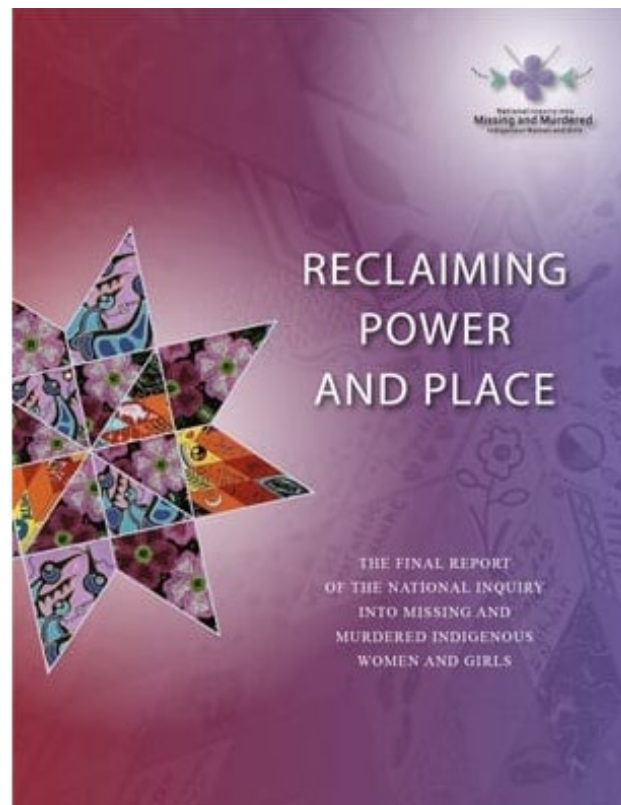
Calls for Action to Municipal Government



**Truth and Reconciliation
Commission of Canada:
Calls to Action**



2015



2019

Many reports have made recommendations to address the historic trauma and impacts of colonization on Indigenous people

Indigenous community members and Indigenous service providers are also making recommendations to advance Indigenous health



- Led by the Toronto Indigenous Health Advisory Circle (TIHAC)
- Envisioned thriving and healthy Indigenous people and communities in Toronto and the transformation of health-related programs and services
- Included recommendations for multiple sectors and partners, including Toronto Public Health and the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network

[Toronto Indigenous Health Strategy, 2016](#)

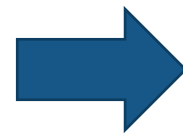
1 Health plans are developed with Indigenous peoples as full partners

2 Wherever Indigenous peoples go to access programs and services, they receive culturally appropriate, safe and proficient care, and all barriers to optimal care have been removed

3 Care is planned to be responsive to community needs and is appropriate, efficient, effective, and high quality at both systems and interpersonal levels

4 Dedicated resources and funding for Indigenous health programs and services will support a coordinated and collaborative system

5 Toronto Public Health and all partners in the Toronto Indigenous Health Strategy acknowledge the importance of Indigenous leadership and Indigenous communities caring for themselves



2016

1. Advocate for affordable, healthy food for Indigenous people in Toronto using an Indigenous lens
2. Support programs that address violence in Toronto's Indigenous community
3. Expand culturally secure parenting support programs
4. Support new and existing public health promotion programs to be culturally appropriate



2022-2032
Reconciliation
Action Plan



Launched in 2022, set for 10 years

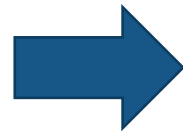
Led by the Indigenous Affairs Office with input from First Nations, Inuit and Métis community members, organizations, Elders, Knowledge Carriers, youth, Indigenous employees, and City Divisions and Agencies, including Toronto Public Health

The plan focuses on five themes:

- Restoring truth
- Righting relations and sharing power
- Addressing justice
- Making financial reparations
- Activating the City of Toronto's commitment to truth and reconciliation



2022-2032
Reconciliation
Action Plan



2022

1. Continue to implement the Toronto Indigenous Health Strategy and strengthen relationships with Indigenous partners
2. Develop and implement an Indigenous cultural safety action plan for Toronto Public Health
3. Develop an Indigenous-led healing pathway for harm reduction, substance use, recovery, and treatment
4. Work with City Divisions and other levels of government to promote and advance the social determinants of health

Toronto Public Health Actions on Indigenous Health Promotion: 2023 and 2024

Launching an Indigenous cultural safety action plan

Responding to substance use and mental health concerns

Promoting COVID-19 and influenza vaccination in urban Indigenous communities and establishing clinics

Renewing relationships with Indigenous service providers on child and youth programming

Working with Indigenous service providers on Indigenous population health data

Identifying ways to recruit and retain Indigenous-identified staff

New: Indigenous Wellness Table

- In April 2023, the Board of Health requested that the Medical Officer of Health work with Indigenous service providers to co-develop an Indigenous mental health, substance use, and addictions strategy
- Toronto Public Health worked with the Toronto Aboriginal Social Services Council (TASSC) to co-host a two-day roundtable on Indigenous wellness in October 2023
- Indigenous service providers requested the establishment of an Indigenous Wellness Committee and co-development of an Indigenous Wellness Action Plan



The Medical Officer of Health recommends that:

1. The Board of Health request the Medical Officer of Health to report back to the Board of Health in 2024 on the establishment of an Indigenous Wellness Committee and co-developed action plan, and recommendations on options to resource the action plan, as requested by Indigenous service providers.
2. The Board of Health request the Medical Officer of Health to arrange an Indigenous cultural safety training session for the Board in 2024 to build the Board's capacity to respectfully advance Indigenous health and reconciliation through its public health governance mandate.
3. The Board of Health request the Chair to call a Special Meeting of the Board of Health in 2024 for the training session referenced in Recommendation 2 above.