



UBC Vancouver School of Nursing Position Statement *Addressing Indigenous-Specific Racism and Discrimination in BC Health Care*

The report *In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-Specific Racism and Discrimination in BC Health Care*, led by Dr. M.E Turpel-Lafond (Aki-Kwe) confirmed the widespread existence of systemic racism experienced by Indigenous Peoples across all levels of the BC health care system. Aligned with nursing's ethical obligations to end systemic racism and promote equity and safety for the health and wellbeing of Indigenous Peoples, we affirm that the UBC School of Nursing is taking a leadership role in educating nurses to mitigate the harms, and to actively work to end anti-Indigenous racism and discrimination in health care.

The UBC School of Nursing's *Anti-Racism Task Force* and the *Indigenous Cultural Safety Strategic Initiatives Committee* Co-Chairs, supported by the Director, will jointly oversee the implementation of the relevant recommendations to prepare the next generation of nurses who are deeply committed to upholding Indigenous Peoples' human rights and ending Indigenous-specific racism in BC health care. *In Plain Sight* asserts there is no safe space for Indigenous Peoples within the health care system. Racism is unacceptable in any form: blatant or insidious, intentional or stemming from lack of awareness or ignorance. We believe it is a fundamental responsibility of nurses and nursing to end Indigenous-specific racism in our academic institutions and the health care system, and we commit to supporting anti-racism policies, providing anti-racism education, and creating anti-racism systems.

Investigation Task Force consultant and SON faculty Dr. Margaret Moss points to how "*Indigenous Peoples' health care access, treatment and outcomes in BC, show persistent gaps as compared to non-Indigenous patient groups. A direct line can be drawn from historical and contemporaneous traumas, including those experienced in health care settings to largely explain these differences. Where the ultimate goal for nurses is to guide their patients toward optimum health, unseen and unaddressed individual and systemic racism often stands in the way.*"

SON Indigenous Advisory Circle Member and UBC Alumni, Tania Dick highlights nurses' role in ending Indigenous-specific racism in health care: "*The profession of nursing prides itself on excellence, trust and caring. We are the heartbeat of the health care system. The inequity and mistrust that is bred by racism and discrimination found throughout our health care system can hinder and hold back our profession as nurses. The critical change we need will be challenging to accomplish unless we can all face this difficult conversation together, with open minds, open hearts, and curiosity. I believe the answer to these issues that are causing harm and death to my people lie within nurses. Racism and discrimination diminish us all, so let's face this together, unified, bringing the best out in each other, and lifting one another up. Excellence, trust and caring is the perfect deterrent of racism*"

In alignment with UBC's action to end racial injustice and oppression experienced by Indigenous Peoples: <https://president.ubc.ca/communications/letter-to-the-community/#wright>, it is time to honour the 9,000 people who contributed to *In Plain Sight*, and tell our BC health care systems – and all nurses -- what needs to be done, now. To remain accountable to the Indigenous communities we work with, we will regularly share the actions we are taking in response to this report and its recommendations.

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