

NORTH

NORTHERN FIRST NATIONS HEALTH AUTHORITY NEWS | NOVEMBER 2021

STORIES FROM THE LAND

FREE CELL PHONES HELP
WITH HARM REDUCTION
AND ISOLATION

RECRUITERS:

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JOB FOR YOU!**

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ACTING VP NORTHERN
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SHARING STRENGTH

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ABOUT THE VACCINE, COVID
AND ITS EFFECTS ON PEOPLE



NORTHERN REGION
First Nations Health Authority

STORIES FROM THE LAND

PHONES ARE A LIFE LINE

THE FIRST NATIONS HEALTH AUTHORITY (NORTHERN REGION) HAS ALREADY HANDED OUT 230 FREE PHONES TO CLIENTS AND COMMUNITIES TO PROVIDE EASIER ACCESS TO HARM REDUCTION SUPPORTS THROUGH APPS LIKE LIFEGUARD, ZOOM AND LIFELINE CANADA.

The program, which has another 55 phones waiting to be shipped from Prince George, was made possible by SPARC BC and is designed to help people connect to services in response to increasing isolation for many during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Some communities are lending the phone out to people in need and individuals who are in a vulnerable space are keeping them close just in case. One woman reported feeling safer going out just having it with her.

Other people use the phone to set up emergency alerts that will notify a loved one they are in trouble if they prefer that to the emergency medical services.

Another favourite is the First Nations Virtual Doctor of the Day for those looking for culturally safe remote health care.



Dezz Spooner using a phone provided by the FNHA



Apps like Lifeguard come pre-loaded and help save lives

A large range of apps come pre-installed in order to meet people where they are at on their journey including: FNHA App, BC COVID-19 App, Zoom, Signal, BC Health Service Locator App, Lifelabs: Save My Spot, LifeLine Canada App and Lifeguard.

The phone comes with a 10-dollar credit that can be refilled at any 7/11 as needed, they can also access



People feel more isolated during the pandemic - phones help!

the Internet with Wi-Fi, which is especially useful in communities with little or no cellphone service.

The FNHA Northern Region has so far handed out more phones than any other region and only has a few left, so hurry while stocks last!

SHARING STRENGTHS

SANDRA MARTIN HARRIS ON VACCINATIONS & THE PANDEMIC

WHY DO YOU THINK SO MANY PEOPLE ARE NOT FULLY BEHIND THE PUBLIC CAMPAIGN TO ADDRESS THE PANDEMIC?

I believe this is mostly a matter of trust. Many people don't believe in public health and many also reject the science behind viruses and vaccines. There is also a mistrust of a system that keeps changing the rules.

And some think that because they live an isolated life, they are not at risk.

YOU BELIEVE IN VACCINES. HOW DO YOU APPROACH CONVERSATIONS WITH PEOPLE WHO DON'T?

I try to listen and create a gentle space. I try to get an understanding of what's happening, to get their perspective.

I also share how I seek to understand the science that tells us how the vaccine is a helper, like for measles, another highly contagious disease and that if you are not vaccinated you can get the disease and share the disease with your family and friends. And share what it might be like to be sick with Covid, how it impacts your lungs especially.

HAVE YOU CONVINCED ANYONE?

I convinced some of my family to get their first dose, now I am waiting for them to take the second dose. In my own family I tell people that I am getting vaccinated because I love them and I don't want to be the reason they get sick. We have lost loved ones in our Nation due to Covid, others were gravely ill and still in recovery.

HAS THE PANDEMIC CHANGED YOUR LIFE?

Daily living has changed dramatically, there is very little movement from my home and everything is planned, there is little randomness.

I didn't realize I could live like a hermit and be OK with it. I make an effort to get outside every day, to be in fresh air and in the sun or rain.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE HARDEST PART OF THE PANDEMIC?

The losses.

Sandra Martin Harris is from the Wet'suwet'en Nation of the Laksilyu Clan. Among other things, she is a trauma practitioner and is certified in the JIBC's Indigenous Focusing Orientated Therapy program and hosts many workshops.



Sandra suggests listening with kindness and try to understand the science

Do you know someone who makes a difference in your community? Suggest a story at SubscribeNorth@fnha.ca

HAVE WE GOT A JOB FOR YOU!



Recruiters are great communicators and marketers. Is this you?

- ✓ **POSITION:** Recruiting Coordinator
- ✓ **LOCATION:** Anywhere in BC
- ✓ **Ideal for an enthusiastic outgoing FNHA admin**

DO YOU WANT TO GET INTO HR RECRUITING? For experienced FNHA admin staff (2-3 years) this is your chance to expand your skills. Does the idea of visiting colleges and schools and talking to prospective employees sound like fun? Do you want to encourage Indigenous kids to look at health careers? If you are the right candidate, you'll have a blast doing this! You'd be scheduling interviews, creating offer letters, completing on-boarding paperwork (including back checks), and supporting the HR recruiter. It takes someone with enthusiasm and who enjoys meeting people. We need a team of dedicated, caring people to do the work we do. Come and join us as our recruiting coordinator and be part of our FNHA family.

Contact Ken.Warda@fnha.ca if you are curious.

Jobs are also available to those with more recruiting experience.

FNHA JOB OPENINGS IN THE NORTH (click for more info)

[Coop Student Research Assistant](#)

[Data Collector, Regional Health Survey](#)

[Dental Hygienist](#)

[Environmental Health Officers](#)

[Facilities Technician](#)

[Indigenous Educator, Harm Reduction](#)

[Interim Medical Director, Primary Care](#)

[Regional Mental Health & Wellness Liaison](#)

COMMUNITY HEALTH NURSES

[Gitanyow & Gitwangak](#)

[Fort St. John](#)

[Kwadacha Fort Ware](#)

[Kitkatla](#)

[Kwadacha](#)

[Telegraph Creek](#)

[Tsay Keh Dene](#)

[Lax Kw'alaams Port Simpson](#)

[Resource Team](#)

[Community Health Practice](#)

[Consultant Prince George](#)

[Rapid Response Community Health Nurse \(internal\)](#)

[Nurse Coordinator CDC](#)

[Programs](#)

NURSES IN CHARGE

[Telegraph Creek](#)

[Gitga'at Hartley Bay](#)

[Tsay Keh Dene](#)

[Regional Nurse Manager](#)

[Prince George](#)

**Check out all our jobs at
fnha.ca/careers**

BONFIRE CHAT

WITH JULIE MORRISON ACTING VP REGIONAL OPERATIONS



I WOULD LIKE TO START BY ACKNOWLEDGING THE HARD WORK OF OUR STAFF AND PARTNERS AS WE RESPOND TO THE DUAL CRISES OF OUR TIME - THE OPIOID CRISIS AND THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, BOTH OF WHICH ARE TAKING TOO MANY LIVES.

I have watched as FNHA staff have worked weekends, taken vaccines to remote communities and organized vaccination clinics with dedication and enthusiasm that has often masked the exhaustion behind the smiles. I am grateful to be working beside them and seeing the grit and good humour they bring to the work.

The opioid crisis is our other top priority. We are partnering with Northern Health and a host of organizations to reach out to those who are in danger by offering a mix of traditional, cultural and harm reduction programs.

We are also producing videos that will raise awareness against the stigma that continues to be the greatest barrier between us and those that need our help.

In the midst of this we are also planning for the future, which revolves around bringing more staff and functions to Prince George from Vancouver to ensure

"I HEARD ABOUT THE TOUGH WORK OF TALKING TO FAMILIES ABOUT OPTIONS WHEN ALL OPTIONS HAVE BEEN TRIED. I COULD SEE THEIR PAIN. "

Our relationship with Northern Health has intensified and become closer as both organizations continue to support efforts to vaccinate our people and care for those who become sick. This strengthening of ties will serve us all as we emerge from the current emergencies.

Recently while in a meeting with doctors who have been providing medical care to patients in intensive care I could see how this has taken a toll on health teams. I heard about the tough work of talking with families about options when all options have been tried. I could see their pain and it reminded me that we all need to take extra care of ourselves and others at this time.

people who know and understand our communities are the ones serving them.

Finally, we are always looking for capable and dedicated professionals to join our growing staff. If you are interested in an organization that puts wellness first, please get in touch.

Email SubscribeNorth@fnha.ca
to sign up for our eZine

FNHA FUNDING

1

Land Based Healing Grants improve access to land based treatment and healing

Stream 1: Capacity Building & Planning
Up to \$50,000
Stream 2: Revitalization
Up to \$50,000
Stream 3: Collaborative Projects
Up to \$250,000

Contact Carla.Lewis@fnha.ca for info

2

Regional Envelope Funding for community based projects

Contact REF@fnha.ca for info

3

Mental Health & Wellness Memorandum of Understanding

\$6 million still available for the North

Contact Lindsey.Larsen@fnha.ca for info

4

Community Based Men's Health Initiative Grants

\$2500 for a men's group activity or event
\$7500 for ongoing projects such as a men's group

Contact frankcohn@dudesclub.ca for info

5

FNHA and Northern Health's Community Wellness Awards are for community based initiatives focused on wholistic health and wellness

\$5000 available

Contact taylor.turgeon@northernhealth.ca for info

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR YOU

Rapid testing devices like GeneXpert, ID Now and Panbio all help people determine if they have COVID or not. For many communities that are remote this is a real game changer. Knowing if you are COVID + means you can take action to get treated, isolate and keep those around you from getting sick.

The FNHA is making these devices available in communities. Priority areas are those that are far from medical centres. If your community would like more information about these COVID testing devices, contact Mauri.Wale@fnha.ca.

On the cover

FNHA Community Engagement Coordinator, Alyssa Lepka, from Nak'azdli Whut'en is an avid hunter. When she was young her grandfather sent her out to get "chickens" (grouse) and told her not to come home till the basket was full. Not only did she fill the basket, today Alyssa is a crack shot. This photo is from one of this fall's hunting expeditions. Alyssa shot a moose and an elk on the same day!

Have a great picture for our cover or a story idea?
Send to SubscribeNorth@fnha.ca

STAFF CHANGES

- Welcome back **Alisa Froh**, CEC in Treaty 8 working with **Kerri Kirk**
- **Marion Cahoose** is our new shipper/receiver in Prince George
- **Joanne Magnusson** rocks it as our receptionist!
- **Coco Miller** is now a talent acquisition specialist. Go Coco!
- Two planners have come on board: **Pratyush Dhawan** and **Alex Currey**
- **Jim Campbell** has filled the position of mental wellness manager
- **Anita Andreychuk** moves into the addictions specialist role
- Nurse advisor, **Reilly Kluss**, has joined the emergency response team and **Liza Sam** is the rapid response team nurse
- In the Northeast our newest EHO is **Seyoum Gebeyehu**. Woohoo!