

# Four Directions Team

Supporting wise practices in  
mental health, substance use,  
and harm reduction



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness

## About the Team

Four Directions is an interdisciplinary team focused primarily on creating and improving programs, resources and services focused on mental health, substance use and harm reduction for First Nations communities and health care professionals who work with First Nations people across British Columbia (BC).

The team is situated within the Office of the Chief Nursing Officer at the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA). Four Directions is committed to working with the FNHA's regional teams to support communities to overcome mental health, substance use, and harm reduction related challenges by incorporating culturally safe, destigmatizing and respectful practices.

The name “Four Directions” comes from the idea of strengthening the body, heart, mind and spirit, and is a wholistic way of viewing oneself. As human beings, we strive to bring balance within these four dimensions.

It's a lifelong journey.

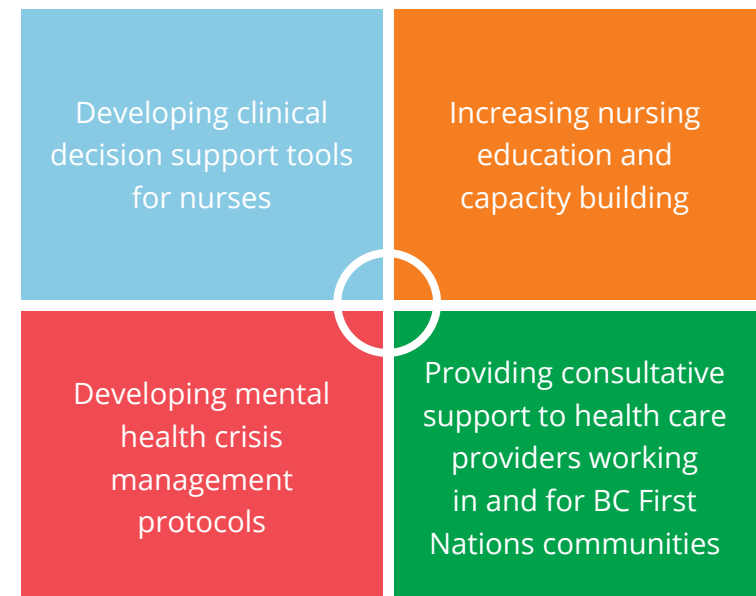


## Mental Health

The Four Directions team supports a variety of mental health-related work as part of one of our focused clinical streams of practice. The team aims to increase nursing mental health practice capacity, which is directly linked to improved mental health outcomes for First Nations communities in BC.

Four Directions also supports safer and more effective mental health emergency responses. Lastly, Four Directions aims to endorse cross-departmental and regional partnerships and collaborations within the FNHA.

The team achieves its goals by:



## Substance Use and Harm Reduction

Since the public health emergency was declared in 2016, street drugs in BC have continued to become increasingly toxic and highly unpredictable. This, combined with the harms of historical and present-day colonialism, has led to a tragic increase in toxic drug poisoning deaths among First Nations people in BC.

As a response to this crisis, the FNHA developed a framework for action which outlines a four-pillar response. This framework focuses on preventing deaths while also supporting broader mental health and wellness goals for First Nations people. Four Directions supports various substance use and harm reduction programs that align with the four pillars of this framework.



**Prevent people from dying**



**Keep people safer when using**



**Create a range of treatment options**



**Support people on their healing journeys**

## Improving access to Opioid Agonist Therapy through Nurse Prescribing

Opioid Agonist Therapy (OAT) is an effective treatment for individuals diagnosed with Opioid Use Disorder (OUD). Four Directions supports First Nations communities in BC to access treatment options such as OAT by assisting communities overcome operational and regulatory barriers.

Four Directions supports communities to improve access to OAT by:

- ✓ Providing in-person or virtual education on OUD and OAT
- ✓ Sharing resources and community engagement opportunities
- ✓ Developing guidelines for health care providers for OUD care and OAT in community
- ✓ Policy and program development i.e., controlled substances standard operating procedures
- ✓ Providing OAT Community grants
- ✓ Increasing access to prescribers through the Registered Nurse and Registered Psychiatric Nurse OAT Prescribing Initiative
- ✓ Supporting OAT dispensing through health centres
- ✓ Providing consultative support for harm reduction services and OAT in FNHA primary care centres



## The Harm Reduction Hub

The Harm Reduction Hub is a centralized service that provides community workers and health care providers with easy access to harm reduction services and supplies including:

- ✓ Assistance with distribution planning for naloxone and other harm reduction supplies
- ✓ Ordering bulk supply of nasal naloxone
- ✓ Information about Raven's Eye episodic overdose prevention sites
- ✓ Access to drug testing strips
- ✓ Sexual health harm reduction supplies i.e., condoms
- ✓ Guidance and education as requested
- ✓ Information about safe supply targeted at reducing drug related harms

The Hub also helps build connections with FNHA's regional teams and other harm reduction supports to help expand harm reduction options in First Nations communities.



Email us at:  
[harmreduction@fnha.ca](mailto:harmreduction@fnha.ca)

## Not Just Naloxone Workshops

Not Just Naloxone (NJN) workshops are delivered collaboratively by the Four Directions Team, FNHA regional teams and community harm reduction champions. This training was developed in response to the toxic drug supply crisis in BC, which continues to disproportionately impact First Nations people in BC.

The workshop examines and addresses the root causes of substance use, acknowledges the importance of community connection, and supports First Nations communities in designing their own responses to the challenges they are facing.



NJN workshops teach participants to facilitate community-based discussions about:

- ✓ Racism and prohibition in Canada
- ✓ Decolonizing substance use
- ✓ Indigenous harm reduction practices
- ✓ Trauma- and resiliency-informed practice
- ✓ Anti-stigma work
- ✓ Naloxone training (nasal and injection)

### Who is this workshop for?

This training is geared towards interested individuals who are in a position to talk about substance use or who support people who use substances in their communities, such as youth workers, support workers, substance use counselors.

### Kickstarter Grant

The NJN Kick Starter grant supports graduates of the Not Just Naloxone workshops to host virtual or in-person training events about harm reduction in First Nations communities. The grant is worth up to \$2,500.



# Contact

General Questions  
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