First Nations
Health Council

June 2020 | Issue 4

This is the fourth issue of the FNHC's weekly bulletin, designed to provide BC First Nation Chiefs and leaders with a round-up of news and updates on the COVID-19 pandemic response. For the most current public health guidelines as well as information for individuals and communities, visit FNHA.ca/coronavirus.

House of Commons Committee: Indigenous & Northern Affairs

On Friday, May 22, FNHC Chair Charlene Belleau along with Senior Leaders from operational partner First Nations Health Authority, provided witness testimony to the committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs, which was reviewing the federal response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs reviews, examines and reports on issues affecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and northerners.

Committees examine, in small groups, selected matters in greater depth than is possible in the House of Commons. They report conclusions of those examinations as well as recommendations to the House. Committees undertake studies on departmental spending, legislation and issues related to their mandate.

Discussion topics on May 22 included

- Personal Protective Equipment shortages;
- Security Checkpoints;
- Community challenges with RCMP and policing;
- Food Security; and
- On/off reserve resources and connectivity issues.

A video link to the testimony can be found below:
https://tinyurl.com/ycpxx5tp

Tripartite Committee on First Nations Health (TCFNH)

The TCFNH was established in 2011 as part of the B.C. Tripartite Framework Agreement on First Nation Health Governance. It is the forum for coordinating and aligning programming and planning efforts between the FNHA, BC Regional Health Authorities, and federal and provincial partners.

The TCFNH met recently via a virtual teleconference to discuss the COVID-19 response. In addition, during the discussion on mental health and wellness, FNHC Chair Charlene Belleau highlighted the need to:

- Invest in community capacity and support for Nation-based governance models;
- Measure our success by community standards; and
- Invest in family violence programs, treatment centres, and culturally safe practices that address mental health and the social determinants of health.

FNHC "Town Hall" June 4

The next Town Hall information teleconference is on Thursday, June 4 from 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM. Participant details have been distributed to all Chiefs and leaders across the province.

First Nations Health Council

Mental Wellness during COVID-19

The Health Council has heard from community leadership the varying degrees in which the pandemic has affected the mental health and wellness of communities.

We know the pandemic has affected our youth, our elders and families in different ways. We wish to pass along collated information provided by our operational partner the First Nations Health Authority on access to Mental Health and Cultural supports:

https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-COVID-19-Mental-Health-and-Cultural-Supports.pdf

Counselling Supports for Chiefs and Leaders

The Kackaamin Family Development Centre and Tsow-Tun-Le-Lum Treatment Centre (TTLL) are offering direct counseling and cultural support. Call toll-free 1-888-403-3123 for an initial consultation.

Hours for initial consultation/session are:
MONDAY TO FRIDAY 8am – 8pm
SATURDAY AND SUNDAY 10am – 2pm

Upcoming FNHC Meeting

The FNHC will meet virtually on June 12 to discuss next steps for the Council's advocacy agenda and its community engagement activities in the midst of phased service resumption amidst COVID-19

We encourage Chiefs and Leaders to raise COVID-19 and/or health governance related issues to the attention of your regional FNHC representative. We remain a source of information and support during this crisis.

The FNHA Service Resumption Guide was made available June 1 and has been posted online **here.** The Guide includes information about re-opening communities and resuming operations as we enter Phase Two of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Guide was prepared as part of FNHA's response to the BC Restart Plan with guidance from WorkSafe BC (which has overall responsibility for this issue in BC). There is no one-size-fits-all solution. Each community will use the Guide differently based on their own needs and circumstances.

ISC Funding Announcement

On May 29 the Prime Minister announced additional funding for health, economic and social support for Indigenous peoples and communities. A link to the funding announcement can be found below:

https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2020/05/29/prime-minister-announces-additional-funding-health-economic-and

Please send comments or questions about this FNHC Bulletin to: ***sharedsecretariat@fnha.ca***