



What you can do on the

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation



SEPTEMBER 30
2023

As we approach the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, the **Indigenous Health Committee** of the AMA invites community physicians to find ways to recognize the importance of this event and to commit to building a future where health equity exists for all.

Purpose

This document provides a list of resources available to community physicians to support them in finding ways to recognize the 2023 National Day of Truth and Reconciliation in their practice.

Background

The AMA is committed to reconciliation, collaboration, meaningful empowered community engagement and knowledge exchange with Indigenous Peoples (AMA Indigenous Health Policy Statement, 2017). The intent of providing a list of resources is to support community physicians in their ongoing reconciliation journey through continued education and reflection.

We hope to provide resources to physicians and staff to learn about the roles of colonialism, residential schools and health care workers on intergenerational trauma experienced by Indigenous communities, and to inspire AMA community physicians to consider how they can contribute to anti-racist action within the workplace and beyond.

We also encourage all physicians and their staff to consider viewing **The Unforgotten**, a film created to raise awareness, incite reflection and spark conversations about how to make meaningful change happen in health care for Indigenous Peoples living in Canada. The five-part film runs 36 minutes in total. **The Unforgotten toolkit** helps viewers learn about and reflect on anti-Indigenous racism in health care.

Recommended Actions

- Take the recently launched Microaggressions course, a collaborative initiative by AMA, AHS & CPSA <http://mycpsa.cpsa.ca/>
- Be aware of Indigenous resources that are available for your patients
- Attend an Indigenous Health educational webinar
- Watch and reflect on the film **The Unforgotten**
- Read a book like 21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act or see [#IndigenousReads reading list](#)
- Review the health-related **Calls to Action** (Health, #18- #24) from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and consider how they apply to your practice
- Talk to kids in your life about **Reconciliation**



Recommended Resources

- United Nations [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)
- Systemic Racism in Health Care: [Listing of health care systemic racism-related news articles/postings](#)
- How the Province of Alberta is recognizing the [Day for Truth and Reconciliation](#)
- How AHS is commemorating the [National Day of Truth and Reconciliation](#)
- Residential Schools and Canadian Reconciliation: [National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#)
 - > Government of Canada: [Indian Residential Schools](#)
 - > TRC Summary of the Final Report: [Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future](#)
- Alberta Medical Association: [Resources from AMA Indigenous Cultural Safety Training](#)
- Alberta Health Services: [Indigenous Health](#)
- Alberta Health Services: [Indigenous Health Program](#) (videos)
- The Alberta First Nations Information Governance Centre: [First Nations Health Trends](#)
- Doctors of Manitoba: <https://doctorsmanitoba.ca/news/truthreconciliation2022#resources>
- Community Resources for Indigenous Peoples:
 - [Resources for Indigenous Peoples List](#) (November, 2018)
 - [Canadian Native Friendship Centre](#) (Edmonton)
 - [Alberta Native Friendship Centres Association](#) (Provincial)
- Academic:
 - > University of Alberta: [Indigenous Canada Course](#)
 - > University of Manitoba: [Indigenous Health: for Brian Sinclair](#)

Help Lines

- [The Indian Residential Schools Crisis Line](#): 1-800-721-0066
- [Lifeworks](#) (formerly Shepell): 1-800-268-5211
- [First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness 24/7 Help Line](#): 1-855-242-3310
(Support can be provided in English, French, Ojibway, Cree and Inuktitut.)
- [Alberta Health Services Mental Health Help Line](#): 1-877-303-2642
- [Canadian Mental Health Association – 24-hour Distress Line](#): 780-482-4357 (HELP)

Understanding the Realities of Indigenous Health

Indigenous Health is in crisis. First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples in Alberta have higher rates of chronic illness, mental health challenges and addictions due to the impacts of colonization and ongoing health inequities. They live shorter lives, continue to experience racism and culturally unsafe care in our health care system, and are disproportionately impacted by unmet social determinants of health and the opioid poisoning crisis. The latest data shows First Nation male life expectancy has fallen below 64 years of age—more than 18 years lower than the life expectancy of non-Indigenous Albertans.

The ongoing presence of systemic racism creates barriers to care that exacerbate already unacceptable levels of health inequity. Earlier this year, colleagues at the University of Calgary released the results of a 2020 study that found a significant presence of anti-Indigenous bias among some physicians who participated in the survey. It was a disheartening finding, but one that can spur us to reflect on how to move toward meaningful change.