



SEP 17 2021

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Via email: c/o Natasha@ubcic.bc.ca

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President
Chief Don Tom, Vice-President, and
Kukpi7 Judy Wilson, Secretary-Treasurer
Union of BC Indian Chiefs
401-312 Main St
Vancouver BC V6A 2T2

Dear Grand Chief Phillip, Chief Tom, Kukpi7 Wilson:

Thank you for your letter of July 26, 2021, on behalf of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs regarding the UBCIC Resolution 2021-31 Sexual Assault Nursing Examiner (SANE) Training for Indigenous Nurses and for bringing this desired opportunity to the forefront.

I acknowledge the resolution urges the provincial government to fulfill its commitment to implement the Calls for Justice and to end the crisis of Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQ+ through “dedicating the resources and funds to expand and establish permanent, sustainable, and culturally appropriate services and supports for Indigenous survivors of violence, including ensuring Indigenous communities have access to the critical, specialized care of a forensic or Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE).” Along with the provincial commitment to the Calls to Justiceⁱ, the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) is dedicated to implementing the recommendations from the *In Plain Sight*ⁱⁱ report to address Indigenous-specific racism in the BC health system. Recommendation 16 specifically draws attention to the specific experiences and needs of Indigenous women.

The BC government has made firm commitments to addressing gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual assault (SA). The Ministry of Health has continued to invest in GBV health sector training through the recently updated free online course, *Gender-Based Violence-We Can All Help: Improving the Health Sector Response*ⁱⁱⁱ. In 2020/21 the Ministry, in partnership with BC Women’s Hospital (BCWH) and the Ending Violence Association of BC (EVA), funded the re-development of course content using intersectional analysis to ensure that the course language was survivor centered, trauma informed, gender affirming and culturally safe. The content update was informed by partners from the First Nations Health Authority, TransCare BC, frontline health professionals and regional health authority leads. Work is currently underway to implement updated materials onto Provincial Health Services Authority’s learning hub and to increase uptake of the course.

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However, the Ministry recognizes that the current work is the beginning of addressing inequity and safety in the system. The SANE training is an additional opportunity to address the above Ministry commitments and will also ensure that services are safe and accessible, and meet the needs of Indigenous women. The Ministry is interested in continuing conversations regarding funding and access to training, while also determining appropriate implementation of this opportunity for Indigenous nurses and for those serving Indigenous people.

The Ministry is grateful to receive the UBCIC Resolution 2021-31 “Sexual Assault Nursing Examiner (SANE) Training for Indigenous Nurses” and we will continue to engage in work to address your concerns. The Ministry looks forward to keeping you updated on our progress and will create space for further discussion on how to best meet the needs of Indigenous communities. Additionally, Indigenous Health and Reconciliation has been made aware of your resolution and concern and will work with colleagues within the Ministry to develop opportunities to offer Sexual Assault Nursing Examiner (SANE) Training for Indigenous Nurses.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond and I look forward to further discussions and planning.

Sincerely,



Adrian Dix
Minister

ⁱ <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/law-crime-and-justice/about-bc-justice-system/inquiries/mmiw/mmiwg-status-update.pdf>

ⁱⁱ <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/613/2020/11/In-Plain-Sight-Full-Report.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.bcwomens.ca/health-professionals/professional-resources/addressing-gender-based-violence/gender-based-violence-learning-series>