



FIRST VOICE
Urban Indigenous Coalition

Indigenous Health Action Circle (IHAC) Terms of Reference

Adopted April 17, 2024

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the First Voice Indigenous Healthcare Action Circle (the “Action Circle”) is to promote, support, and coordinate work to advance priority Calls for Change specific to the health community and other actors in the healthcare system in Newfoundland and Labrador. These priority Calls for Change are appended to these *Terms of Reference* as Schedule A.

2. MANDATE

The Action Circle is constituted under the First Voice *Coalition Charter* and is accountable to the First Voice Partnership Table. In pursuing its Purpose, the Action Circle shall strive to be fully inclusive of all Indigenous Peoples in the province.

3. SCOPE OF WORK

The Action Circle’s Scope of Work includes the following:

- (a) Create sector-specific anti-racism training for the health community and healthcare system;
- (b) Promote and support access to Indigenous healing practices within the health community and healthcare system;
- (c) Coordinate best practices in health-related provincial policy development;
- (d) Increase, promote, and support access to safe, stable and nutritious wild game food sources within health systems;
- (e) Increase, promote, and support the availability of Indigenous seats in health-related post-secondary programs;
- (f) Support and expand efforts to recruit and retain Indigenous people into health-related positions.

**First Voice Indigenous Healthcare Action Circle
Terms of Reference // Adopted April 17, 2024**

4. MEMBERSHIP

4.1 Co-Chairs

(a) The Action Circle shall be led by the following Co-Chairs:

- Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services, as represented by the Senior Director of Acute Care Services, NLHS Eastern Zone, or another duly assigned delegate; and
- First Voice Community Advocate Brooke Blanchard.

(b) The Co-Chairs have the following powers and responsibilities:

- Setting the substantive direction of the Action Circle;
- Reporting to the First Voice Partnership Table on the work of the Action Circle;
- Inviting appropriate individuals to participate in the work of the Action Circle as needed; and
- Publicly Representing the Action Circle.

4.2 Partners, Contributors, and Individual Supporters

In addition to the two Co-Chairs, the following organizations and individuals are members of the Action Circle:

(a) First Voice Organizational Partners

- First Light St. John's Friendship Centre
- Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services
- Public Health Agency of Canada

(b) Organizational Contributors

- Department of Health and Community Services
- FoodFirstNL
- Memorial University, Faculty of Medicine

(c) Individual Supporters

- Kelly Simms (First Voice Community Advocate)
- Rutanya Wynes (First Voice Community Advocate)

**First Voice Indigenous Healthcare Action Circle
Terms of Reference // Adopted April 17, 2024**

4.3 Ex Officio Members

All members of the First Voice Partnership Table are entitled to participate in the Action Circle at their own discretion.

4.4 Code of Conduct

Everyone who participates in the Action Circle agrees, by virtue of their participation, to abide by the First Voice *Code of Conduct*.

5. DECISION-MAKING

5.1 Consensus

All substantive decisions related to the Action Circle's work shall be made by consensus among its members. As defined in the First Voice *Coalition Charter*, "consensus" means that everyone involved in making the decision:

- Feels they have been heard;
- Understands the reasons for the decision and the need to take action; and
- Can support the final outcome, even if they personally hold an opposing view.

In the event that consensus cannot be reached, the Co-Chairs may call a vote whereby a final decision is made by (a) a majority of voting members; and (b) a majority of voting members who are Indigenous.

Observers are not entitled to be present during the decision-making process.

5.2 Quorum

No final decisions shall be made at any meeting of the Action Circle unless the following members are present:

- At least one of the two Co-Chairs;
- A majority of First Voice Partner organizations, as represented by their duly designated delegate(s); and
- A majority of Indigenous individuals who are active members of the Action Circle.

In the event that these conditions are not met, decision-making powers of those present shall be limited to proposing tentative decisions to be ratified or rejected according to Article 5.3 below.

**First Voice Indigenous Healthcare Action Circle
Terms of Reference // Adopted April 17, 2024**

5.3 Indigenous Leadership

No final decision shall be made without a majority of Indigenous individuals who are members of the Action Circle having had an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process, whether at or following a meeting of the Action Circle.

6. ADMINISTRATION

Through its Action Circle Coordinator, First Voice is responsible for providing all necessary administrative support to ensure the Action Circle is able to carry out its work. This includes:

- Coordinating and facilitating all meetings, including compiling and circulating agendas, meeting minutes, and other meeting papers in a timely manner;
- Supporting the active participation of all members in the Action Circle's decision-making process, and particularly those who identify as Indigenous;
- Facilitating information-sharing between and among participants and other stakeholders, including drafting and disseminating reports;
- Obtaining any necessary research support;
- Ensuring compliance with the Action Circle's *Terms of Reference* and the First Voice *Coalition Charter and Code of Conduct*.

7. AMENDMENTS

Amendments to these *Terms of Reference* may be proposed, via the Action Circle's Co-Chairs, to the First Voice Partnership Table for consideration at its regular monthly meeting. The Partnership Table has final decision-making authority with respect to these *Terms of Reference*.

SCHEDULE A:
PRIORITY FIRST VOICE CALLS FOR CHANGE

Call for Change 5. Promote and support the establishment of designated Indigenous seats in essential post-secondary programs such as health, law, education, engineering, and public policy.

Call for Change 6. Build strategic partnerships to support the development and delivery of sector-specific anti-racism training in essential areas such as health, law, education, engineering, and government services.

Call for Change 18. Promote and support efforts to improve access to safe, stable, nutritious, and affordable food sources for the urban Indigenous community. This includes wild game, country foods, and other culturally significant sources of nutrition.

Call for Change 25. Promote and support the availability of Indigenous healing practices and other appropriate cultural programming within the healthcare system.

Call for Change 27. Promote and support the establishment of full-time, paid Indigenous advisory positions in essential areas such as health, law, education, engineering, and government services.

Call for Change 30. Ensure that municipal and provincial policymaking is shaped and informed by appropriate demographic data.

Call for Change 31. Promote and support urban Indigenous participation on critical governance and advisory boards.

Call for Change 33. Work with healthcare providers and community organizations to ensure that urban Indigenous people are able to access services related to mental health, addictions, and recovery free of discrimination.