

# NORTH

NORTHERN FIRST NATIONS HEALTH AUTHORITY NEWS | NOVEMBER 2022

## STORIES FROM THE LAND

REMOTE COMMUNITY  
GETS X-RAY MACHINE

## HAVE WE GOT A JOB FOR YOU!

DETAILS ON PAGE 4

## BONFIRE CHAT

GETTING PROACTIVE  
WITH HEALTH EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT

## IN THE GALLERY

OUR PETS...TRUE LOVE

## SHARING STRENGTHS

LOCAL WORK ON  
A GLOBAL SCALE



NORTHERN REGION  
First Nations Health Authority

## STORIES FROM THE LAND

# KWADACHA ELDERS SEE FIRST X-RAY MACHINE IN COMMUNITY FOR MORE THAN 50 YEARS

**MEMBERS OF KWADACHA FIRST NATION LIVE IN ONE OF THE LEAST ACCESSIBLE LOCATIONS IN NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA,** 12 hours by car from Prince George when the roads are clear, too far away from medical supports even when the sun is shining. At times in winter, no-one can get in even by plane.

This made it the perfect choice for the First Nations Health Authority's first community X-ray machine.

"Elders were elated as they recalled a time when an X-ray team used to travel into community by boat in the 1960s to do chest X-rays and TB screenings," said Kwadacha Health Director Rebecca Tallman. "To see an X-ray machine in their own community was very exciting."

Community members, especially the Elders, are relieved to avoid travelling to far away hospitals where many have had negative and culturally unsafe experiences, to say nothing of extended waits in Emergency rooms. Now they can have their chest X-ray close to home.

The long-term plan is to provide more and more primary care to more and more communities, making sure more patients are diagnosed sooner and treated with the respect and dignity they deserve. The X-ray machine is a positive sign of things to come.



This new community X-ray machine is compact yet powerful



FNHA staff head north to set up the machine

Download a digital copy of NORTH:  
<https://fnha.bmeurl.co/EAF0585>

## SHARING STRENGTHS

# FNHA'S CARLA LEWIS TO ATTEND UNITED NATIONS LAUNCH OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES DECADE

### **CARLA LEWIS, THE NORTHERN REGION'S TRADITIONAL WELLNESS SPECIALIST, IS TRAVELLING TO PARIS**

this December to attend UNESCO's launch of the International Decade of Action for Indigenous Languages, which will promote their preservation and revitalization through international cooperation and sharing of experiences.

Carla is attending the event as the Board Chair of the First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC), which she has been involved with for the past six years. The FPCC works with First Nations communities in BC to build the vitality of language, arts, and cultural heritage through research, advocacy, policy development and fundraising. She is attending with a delegation from First Peoples which includes Dr. Lorna Williams, Chair of the First Peoples' Cultural Foundation and two youth language warriors who will be attending as a mentorship opportunity.

The high-level launch event, hosted by UNESCO, is in co-operation with the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and members of the Global Task Force for Making a Decade of Action for Indigenous Languages. The event will primarily target high level representatives of UNESCO Member States, Indigenous leaders, the UN system, civil society national researcher organizations and representatives from

the public and private sector. This is an open space for discussion, sharing of good practices and presentation of concrete projects. A global social media campaign is being carried out in conjunction with the launch event, to increase awareness about the International Decade.

"To thrive in wellness as First Nations people we need to be connected to our languages that hold the stories, songs, and values of our lands and our cultures. I am proud to be representing the amazing work being championed here on Turtle Island," said Carla as she re-arranged her beret in preparation for the journey.

Bon voyage Carla!



Carla Lewis is the Board Chair of the First Peoples' Cultural Council. She is passionate about language.



# HAVE WE GOT A JOB FOR YOU!



You work with partners to develop programs and coordinate training

- ✓ **POSITION:** Nurse Advisor, Harm Reduction & Substance Use (Tobacco & Cannabis)
- ✓ **LOCATION:** Prince George BC
- ✓ **Gather and share tobacco/cannabis related info, stats, and harm reduction strategies in a culturally safe way**

**COMMUNITY LEADERS, KNOWLEDGE KEEPERS, TRADITIONAL HEALERS AND FOLKS FROM OTHER AGENCIES ARE YOUR PARTNERS IN THIS WORK.** And it's your skill in creating meaningful relationships that is key to reconnecting to cultural ways of influencing harm reduction in a good way. Community members are your partners as well as representatives from QuitNow, Talk Tobacco and Northern Health. Some of your work involves engagement to determine what best practices currently exist for harm reduction, and other times you'll be doing research, collecting and sharing data. As a health professional you can provide specialized expertise, advice and guidance. If you enjoy working on projects and programs that promote health and wellness, consider applying for the position of [Nurse Advisor, Harm Reduction & Substance Use \(Tobacco & Cannabis\)](#).

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

[Aboriginal Head Start Advisor](#)

[Administrative Assistant](#)

[Advisor, Crisis & Emergency Response](#)

[Clinical Counsellor, Crisis Response](#)

[Clinical Counsellor, Mental Health & Wellness](#)

[Community Engagement Coordinators:](#)

- [Northern Region](#)
- [Burns Lake](#)
- [Prince George](#)

[Community Relations Representative](#)

[Coordinator, Men's Health & Wellness](#)

[Crisis Response Community Coordinator \(2\)](#)

[Environmental Health Officer](#)

[eHealth Trainer](#)

[Financial Consultant](#)

[Indigenous Educator, Harm Reduction](#)

[Medical Office Assistant](#)

[Program Coordinator, Traditional Wellness](#)

[Project Manager Land Based Healing](#)

[Regional Addictions Specialist](#)

[Regional Joint Project Board &](#)

[Mobile Support Project Manager](#)

[Regional Planner](#)

[Senior Administrative Coordinator](#)

[Senior Provincial Addictions Specialist](#)

[Wellness Systems Quality Care Coordinator](#)

### NURSING

[Community Health Nurse, Health Centres \(casual\)](#)

[Community Health Practice Consultant](#)

[Nurse Advisor, Harm Reduction & Substance Use \(Tobacco and Cannabis\)](#)

[Regional Nurse Advisor, Communicable Disease Emergencies](#)

**Check out all our jobs at**  
[fnha.ca/careers](https://fnha.ca/careers)

# BONFIRE CHAT

WITH CARLOS COLINDRES, DIRECTOR OF HEALTH AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



**I FEEL THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE IN MY ROLE AS THE FNHA'S EMERGENCY RESPONSE LEAD IN THE NORTHERN REGION** is the colonial structures and mindsets that place a disproportionate focus on responding to emergencies when they happen, rather than preventing or reducing the impact of health hazards of all type.

The system does not yet give the proper focus to preventing illness and mitigating emergencies.

In my opinion the lack of focus on prevention and mitigation does not align with First Nations' perspectives on health and wellness. The imposition of this reactive approach through colonial policy is part of the structural violence against First Nations. The short-sighted approach to emergencies means

Act (DRIPA) as well as the implementation of the Sendai Framework—it outlines seven global actions to reduce disaster risk—strengthen avenues for this.

Luckily, our communities have asked us to build community wellness from a strengths-based approach that gives them the capacity to prepare and protect themselves with cultural tools. Tools like the teachings of the ancestors and the power of the land.

This proactive approach includes our drinking water programs, food safe training and, thanks to learning lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic, community-based testing for viruses and infections to halt their spread just to name a few.

**"OUR APPROACH IS TO INVEST NOW RATHER THAN JUST REACT LATER (TO HEALTH AND NATURAL DISASTER EMERGENCIES)."**

that until now we are always running to catch up. Thanks to the leadership of our communities, we are starting to change that.

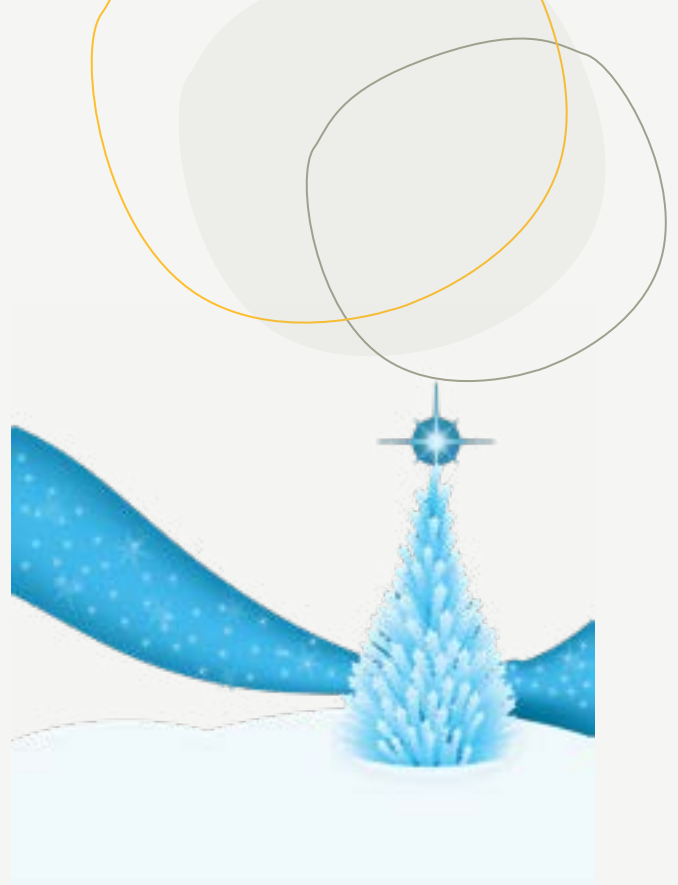
Our approach is to invest now rather than just react later. Changing the mindset and policies in these spaces is hard but it is happening. We can't see the system change in real time but we see it in action. The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The incredible reclamation of culture in community is making this work possible. And this is why the inspiration I see from the communities I work with and serve gets me out of bed in the morning.

Email [SubscribeNorth@fnha.ca](mailto:SubscribeNorth@fnha.ca)  
to sign up for our eZine

# FYI

THE WINTER SOLSTICE IS AN IMPORTANT TIME FOR FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE, WHO SINCE TIME IMMEMORIAL HAVE CELEBRATED THE RISING AND RENEWAL OF THE SUN. AS WE REFLECT ON OUR CONNECTION TO THIS LAND AND THE CHANGING SEASONS, LET US HONOUR OUR LOVED ONES AND ANCESTORS WHO SURROUND US WITH WARMTH AND SUPPORT YEAR ROUND.



## FUNDING

### Healing from Trauma

The FNHA recently sent out packages to health leads regarding this funding:

Government of Canada funding is available to First Nations organizations or communities engaged in direct health service delivery to BC First Nations people. The funding can support Trauma-informed cultural and emotional supports.

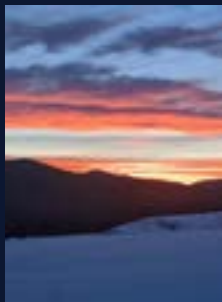
The amount of funding is up to \$50,000 per community, and up to \$100,000 for caretaker communities where Indian Residential Schools and/or Indian Hospitals were located.

If you did not receive this funding contact [NRPlanning@fnha.ca](mailto:NRPlanning@fnha.ca) or your community engagement coordinator.

### On the cover

Dawn light brightens the horizon and reminds us that the seasonal cycles continue as we near the shortest day of the year.

*Photo by Peter McBride*



**Have a great picture for our cover or a story idea? Send to [SubscribeNorth@fnha.ca](mailto:SubscribeNorth@fnha.ca)**

## HOLIDAY NUMBERS PHONE SUPPORT

In addition to the contact info on our back page, the following resources are available:

- Provincial Alcohol & Drug Information Referral Service 1-800-663-1441
- FNHA Mental Wellness & Counselling Support through Health Benefits 1-855-550-5454
- Adah Dene Cultural Healing Camp Society, Margo Sagalon 250-996-3813 or Tracey Charlebois 250-996-1475
- Carrier Sekani Family Services Vanderhoof, Catherine Lessard 250-996-8090; Prince George, Rhonda Hourie or Cheryl Thomas 778-675-0419
- Gitanyow Human Services, Wanda Good 250-849-5651
- Gitxsan Health Society, Ardythe Wilson 250-842-8251, Pam Torres 778-202-1355, Gary Patsey 778-202-1703



# THROUGH NORTHERN EYES

THEY LOVE US NO MATTER WHAT...OUR PETS



UPCOMING IN JANUARY: WINTER SCENES  
Send us your photo to [SubscribeNorth@fnha.ca](mailto:SubscribeNorth@fnha.ca)

# IMPORTANT CONTACT INFO

**FNHA Virtual Doctor of the Day**  
**1-855-344-3800**

**First Nations Health Benefits**  
**1-855-550-5454**

**National Indian Residential  
School Survivors Society**  
**1-800-721-0066**

**Kids Help Phone**  
**1-800-668-6868**  
**Text "connect" to: 686868**

**KUU-US Crisis Response**  
**1-800-588-8717**

**Mental Health**  
**(no area code needed)**  
**310-6789**

**Health Link BC**  
**811**

**BC Suicide Line**  
**1-800-784-2433**  
<https://crisiscentre.bc.ca/get-help/>

**Northern BC Crisis Line**  
**1-888-562-1214**

**Northern BC YOUTH  
Crisis Line**  
**1-888-564-8336**  
**Text: 250-564-8336**