



Winnipeg Regional Health Authority
Aboriginal Health Programs

**ABORIGINAL HEALTH PROGRAMS
WINNIPEG REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITY**

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER: ABORIGINAL HEALTH PROGRAMS STRATEGY 2011-2016



Winnipeg Regional
Health Authority
Caring for Health

Office régional de la
santé de Winnipeg
À l'écoute de notre santé



TABLE OF CONTENTS

3.....Executive Summary

3.....Introduction

4.....Strategic Directions

9.....Implementation Plan

10.....Conclusion



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Aboriginal Health Programs has continued to grow and adapt to the needs of the Winnipeg health region and Aboriginal population in an effort to increase cultural proficiency throughout the region and wellness for Aboriginal peoples. The *Moving Forward Together Aboriginal Health Programs Strategy* was created in collaboration with external stakeholders and community input and outlines five Strategic Directions with Strategic Priorities that will guide Aboriginal Health Programs over the next five years.

The five Strategic Directions are:

- Enhance Patient Experience & Access
- Improve Quality & Integration
- Foster Public Engagement, Awareness & Communication
- Support a Positive Work Environment
- Enhance Structure & Sustainability

Each Direction has several Strategic Priorities that will guide annual program plans and tasks.

Aboriginal Health Programs will evaluate its progress on an annual basis while continuing to foster new relationships that help accomplish the program's Strategic Directions.

INTRODUCTION

In general, Aboriginal people do not enjoy the same health status as other Canadians. Up to 60 per cent of urban hospital patients may be Aboriginal and it is estimated that Aboriginal people utilize hospitals and medical services at a rate two to three times higher than that of other Manitobans. Many factors affect the health and well-being of Aboriginal people in Canada.

The Winnipeg Regional Health Authority recognizes that understanding the historical, contemporary and cultural factors impacting Aboriginal people is key in understanding their current health status and developing appropriate health-care services.

Aboriginal Health Programs (AHP) provides culturally appropriate support, services, resources and education for patients and their families, the community and the Winnipeg health region workforce through its regional team and three streams: Health Services, Workforce Development and Health Education. AHP continually partners with internal and external stakeholders on a variety of projects and initiatives that help guide and develop services, policies and programming throughout the health region and province.

In a continued effort, Aboriginal Health Program's *Moving Forward Together Aboriginal Health Programs Strategy* outlines five Strategic Directions which will become areas of focus for AHP, in all its sub-programs and partnerships, over the next five years. These Strategic Directions were developed collaboratively with input from external stakeholders and community representation including the integration of our Framework for Health Adaptation created through participation in an Aboriginal Health Transition Fund project.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITIES



1. Enhance Patient Experience & Access

This strategic direction encompasses initiatives aimed at improving access to health care and the experience of the patient while utilizing the health-care system. Some focus areas of this strategic direction include:

Ensuring Patients are Treated with Empathy and Understanding

Aboriginal Health Programs is helping the Winnipeg health region create a more culturally proficient health system that better understands and interacts with Métis, First Nations and Inuit patients. Efforts include improving access and awareness of AHP – Health Services for patients in Winnipeg health region facilities, continued development and implementation of cultural education and training for health-care providers working in the region and building a more representative workforce through the hiring of Aboriginal employees in all areas/disciplines within the region.

Service Access & Delivery

Aboriginal Health Programs works to identify contextual influences, barriers, gaps and historical challenges that impede access to both regional and community-based services. To create a more responsive system understanding of these specific issues, Aboriginal Health Programs works collaboratively with communities, families and patients.

Community Based Services

Through collaborative action and shared knowledge, community based services can be improved particularly in areas of discharge coordination and continuum of care. Through strengthened linkages with Aboriginal stakeholders, partners can work towards improved access to health services in areas most in need. Additionally consultations and support can be offered to Aboriginal Health Liaisons connected to Regional Health Authorities to help evaluate/improve community based service delivery to Aboriginal patients.

Joint Community/System Based Management

In order to ensure better continuum of care, new linkages could be established to better facilitate coordination and relocation of patients returning to their communities. Additional joint/collaborative efforts to streamline and improve efficiency of patient care can include better communication and establishing improved community representation in specific programs, services and supports. Additionally further education on joint community/system based management educational curriculum can be explored and potentially developed/implemented.

EFFICIENT SERVICE DELIVERY

Aboriginal Health Programs – Health Services has a centralized intake to triage requests for information and requests for our direct services which include First Nations language interpretation, advocacy, complex discharge planning and spiritual/cultural care as well as additional supports. This system allows us to efficiently utilize staff, which includes hospital offices and a mobile team.

Central Intake: 1-877-940-8880



2. Improve Quality & Integration

This strategic direction looks at utilizing Aboriginal Health Programs in guiding and developing improved practices and process within the health-care system and integrating stakeholder services and programming to support improved well-being for Aboriginal people in the province.

Improve System Integration Through Coordination of Care, Health Information Management and Use of Evidence-Informed Practice

Internally Aboriginal Health Programs will integrate itself regionally with programs and services that affect and serve Aboriginal patients in order to better support and guide these community programs such as Population and Public Health, Mental Health and Primary Care. Additionally these efforts can lead to development of best or promising practices and standards of care in various program areas for integrated Aboriginal health programming. Externally Aboriginal Health Programs & WRHA will continue to foster partnerships such as with Manitoba Housing, First Nations Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) and Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs that identify and address the needs of patients such as patients relocating for medical purposes.

Strengthen Service Delivery

Aboriginal Health Programs will work to strengthen its own direct services and help improve service delivery for Aboriginal patients in additional WRHA program areas. Through linkages with federal and provincial stakeholders, program standards will be established that can be measurable through collaborative dialogue to better understand Aboriginal patients. The Aboriginal Health Collaborative Network is a network of internal Aboriginal liaisons who share knowledge of resources of non-health services in order to strengthen the number of individuals accessing them.

Develop a Quality Culture and Improve Health Care Provider Capacity

This strategic priority aims to set a standard for cultural proficiency among the health region and its programs and staff. Apart from strengthening the workforce in this regard through a more representative workforce, additional efforts can be made through defining and establishing standards and an implementation plan through programming and education.

Effective Linkages Between First Nations Community and Health Services

Particular program-specific strategies will be identified to help strengthen and enhance continuum of care between programs and communities. As well a comprehensive collection of quality health resources can be developed by Aboriginal communities through stakeholder partnership for use with Aboriginal communities that identify specific quality measures of care.

PLANNING FOR INTEGRATION

In 2011, Aboriginal Health Programs developed and implemented a new focused approach to Integration in an effort to increase Aboriginal Health Programs' integration into other program areas throughout the region. Additionally the focus on Integration will help prioritize, plan and implement initiatives to improve integration with external stakeholders, partners and community organizations.

PARTNERING FOR A BETTER SYSTEM

Aboriginal Health Programs' works in conjunction with WRHA Mental Health on a variety of initiatives to help build adequate tools, resources and education for mental health service providers. This partnership is helping to build understanding to create improved, relevant services and resources for Aboriginal clients.

3. Foster Engagement, Awareness & Communication

This strategic direction aims to ensure adequate community involvement through various methods such as education, consultation, collaboration and action. Focus is on involving community in planning, working together, evaluating results and educating stakeholders to make changes within their own systems as well as mobilizing the community towards action and improved standards of care.

Engage the Public & Community in Planning, Policy Development and Decision Making

Community level involvement is key to determining chronic issues and practical solutions to be utilized in program and service development and delivery. Aboriginal Health Programs will expand upon current efforts to form relationships and partnerships with community stakeholders to identify needs and provide input into programming. Regionally, initiatives will be supported to focus on the use of evidence-based strategies, developed with community involvement, for initiatives and evaluation.

Behaviour Change Communication

Through culturally appropriate knowledge transfer, opportunities are created for health care providers and community organizations to increase their awareness and understanding through contextual experiences. For example, increase understanding and awareness of jurisdictional challenges and system navigation for First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

Expand Education Activity

Aboriginal Health Programs will work towards improved education to create awareness of Spiritual/Cultural Care throughout the region. Additional efforts will include supporting the implementation of the WRHA Cultural Proficiency and Diversity Framework with inclusion of staffing initiatives and education, continued expansion of inter-professional team approaches to address systemic learning initiatives (i.e. Palliative Care, Spiritual Care, Advocacy, and Cultural Proficiency) and identifying specific educational opportunities required for northern, rural and isolated program service delivery and mechanisms. Additionally, continued building of community opportunities to encourage maximum participation in enquiring and learning environments for students, volunteers and community will take place.

NEW EDUCATION FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

Aboriginal Health Programs – Health Education continues to expand on educational events and workshops while working collaboratively with external stakeholders and other regional program areas. In 2011 a new Palliative Care: Aboriginal Perspectives End of Life Workshop was developed in conjunction with Palliative Care and University of Manitoba. The workshop was accredited by both The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and College of Family Physicians of Canada. Additionally AHP – Health Education is implementing more lunch-hour education sessions and hosts Grand Rounds in Aboriginal Health throughout the year.



4. Support A Positive Work Environment & Enhance Structure & Sustainability

This strategic direction encompasses the need for improvements within the region and programs to achieve a more diverse workforce, increased workforce education and structural improvement that supports Aboriginal Health Programs' overall goals.

Create a Diverse Workforce and Improve Retention

Aboriginal Health Programs aims to create a diverse workforce through recruitment of Aboriginal people and promotion of health region careers to Aboriginal youth. Existing relationships with high schools, community colleges and universities will be strengthened and enhanced to build awareness of the need for employment opportunities. Aboriginal Health Programs will work with programs, services and supports where employment turnover has been identified as a concern to implement collaborative retention strategies. As well, a direct link with Organization and Staff Development will be created to enhance and strengthen regional organization support of Aboriginal Health Programs initiatives/strategies.

Develop Evidence-Informed Education and Learning Opportunities

Aboriginal Health Programs will strengthen and enhance current community partnerships to create synergies and efficiencies for educational linkages. Additionally it will enhance educational opportunities across the region by engaging and establishing targets with Acute Care, Long Term Care and Community Programs.

Support a Positive Work Life Culture

Aboriginal Health Programs fosters cultural continuity within the program by supporting solstice and equinox gatherings for staff and partner organizations throughout the calendar year as well as seasonal medicine picking outings that provide sacred medicines to use within direct service programming. AHP recognizes that staff walk in two worlds – the WRHA organizational structure and the Aboriginal community worldview.

REPRESENTATIVE WORKFORCE

Aboriginal Health Programs – Workplace Development has dedicated staff who recruit job-ready Aboriginal people for employment in the Winnipeg Health Region and promote health-care careers and our Connecting Work Placement Program supports volunteer and summer employment opportunities for our Aboriginal youth.



5. Advance Research & Education

This strategic direction reflects themes throughout the strategic plan of improved and expanded upon education for region workforce and community, as well as utilizing evidence informed decision making. Aboriginal Health Programs will move forward in defining areas within the strategic plan and strategic priorities that will capture information that will inform evaluation of effectiveness/accessibility with a Population focus. Performance measures, quality indicators and outcomes will continue to inform regional priorities and program development.

Maximize Benefits from Research, Development & Innovation Including the Increased Use of Evidence Informed Decision Making

Partner with and support internal and external organizations in the gathering of culturally relevant research and data to help guide program and service development throughout the region and province.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Aboriginal Health Programs will utilize the *Moving Forward Together Aboriginal Health Programs Strategy* in the development of internal, annual action plans for each stream and regional team role. Each plan indicates specific actions to implement that achieve Strategic Priorities found within the Strategic Directions.

These actions include efforts within each role, each team and the program overall as well as regional impact, interaction with external stakeholders and partner organizations and the community we serve.

Progress is evaluated and documented on an annual basis to ensure Strategic Priorities are being met and aligned with, and next steps are prioritized accordingly.



CONCLUSION

Aboriginal Health Programs will incorporate the *Moving Forward Together Aboriginal Health Programs Strategy* in all its efforts, working towards cultural proficiency throughout the region and increased wellness for Aboriginal peoples. We will continue to foster relationships with partners and organizations who share our goals and strategic priorities. If your organization would like to work with Aboriginal Health Programs to help accomplish these goals, please contact us to we can continue to move towards culturally safe health-care and healthy communities for Aboriginal peoples throughout Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario.

LEARN MORE

To learn more about Aboriginal Health Programs – Winnipeg Regional Health Authority visit our website at www.wrha.mb.ca/aboriginalhealth or call 204-940-8881 for more information.



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