



FIRST PEOPLES WELLNESS CIRCLE

CHIEFS OF ONTARIO

First Nations Community Wellness Conference

Toronto | March 2024



We acknowledge the land we are meeting on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit.



Anne Duquette
Manager, Mental
Wellness Team Supports



Keith Martin
Workforce Development
Lead

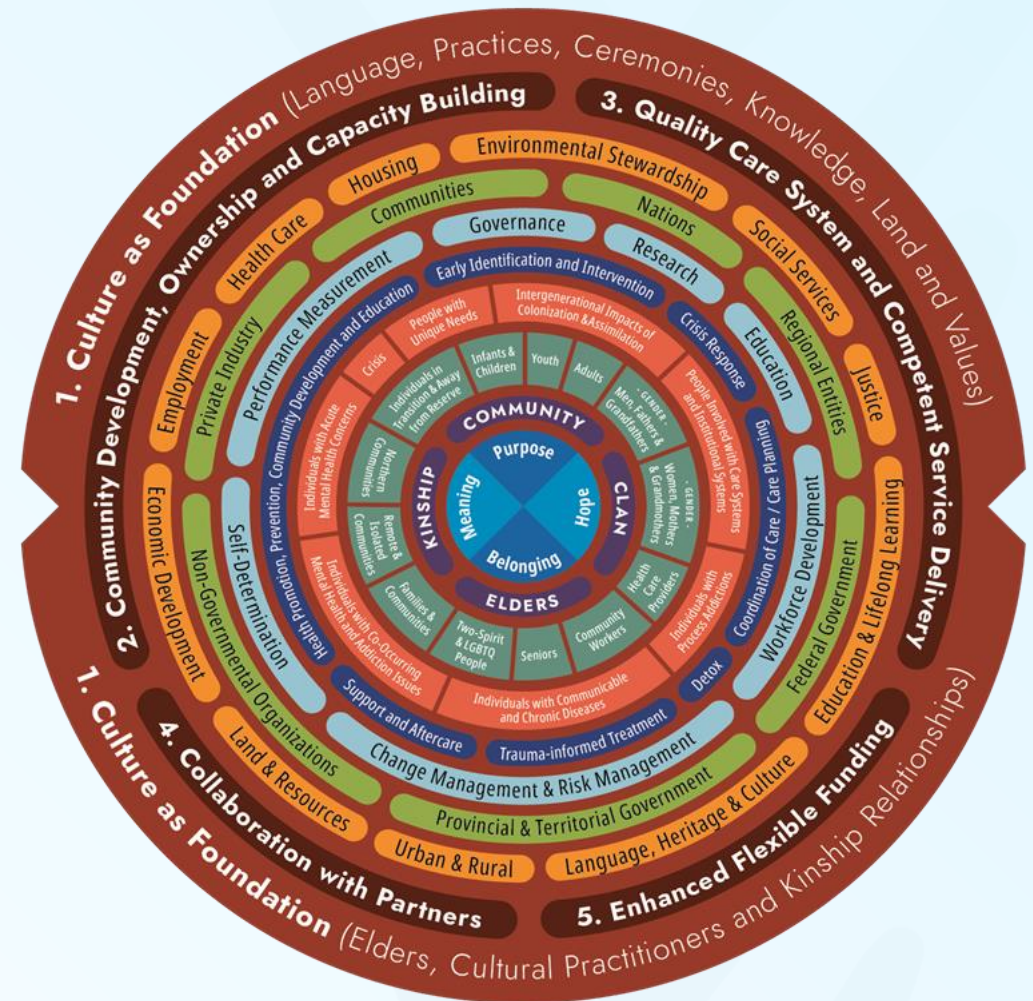


Today:

- Share about First Peoples Wellness Circle and how we support the First Nations Mental Wellness Workforce
- Workforce Wellness Strategy: Supporting the Well-being of the First Nations Mental Wellness Workforce
- Gathering Our Knowledge Bundles: Supporting the Development and Mobilization of Community-owned, Self-determined and Culturally Relevant Mental Wellness Tools and Resources

What We Do

- Implementing the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework
- Capacity building of the First Nations Mental Wellness Workforce
- Building evidence on the effectiveness of Indigenous knowledge through research and evaluation
- Creating opportunities for knowledge exchange, sharing of wise practices, and strengthen relationships & partnerships
- Advocating for systems change



For more information about the framework, please see:
<https://thunderbirdpf.org/fnmwc/>



**FIRST PEOPLES
WELLNESS CIRCLE**

Workforce Wellness Strategy: Supporting the Well-being of the First Nations Mental Wellness Workforce

Workforce Wellness Strategy

Overview

- From the *Mental Wellness Teams Comprehensive Needs Assessment, 2019*
- This Workforce Wellness Strategy aims to:
 - Support the wellness of the workers who comprise the First Nations Mental Wellness Workforce (FNMWW) who serve First Nation communities and their members,
 - Be reflective of those workers and the current realities they work in; and,
 - Contain strategies that can be implemented in meaningful ways

Journey

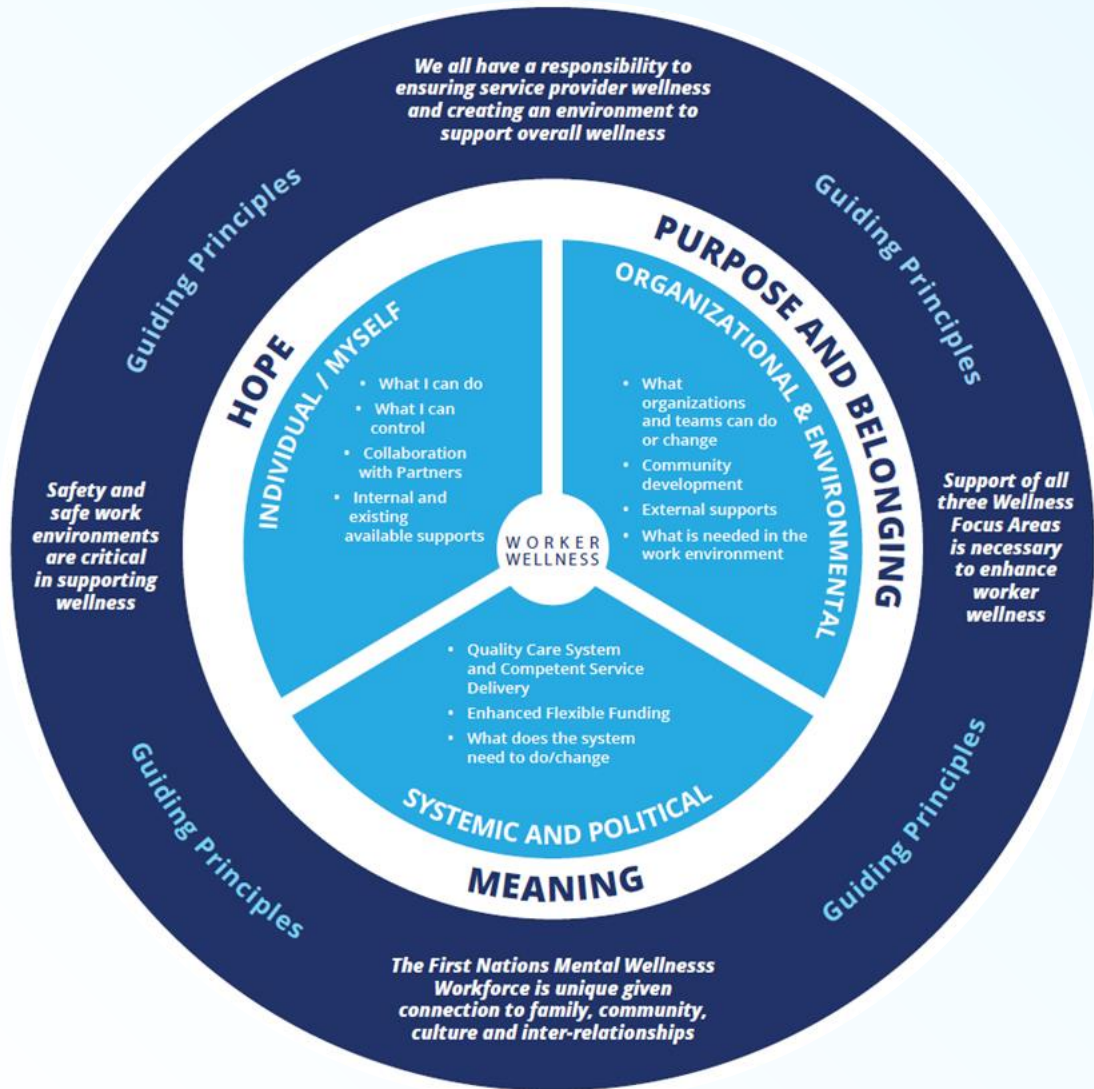
- Process was a nationwide engagement and included:
 - Being guided by a working group
 - A literature review
 - A nationwide survey
 - Nationwide focus groups

Workforce Wellness Strategy

What we heard overall

- *“Service providers have healthy boundary with community member and supervisor to communicate when they are at limit; ability to ask for help/resources etc.”*
- *“Wellness happens when you are taking care yourself and feel balanced while also feeling good about being able to take care of others in your family, community and clients.”*
- *“There is a clear need in terms of human resource capacity. We have the same responsibility as the province with a fraction of the resources.”*
- *“Service Providers are stretched thin, overworked, experience vicarious trauma and often put self care on the back burner.”*
- *“Equitable Compensation – hard to be motivated to provide great care if you feel you are not being paid what you are worth or the amount paid to same positions in different systems. Sustainability of funding is always a big concern, no funding no services.”*
- *“Anyone of us can be a patient at any time. Every patient has the right to get those services”*

Workforce Wellness Strategy - Framework



Guiding Principles

- We all have a responsibility to ensuring service provider wellness and creating an environment to support overall wellness;
- Indigenous wellness workforces are unique given connection to family, community, culture and interrelationships;
- Safety and safe work environments are critical in supporting wellness; and
- Support of all **3 wellness focus areas** is necessary to enhance service provider wellness, which are:
 - Individual
 - Organizational and Environmental
 - Systemic and Political

Workforce Wellness Strategy

Actions (some examples) found in the three “wellness focus areas”

Individual

(Self-Evaluation; Self-Awareness; Self-Reflection)

- Have systems in place to support wellness workers in knowing how to be aware of their individual state of wellness and needs (Elders, counsellors, peer support or other cultural supports)
- Explore wellness supports outside of the work environment including family, friends and community.
- Develop a personal wellness plan that includes regular check-ins with supervisor to support growth and achievement. This could include education and training needs as well as forms of support such as supervisory, cultural, peer or other.
- Develop a self-evaluation tool to support wellness workers in recognizing issues. This tool can be used regularly and built into regular routines similar to other policies and procedures.

“It was the Elder that that trained me to focus on the individual and not the system.”

“Wellness happens when you are taking care of yourself and feel balanced while also feeling good about being able to take care of others in your family, community, and clients.”

Workforce Wellness Strategy

Actions (some examples) found in the three “wellness focus areas”

Organizational & Environmental

(Relationship Building & Advocacy; Network of Support; Wellness Plans & Activities; Policies, Procedures and Practices; Administrative Functions)

- Establish a tool for friends and family of Service Providers to understand how to support them
- Work environments encourage and provide time needed for employees to build relationships so that there is an opportunity to learn from one another, collaborate, network, connect and check in to offer support.
- Develop a training program for Supervisors related to how to support implementation and evaluation of employee personal wellness plans.
- Develop worker wellness policies and procedures that are focused on health and balance of all employees.

“Safety is a trauma-informed way of understanding and having an administration that understands what workers are doing and how they are working.”

“...the need for policy and procedures and the challenge to have them reflect each community, and balancing all that and the capacity of doing that... How do we align the policy at the organization level and then at the community level?”

Workforce Wellness Strategy

Actions (some examples) found in the three “wellness focus areas”

Systemic & Political

(Political; Funding; Resources)

- Federal and Provincial governments need to re-evaluate the current funding models intended to support mental health and wellness amongst Indigenous peoples, communities, and service providers.
- Funding models need to be suitable, equitable and sustainable.
- Develop a recruitment and retention plan along with required funding requirements to support the training and hiring of wellness workers.
- Continue advocacy for governments to implement the calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), the articles identified in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the calls to justice that were identified in the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG), and other actions that have been identified.

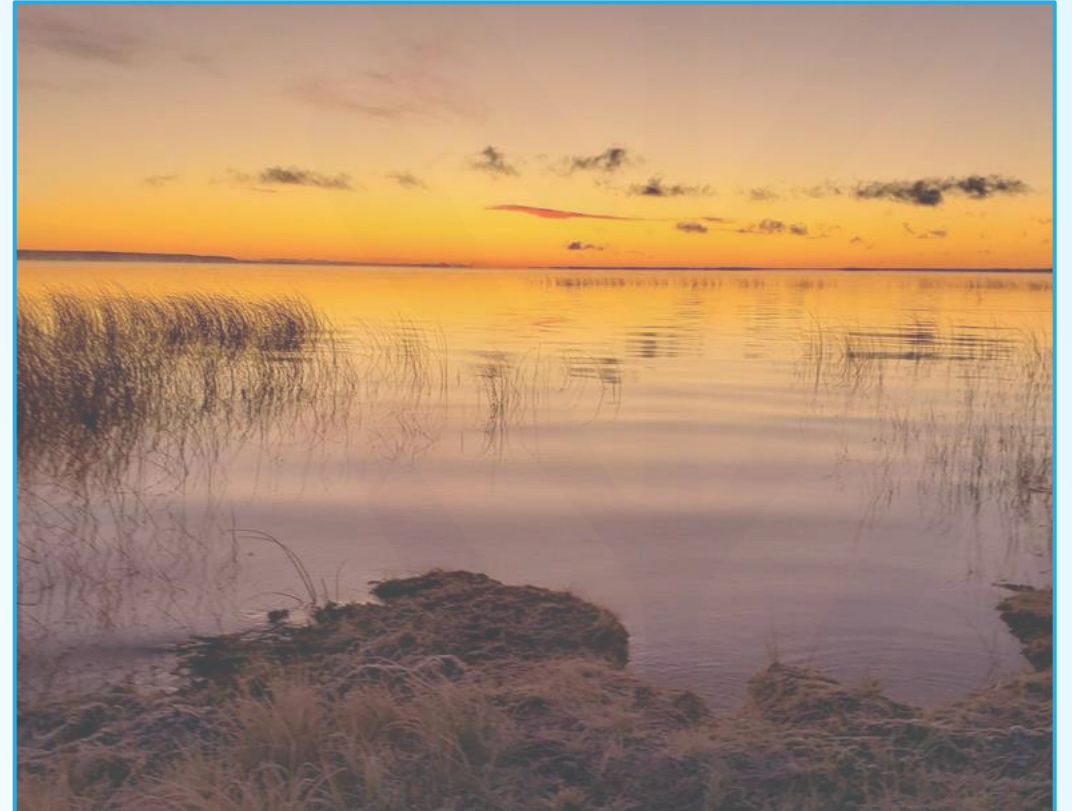
“There is a clear need in terms of human resource capacity. We have the same responsibility as the province with a fraction of the resources.”

“Cultural acceptance in government policies and overall government legislature that is implemented in all of the provinces and understood as coming from the sovereignty of Indigenous People.”

Workforce Wellness Strategy

Recommendations

- Develop Resources and Tools for Wellness Workers
- Develop and Implement Wellness Training and Curriculum
- Develop a Virtual Resource Library
- Pilot Wellness Initiatives with the Workforce
- Advocate for Proactive Investments
- Implementation Plan...



PROJECT

Gathering Our Knowledge Bundles

Supporting the Development and Mobilization of
Community-owned, Self-determined, and Culturally
Relevant Mental Wellness Tools and Resources

Overview

- **Welcome and Introduction (10 mins)**
 - Who are we
 - About Gathering Our Knowledge Bundles
- **Gathering Information (5 mins)**
- **Resources in Development (5 mins)**
- **Interactive Activity (10 mins)**
- **Q & A (30 mins)**



Mia Commanda-Bourque
Project Coordinator,
Gathering Our Knowledge
Bundles



Lulu Choy
Resource Developer,
Gathering Our Knowledge
Bundles

About the project

Using culture as a foundation, **Gathering Our Knowledge Bundles** will support the First Nations Mental Wellness (FNMW) Workforce to develop and mobilize community-owned, self-determined and culturally relevant mental wellness tools and resources.

Key Aspects of the Project

- Creation of **“Knowledge Bundles”** among the FNMW Workforce that will support promoting mental wellness in safe, meaningful, and healing ways.
- Support the FNMW Workforce in reconnecting following the isolation of the COVID-19 pandemic
- Increase accessibility of culturally relevant mental wellness tools and resources focused on mental wellness priorities impacted by COVID-19
- Ensure that the project is strength-based, community-driven, and wholistic



Gathering Information

- **Community Conversations** and **Networking Sessions** that gives people the opportunity to come together and share
 - **Upcoming Community Conversations:**
 - **Fort Frances, ON March 2024**
 - **Saskatoon, SK May 2024**
 - **British Columbia TBD**
- Hosting **Regional Circles** and establishing an **Advisory Circle** to guide our work in a community-driven and holistic way
- Digital and Paper **Survey** created to gather insight and feedback for resource priorities





Gathering Our Knowledge Bundles: What are your resource priorities?

Thank you for participating in our survey. Your responses will help us create resources for the Gathering Our Knowledge Bundles project and other First Peoples Wellness Circle initiatives. This project is designed to support the First Nations Mental Wellness Workforce by developing and sharing culturally relevant resources that can be used with the communities they serve.

By participating in this survey, you will also be entered into a raffle to win a prize!

1. Please rank in ORDER of importance (with 1 being the most important and 10 being the least important) the following potential priority areas for the development of resources that may be included in the Gathering Our Knowledge Bundles Project:

- Staff wellness and self-care
- Culturally appropriate, trauma-informed approaches
- Resources for recognizing and responding to complex, layered trauma(s)
- Recognizing, responding and supporting victims of sexual trauma/violence
- Burnout, compassion fatigue and/or vicarious trauma
- Grief and loss, including complex grief and unresolved grief
- Supporting specific needs such as LGBTQ2S individuals and families
- Virtual care and delivery
- Working with specific age groups, e.g, children and youth
- Resources to address the unique needs of various cohorts, such as child welfare applicants, 60s Scoop, MMIWG, Indian Day Schools, etc

2. What potential resource priority topics do you feel are missing from the list?

3. What delivery format would you prefer for the selected resource priorities:

- Handouts (one-pager, booklet)
- Powerpoint Presentation
- Facilitator Guide
- Webinar
- Infographic
- Podcast
- Combined Delivery Format
- Other: _____

4. Are you interested in being a part of a Regional Circle for this project?

Yes / No

5. Would you like to receive updates from First Peoples Wellness Circle (FPWC)

- Yes
- No

***Disclaimer: Your name and other identifying information are only used to contact you for being part of Regional Circle and to enter you into a raffle for participation in this survey**

Name: _____ Email: _____

What is the name of your organization or community? : _____

Job Title: _____

***Disclaimer: By participating in this survey, you are agreeing for this information to be used to inform the development of resources and other initiatives at FPWC. Identifiers will remain confidential and anonymous.**



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Resources in Development

- **Virtual Care Toolkit**

- A resource guide that will accompany wellness workers and staff in delivering virtual care to their First Nation communities

- **Implementation Guide**

- A comprehensive guide to planning events or training sessions that wellness workers may be asked to run

- **Workforce Wellness Strategy**

- A strategy focused on supporting the well-being of Wellness Workers in First Nation communities

- **Workplace Well-being Training**

- A training resource with accompanying manuals geared towards frontline workers and managers in addressing common challenges wellness workers face



Interactive Activity

To participate, please use your phone to join at
[menti.com](https://www.menti.com) and enter the code:

6937 6675

Or scan the QR Code:



Join at menti.com | use code 6937 6675



What were some of the challenges that your community or organization experienced during the COVID-19 Pandemic?

Waiting for responses ...



Join at menti.com | use code 6937 6675



Are any of those challenges still present?

Yes

No



Join at menti.com | use code 6937 6675



What were some resources or supports that you found helpful in addressing any or some of those challenges?

Waiting for responses ...



Join at menti.com | use code **6937 6675**



What are some wise practices, ideas or solutions you would like to share?

Waiting for responses ...



Questions & Discussion



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Thank You

Wela'lioq

Nakurmiik

Tshinashkumitin

Maarsi

Merci

Miigwech



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Miigwech • Maarsii • Nakurmiik • Merci • Thank you