

INDIGENOUS HEALTH CARE ACTION SERIES






In June 2020, claims surfaced about a “Price is Right” game allegedly being played in B.C. hospital Emergency Departments (EDs) in which health care workers were guessing blood alcohol levels of Indigenous patients.

A review team investigated this by conducting surveys and interviews with healthcare workers and indigenous patients. While the “Price is Right” allegations were unsubstantiated, there were other examples found of racism and discrimination towards Indigenous peoples in the B.C. health care system. This led to recommendations that stress the need for immediate, principled and comprehensive efforts to eliminate prejudice and discrimination against Indigenous peoples in the health care system.








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
Key Findings

-  Stereotyping, prejudice and racist treatment are commonly experienced by Indigenous people in B.C. health care at all levels, especially urgent care. Only 16% of all Indigenous respondents reported not being discriminated against.
-  Indigenous peoples experience harm, poorer quality of care and even death. Racism limits access to medical treatment and primary preventative care services, leading to high reliance on emergency services which can result in hospitalization for avoidable reasons.
-  Indigenous women and girls are disproportionately impacted by Indigenous-specific racism in the health care system.
-  Indigenous peoples find the complaints process inaccessible, and this is reflected in a low number of complaints filed. Most complaints of racism and discrimination are not meaningfully addressed.
-  Indigenous health care workers face racism and discrimination in their work environments.

What Actions Can I Take as a Healthcare Leader?

-  1. Create Indigenous roles in health leadership and decision making, through both Indigenous health governance structures and the health care system as a whole.
-  2. Implement a comprehensive and secure system for collecting Indigenous identity information in health care to adopt the self-identification data standard.
-  3. Improve the process of filing and reviewing complaints, in order to address health system performance failures experienced by Indigenous peoples.
-  4. Include mandatory and standardized learning expectations surrounding anti-racism for health workers at all levels.
-  5. Ensure regular monitoring and evaluation of health services' effectiveness in serving Indigenous populations.

What Actions Can I Take as a Healthcare Provider?

-  1. Reflect on potential biases and avoid stereotyping, profiling and discriminating against Indigenous peoples.
-  2. Incorporate cultural healing practices and traditional medicines into clinical care.
-  3. Be respectful toward Indigenous colleagues with the healthcare team.
-  4. Report incidents of observed racism as per hospital procedures.
-  5. Be prepared to provide support for patients or colleagues who have experienced racism. This could include connecting them to counselling services, patient advocates, or community resources.