



## Tripartite First Nations Health Plan

February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010

### ***An Information Bulletin from the Tripartite Strategy Council for First Nations eHealth***

#### **Dear First Nations Community Members,**

As we move into 2010 we would like to take the opportunity to emphasize the importance of eHealth to our efforts of realizing the Tripartite First Nations Health Plan.

The *Tripartite Strategy Council for First Nations eHealth* was established in 2008/09 as a forum to ensure the success of the First Nations, Federal and Provincial partners in their efforts to develop eHealth capacity and infrastructure in First Nations health services. The Tripartite Strategy Council is currently developing an eHealth Strategic Plan that will help frame our collective efforts to support integrated and culturally appropriate First Nations eHealth.

#### ***What is eHealth?***

e-Health is the combined use of electronic communication and information technology in the health sector.

The establishment of the Centre of Excellence for First Nations eHealth (CoE) is fully supported by the Tripartite Strategy Council and is considered a key operational foundation for the advancement of the First Nations eHealth infrastructure, support and standards development. The eHealth CoE will leverage the skills, knowledge and experience of First Nations eHealth champions and will coordinate efforts to assist all communities to build and enhance their own eHealth capacity and services.

#### ***Why eHealth?***

eHealth is a way to keep health services close to home and in the hands of First Nations people.

Using available technology we can work smarter, faster, and more collaboratively than ever.

Efforts to establish the eHealth CoE have been ongoing over the past year and had been building on a model of an independent CoE Society. Due to challenges with this model, the Tripartite Strategy Council has re-examined the context and structure of the CoE and decided to move in a new direction that will emphasize community involvement and leadership and be better able to provide opportunities for all BC First Nations communities to participate.

This new eHealth CoE model will benefit from the joint strategic oversight provided by the Tripartite Strategy Council combined with the development of community-based eHealth advisory and leadership structures that will help set the





## Tripartite First Nations Health Plan

priorities of the eHealth CoE. BC First Nations communities will have a greater opportunity to be decision makers in setting the direction of eHealth for their communities.

The First Nations Health Council will ensure that effective community involvement is maintained as the eHealth CoE moves forward with its mandate, and that the goals of the overall First Nations Health Plan establish the building blocks for the CoE activities and its community driven approach. The First Nations Health Council will continue to utilize its leadership role at the Tripartite Strategy Council to ensure that decision making mechanisms and participatory forums are established to ensure First Nations decision involvement and direction setting at all levels.

Funding commitments for the Centre of Excellence for First Nations eHealth remain in place from the Tripartite partners to enable the eHealth operational and project plans to be fully deployed, and to ensure that the needs of all First Nations communities are being addressed. Specific project funding commitments such as the Canada Health Infoway investments for the BC First Nations Telehealth Expansion initiative also remain in place.

We would like to highlight two current initiatives as promising contributors to First Nations eHealth: the BC First Nations Panorama Implementation Project and the BC First Nations Telehealth Expansion Project:

### ***BC First Nations Panorama Implementation Project (FN PIP)***

- Panorama refers to a new Pan-Canadian software solution for supporting Public Health information management related to immunization, family health, communicable disease control and outbreak management. Panorama will replace the current system in use in BC called iPHIS (Public Health Information System).
- Panorama implementation will represent a unique milestone in BC given that First Nations partnership in the deployment of the system is a priority from the beginning.
- The FN PIP project is overseen by the Tripartite Strategy Council for First Nations eHealth. An FN PIP Working Group made up of community, health authority, BC Centre for Disease Control, and other key partners will help drive implementation of Panorama for interested First Nations health organizations.

Panorama will enable First Nations communities to track infectious disease, and to respond to outbreaks more quickly.





## Tripartite First Nations Health Plan

### **BC First Nations Telehealth Expansion Project**

- The Tripartite partners were successful in obtaining funding commitments from Canada Health Infoway to initiate one of the largest deployments of clinical Telehealth for First Nations communities in Canada.
- The First Nations Telehealth Expansion Project is designed to support the Tripartite First Nations Health Plan by: creating an integrated First Nations Telehealth network; increasing the capacity of First Nations communities to receive clinical telehealth services; and, expanding the breadth of “Wellness” video-conference programming in First Nations communities.
- Final revisions to the Telehealth project framework and plan were submitted to Canada Health Infoway late in 2009, with the project expected to be officially launched in the first quarter of 2010. The Tripartite partners fully support this project and have committed multi-year funding to ensure First Nations Telehealth is both a successful and sustainable endeavour.

BC First Nations are part of the biggest Telehealth expansion project in Canada. Building community capacity to deliver more services at home is the goal.

2010 promises to be a very exciting and active year in the development of First Nations eHealth. We were encouraged to see the high level of interest and support for eHealth as a priority during the recent Gathering our Wisdom III Conference this past November.

For more information about First Nations eHealth please visit the First Nations Health Council website at [www.fnhc.ca](http://www.fnhc.ca)

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