

Toronto COVID-19 Action Initiative

Milestones and Future Directions

Summer 2021



Public Health
Agency of Canada



Tungasuvvingat Inuit



FNIGC | CGIPN

First Nations Information Governance Centre
Le Centre de gouvernance de l'information des Premières Nations



MÉTIS NATION
BRITISH COLUMBIA



National Association
of Friendship Centres
Association nationale
des centres d'amitié



Well Living House



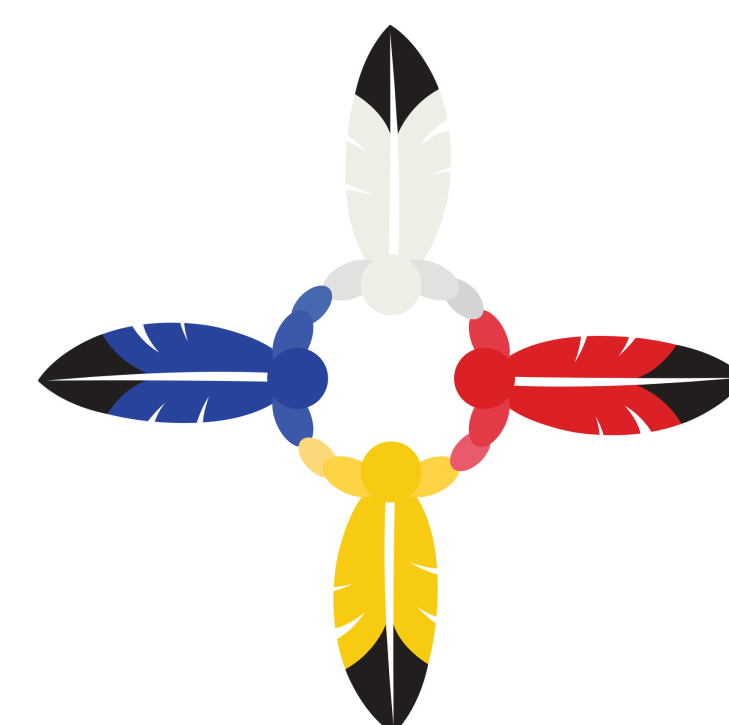
First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

Seventh Generation Midwives Toronto



Native Women's
Association of Canada

L'Association des
femmes autochtones
du Canada



Indigenous Services
Canada

Services aux
Autochtones Canada



JOHNS HOPKINS
BLOOMBERG SCHOOL
of PUBLIC HEALTH

FIRST NATIONS HEALTH AND SOCIAL
SECRETARIAT OF MANITOBA

PROJECT OVERVIEW

In May 2020, the Well Living House received funding from the University of Toronto to support better tracking of COVID-19 infection among First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. The funding we received allowed us to launch the Supporting the Rapid Implementation of Shared COVID-19 Tracking and Response Platforms for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Populations in Canada project. Working together with First Nations, Inuit and Métis (FNIM) community partners and allied agencies, we supported local, regional, and national Indigenous-led COVID-19 monitoring and modelling activities. We did this by bringing together FNIM community health leaders, scientists, and policymakers to exchange information and advance FNIM COVID-19 data systems. Initially, we wanted to build a shared COVID-19 data platform with our partners. This platform would help predicate surges in COVID-19 cases and inform the planning of health services. However, working closely with our community partners, we learned that it was more valuable to support regional and national FNIM organizations to develop and advance their own distinct COVID-19 data and data systems. Rather than share data, we would bring together FNIM data leaders with FNIM and allied epidemiologists and public health scientists share case tracking and modelling methods and tools advocate for federal and provincial/territorial data to be returned to and or shared with organizations and governing bodies representing the First Nations, Inuit, Métis peoples.

-Dr. Janet Smylie, Nominal Principal Investigator



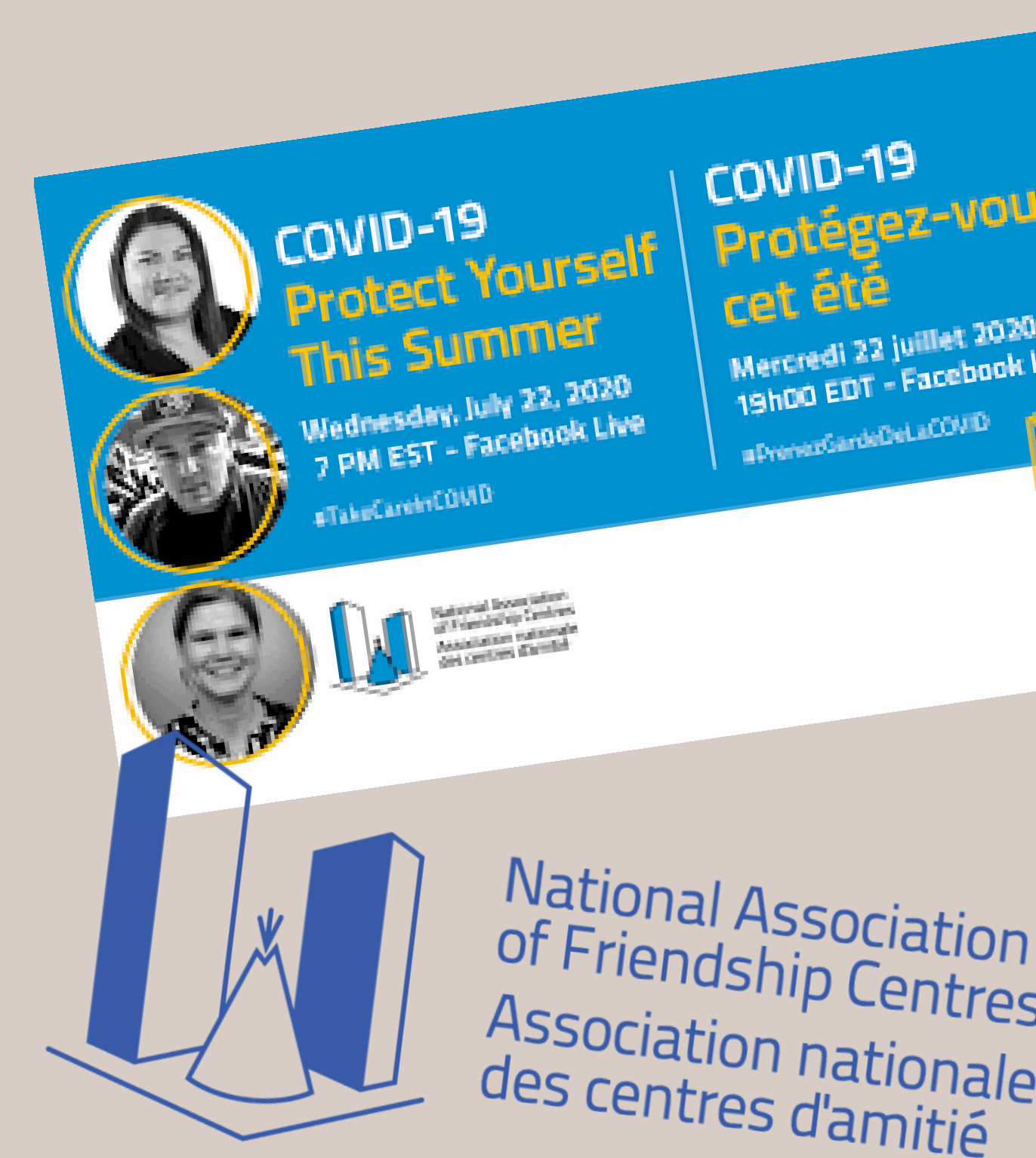
First Nations, Inuit and Metis Tracking and Response Activities: Highlights from Regional and National Project Partners

NAFC's #TakeCareInCOVID and Vaccination Rollout Efforts

In the summer of 2020, the NAFC ran a national communications campaign titled, #TakeCareInCOVID to help provide accurate and culturally relevant information to keep urban Indigenous peoples safe during the pandemic in summer. The campaign aimed to dispel myths and misconceptions about COVID-19 -the campaign reached millions of people, receiving over 5 million impressions, over 77,000 clicks to the NAFC COVID-19 resource page where people were able to find a variety of resources and information about COVID-19, and over 2,000 people viewed the Facebook Live event.

Friendship Centres across Canada have been involved with vaccinations in variety of capacities ranging from providing transportation to clinics, providing cultural supports and presence at vaccine clinics to make clinics safer spaces, to hosting small and mass clinics ensuring Indigenous peoples in their communities have access to vaccines in spaces familiar to them from organizations they trust. Friendship Centres were strong advocates for Indigenous-led vaccine clinics in urban centres for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis living in urban areas to access vaccines. Over 50 Friendship Centres have been providing supports to vaccine clinics, including the Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary that has partnered with Siksika Health Services, Awo Taan Healing Lodge Society Women's Emergency Shelter, Okaki, and Seven Brothers Circle to host a mass clinic in Calgary that has been a huge success, and have even begun a mobile vaccine unit to remove barriers those that are unsheltered and unhoused may have in accessing vaccinations.

For more information: [NAFC Annual Report](#), [NAFC Interim Report](#), [NAFC COVID-19 Page](#)



MNBC's Mental Health in COVID19 and Vaccine Surveys

The Métis Nation of British Columbia recently held engagement sessions to understand the mental health effects COVID 19 has had on individuals within Chartered Communities, communities' views regarding the planned mental health supports MNBC has recently put forward during COVID 19, and how MNBC can better support our Métis Chartered Community Presidents and the mental health needs in their communities going forward. The project also aimed to understand how interested communities would be in co hosting clinics with Friendship Centres, any barriers to attending said vaccination clinics, and barriers to vaccine confidence within communities. Preliminary findings include the impacts of COVID19 on mental health, positive and negative perceptions of the current mental health supports, how to alleviate barriers and what kind of supports people need moving forward. The sessions also found information on how the vaccine clinic were perceived, barriers to access, and what is wanted moving forward.

For more information please contact Tanya Davoren: tdavoren@mnbcc.ca



MEASURES AND MILESTONES



RELATIONSHIPS, PARTNERSHIPS & GOVERNANCE

- Supported the establishment of relationships between community partners and public health agencies and health and infectious disease specialist across the country.
- Worked with community partners to advance the progression of information sharing agreements
- Supported the advocacy of research partners to receive funding from federal agencies to advance their role in acting as the recognized custodian of First Nations COVID-19 data collected by the federal government.



KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND APPLICATIONS

- Convened the Ontario Technical Working Group which included WLH, Chiefs of Ontario, Dr. Sharamistha Mishra and Dr. Jennifer Walker which focused on knowledge sharing and translation of FNIM COVID-19 statistical modelling and methodologies in Ontario.
- Convened the National Modelling Working Group which included Well Living House (WLH), and National and Regional FNIM and ally Organizational Partner data specialists, epidemiologists, and infectious disease specialists. We worked together to advance and customize FNIM COVID-19 statistical modelling, methodologies, and improve FNIM COVID-19 data systems.
- Convened the FNIM COVID-19 Knowledge Network includes WLH, National and Regional FNIM Organizational Partner representatives, National and Regional FNIM collaborating organization representatives, WLH Grandparent's Counsel members and Provincial/Territorial and Federal government representatives. This network worked together expedite the rapid translation of the generated information regarding patterns of COVID-19 among FNIM populations to health and public health decision makers, service providers, and communities at large.
- Developed a customizable COVID-19 tracking database with case reporting data entry form which we shared with interested parties



TANGIBLE COMMUNITY BENEFITS

- Supported the planning of COVID-19 pop-up vaccination clinics for FNIM peoples across Canada by providing Indigenous Services Canada with estimates of FNIM population sizes for urban and related homelands
- Advocated successfully and supported supported efforts that prioritized FNIM populations during vaccine-roll out, including uptake of FNIM specific age eligibility and dosage intervals
- Through Auduzhe Mino Nesewinong provided 8570 vaccines, 1900 COVID19 tests, and provided wrap around support for 100 FNIM individuals



RESEARCH AND TRAINING

- Immersed 12 FNIM new trainees/health research staff in applied outbreak epi/response at WLH and partner agencies
- Provided 9 sub awards agreements to support community research partners with their COVID -19 staffing and research needs
- Developed an Indigenous specific COVID-19 contract tracing program

The Journey

Toronto COVID19 Action Initiative Launches

Knowledge Network April 2020

First gathered to review Milestones. The Knowledge Network brings together national and regional FNIM and allied organizational partners and government representatives to advance FNIM COVID-19 data governance and share FNIM models and practices for tracking and responding to COVID-19.

Ontario Technical Working Group April 2020

First gathered and included WLH, Chiefs of Ontario, Dr. Sharmistha Mishra and Dr. Jennifer Walker. This group focuses on knowledge sharing and translation of FNIM COVID-19 statistical modelling and methodologies in Ontario. The group kicked off with a gathering to connect FNIM and allied epidemiologist and health data research scientists to support the tracking and tracing COVID-19 in FNIM communities throughout Canada. The group reached out to data custodians to introduce project and discuss governance frameworks.

Ontario Technical Working Group May 2020

The group refined a list of indicators and case reporting form for FNIM COVID-19 data sets and worked with partners to introduce research project, build synergies and discuss research agreements and established work plans for grant applications to support COVID-19 research.

Knowledge Network June 2020

Established an interest in National Modelling Working Group and introduced sub-project WeCountCovid19.

Ontario Technical Working Group June 2020

Reviewed draft database and tracking form plan for National Modeling Working Group

Knowledge Network July 2020

Gathered input regarding FNIM COVID-19 information priorities and discussed governance framework

National Modeling Group July 2020

First gathered to share an overview of Platform and Modelling Activities – Dr. Jennifer Walker and Dr. Janet Smylie lead the National Modelling Working Group. This group brings together national and regional FNIM and allied organizational partners, data specialists, epidemiologists, and infectious disease specialists to advance and adapt COVID-19 statistical modelling, methodologies and improve FNIM COVID-19 data systems. The overarching goal of this group is to use statistical modelling to fit with community priorities and knowledge.

Knowledge Network September 2020

Sharing of Wise Practices- by Louise Meilleur (FNHA, British Columbia)

National Modeling Group September 2020

Shared Inuvialuit COVID-19 Epidemiological Models- Matthew Chudek, Inuvialuit Statistician

National Modeling Group November 2020

Shared Roundtable Discussion: National COVID-19 Vaccination Strategy, Policy and Urban FNIM Population Estimate

Knowledge Network December 2020

Sharing of Indigenous COVID-19 Contact Tracing- Nicole Muir (Well Living House)

Knowledge Network Feb 2021

Sharing of Using Data to Support Vaccination Planning and Implementation- Leona Star (FNSSHM)

National Modeling Group Feb 2021

Shared resources for COVID -19 Modelling - Margaret Haworth-Brockman, National Collaboration Centre for Infectious Disease

National Modeling Group March 2021

Gathered for Roundtable Discussion: Future of the Modelling Working Group

Knowledge Network April 2021

Shared in a Panel: Reflections on the Progress and Challenges Around FNIM COVID-19 – Rachel Dutton (Manitoba Inuit Association), Jocelyn Formsma (National Association of Friendship Centres), Carol Mulder (Chiefs of Ontario)