

# THINKING ABOUT CULTURAL SAFETY DURING COVID-19



The goal of cultural safety is for all people to feel respected and safe when they interact with the health system. Culturally safe health services are free of racism and negative discrimination.

People are supported to draw strengths from their identity, culture, and community.

We all share a responsibility to develop culturally safe practices with Indigenous Peoples. Practicing in a culturally safe way means that you:

- recognize and learn about the role of history and culture in shaping health and health care experiences;
- foster caring relationships with the people you serve based on mutual respect and trust;
- increase your understanding of what wellness means for the people you serve;
- engage in self-reflection to learn about and identify your potentially negative biases and assumptions;
- reflect on the inherent power dynamics in the health care system; and
- acknowledge people's experiences of the health care system.

# IMPLEMENTING CULTURAL SAFETY DURING COVID-19

Here are eight things you can do as a health care provider when supporting Indigenous families in Northern British Columbia:

## 1. Welcome

Offer a warm welcome and ensure your words and manner project acceptance and caring. Smile.

## 2. Respect

Remember that many people experience poverty and social status different from ours; the words we use can sometimes be perceived as negatively biased or discriminatory.

## 3. Service

Remember, we are here to serve. People need and deserve the best we can give them.

## 4. Care and Caution

Be mindful of the trauma people are experiencing now, as well as the trauma they may have experienced in the past. Our words can be helpful, not harmful, if we pay attention to what we say and how we say it.

## 5. Interest

Show your interest and support as individuals share their issues and concerns.

## 6. Immediate

Be present with the person in front of you knowing that each person brings a history and their own context.

## 7. Safety

Be the safe person that an Indigenous person will feel able to talk to, ask questions, and seek support from.

## 8. Indigenous Cultures

Be aware that Indigenous cultures may have different understandings of well-being and communication. If you don't know, or you are unsure about something, ask.

