



# Advancing Reconciliation

## WHY IT MATTERS

### ISSUE

Indigenous people living in Canada experience the shortest life expectancy, highest rates of suicide, and among the highest rates of other chronic diseases, including heart disease, diabetes and arthritis. Better health care can lead to better health for Indigenous Peoples, but this requires healthcare providers to have training that addresses the health, social and cultural needs of Indigenous peoples.

### REQUEST

The Royal College calls on all parties to help make Indigenous health a mandatory part of medical training. As medical educators take steps to integrate Indigenous health into postgraduate medical education, the federal government will be called upon for financial, advisory, program development and other necessary supports. This is a unique opportunity for federal parties to step in and improve the health of, and health care for, Indigenous Peoples.

### The Evidence

- In 2016, there were 1,673,785 **Indigenous people** in Canada, accounting for 4.9% of the total population. Since 2006, the Indigenous population has grown by 42.5%—more than four times the growth rate of the non-Indigenous population over the same period. According to population projections, the Indigenous population will grow to 2.5 million people over the next two decades.
- Indigenous people in Canada experience significantly shorter life expectancy and higher rates of disease than the rest of the population.

### The Impact

- The Royal College is working with Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders to make Indigenous health a mandatory part of postgraduate medical education, including curriculum, accreditation and assessment.
- The collective effort to enhance postgraduate medical education will ensure that every specialist physician and surgeon will have the required training and education to provide culturally safe care for Indigenous people.
- Indigenous Peoples will experience better health care, and increased opportunity for improved health outcomes, when cultural safety is ubiquitous and deeply rooted in medical training and practice.

# FAQs

## Why is the Royal College focused on Indigenous health?

The Royal College recognizes that Indigenous people experience greater health disparities than any other population group, and that specific action must be taken to address these disparities.

## What are you doing to improve Indigenous health?

The Royal College Indigenous Health Committee – comprised of Indigenous leaders, physicians, educators and advocates - offers guidance and direction on all aspects of the Royal College's work on Indigenous Health. This is in keeping with our focus on allyship, collaboration, and the philosophy of "nothing about us, without us".

The Royal College has also convened a working group tasked with advancing the implementation of Indigenous Health in PGME.

## What does the Royal College know about Indigenous health?

The Royal College has studied Indigenous health and listened to Indigenous leaders to gain insight into the health of Indigenous Peoples and communities. At present, our Indigenous health learning is embodied in two main Royal College knowledge products:

1. The [Indigenous Health Primer](#) (2019) provides core information about Indigenous health through stories and case studies of Indigenous experiences and essential knowledge for Fellows, health care providers, learners and educators in caring for Indigenous Peoples.
2. The [Indigenous Health Values and Principles Statement, Second Edition](#) (2019) examines the values pertaining to Indigenous health and bridges these values to the CanMEDS framework with actionable principles that guide culturally safe health care.



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