

# COMMUNITY UPDATE

## INTERLAKE-EASTERN REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITY



### CELEBRATING NATIONAL INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY – JUNE 21

Yesterday, on June 21, Indigenous Peoples' organizations and the Government of Canada celebrate National Indigenous Peoples Day. The date was chosen to coincide with the summer solstice – the longest day of the year – which many Indigenous Peoples' groups have celebrated as part of their culture and heritage.

In a health region that lies within Treaty Territories 1, 2 and 5 and where almost one-third of people self-identify as First-Nation, Inuit or Métis, we have reminded our staff that it is important for all of us to take responsibility to become more actively engaged in learning about Indigenous culture and history. We know that becoming more culturally sensitive will allow us to better serve all communities throughout the region and provide a culturally safe place for giving and receiving care. In this community update, we're sharing with you some of the messages we shared with staff this week to recognize and honour today.

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## Reflecting on Personal Reconciliation



***Ron Van Denakker, CEO, Interlake-Eastern RHA, with The Seven Teachings posted in the health authority's corporate office. These traditionally held guiding principles form the cultural foundation of many Indigenous organizations and communities.***

In recognition of Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21, I'm reflecting upon what truth and reconciliation means for us as a regional health authority and the partnerships we have built and continue to build with our Indigenous communities in providing excellent care that is culturally informed.

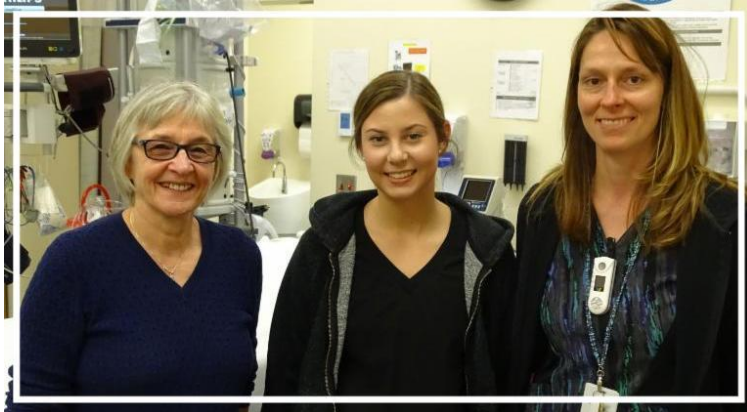
Becoming aware of our past and acknowledging the harm that has been done is a start. Our Indigenous Cultural Awareness course is a step along this path. To date, approximately 600 of our staff have taken this course in an effort to better serve our Indigenous clients and provide a space of cultural sensitivity and safety when delivering care. We continue to encourage our staff to take advantage of this important cultural education resource so that we can begin the real work of reconciliation by letting cultural sensitivity inform the services we provide to our Indigenous clients.

Moving forward, we are working with our Indigenous community partners to jointly define what culturally sensitive health care means, to provide more representative Indigenous hiring through our HR programming, and to provide culturally invested supports through our Indigenous outreach services.

We have traveled far and achieved much along the way. Yet we all still need to learn and understand so much more. This is why we need to follow the lead of Indigenous people in our region, province and nation. Our shared history contains so many things from which we can mutually learn and begin together on a new path of healing. As health care professionals, however, we know that "healing" is defined on many more levels than just the physical.

I hope this day encourages you to take advantage of opportunities to learn, challenge assumptions and apply your new understandings to your development towards personal reconciliation.

## Internship Program Pays Off



*Emergency department education for summer student Rebecca Schott, in middle. Left is Oxeer, emergency department clinical team manager, Selkirk Regional Health Centre and at right is Amanda Repar, emergency department clinical resource nurse, SRHC.*

When she was in Grade 12 in 2016, Rebecca (Becca) Schott participated in Interlake-Eastern RHA's Aboriginal Internship Program, starting with a placement at Rosewood personal care home in Stonewall.

Since that time, Becca enrolled in the University of Brandon where she completed nursing prerequisites. Last summer, she returned to Stonewall for a nursing assistant position at the hospital which the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) partly funded through their internship program.

Becca has completed her first year and has one more prerequisite to complete. She will then apply to the faculty of nursing. This summer she is working at Selkirk Regional Health Centre as a health care aide, with continued support through the MMF's internship program. This program will provide summer employment for up to five years for students.

"Being in the emergency department allows me to observe, learn, and help out in real situations, which is an extremely cool and exciting opportunity," Becca said. "I'm getting an idea of what areas of nursing most appeal to me. So far, I love emergency. For the most part, the nurses here are amazing at answering the questions I have, and observing. Some nurses even take the extra time to talk me through what they are doing and why they are doing it, which is amazing and has taught me so much."

## Bannock Point Petroforms



Lynette Klein, regional manager of Indigenous health, has a great suggestion for celebrating Indigenous culture in the region this summer:

"Whiteshell Provincial Park features the Bannock Point petroforms that are figures created by stones that people placed long ago. These outlines of turtles, snakes and humans rise up from the flat outcrops," she says. "This is a sacred place and you'll see evidence of traditional ceremonies all around. We believe the stones were placed for the benefit of all people. You can feel that this is a special place."

## What would you do?



*Attendees at the ethics workshop included (back, from left): Robert Maytwayashing, Indigenous human resources development officer; Judy Dunn, IERHA director; (front, from left): Corrie Cole, executive assistant, CEO, Board & human resources; Ruth Ann Furgala, IERHA director; Steve Day, IERHA director; Oral Johnston, IERHA director; and Isabella Sumner, Little Saskatchewan First Nation community member.*

On Monday, June 11, 75 people participated in a half-day ethics workshop sponsored by Interlake-Eastern's regional ethics council. Attendees included staff leaders, members of IERHA Board of Directors and Chief Shorting and residents of Little Saskatchewan First Nation. Dr. Donna Martin, RN, PhD, associate dean, research, associate professor, College of Nursing, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences, led the workshop.

The workshop focused on ethics regarding the 2011 flood and equity in Indigenous health care. The health needs and services of Little Saskatchewan First Nation community members' served as examples for discussion. The morning opened with a screening of the documentary *Wounded Spirit* that captured the story of Little Saskatchewan First Nation residents as they recounted the 2011 flood.

Attendees then walked through a case study and applied a framework for clinical ethical decision making to help better understand how their decisions held up against an ethical checklist.

## A shining example of collaboration



Giigewigamig Traditional Healing Centre, that is part of the health complex in Pine Falls, reflects local, regional, provincial and federal partnerships that have created a place of healing for everyone. Managed by Giigewigamig First Nation Health Authority, which is comprised of Black River, Bloodvein, Hollow Water and Sagkeeng First Nations, the chiefs and councils of each community have recognized the leadership of their Elders in keeping with protocols of the Anishinabe Nation to oversee the centre.