



Public Health
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SUDBURY & DISTRICTS

Unlearning and Undoing White Supremacy & Racism Project

Foundational Obligations to Indigenous Peoples:

Treaties

November 20 , 2025



The Role of Health Systems in Reconciliation


- Health systems and reconciliation.
- Intersection of Indigenous rights, health equity, and treaties.
- Understanding treaties in the context of public health.

The TRC, National Inquiry, and UNDRIP

- **TRC Calls to Action (2015)**
 - Focus on health equity, culturally safe care.
- **National Inquiry into MMIWG (2019)**
 - Violence, trauma, and health outcomes.
- **UNDRIP**
 - Rights to land, resources, and self-governance.

What is a Treaty?

- Treaties are binding agreements between nations.
- Common worldwide: peace treaties, trade agreements, alliances.
- In Canada: nation-to-nation agreements with Indigenous peoples.
- Treaties are legal, living agreements, not just history.

A Two Row Wampum Belt, a traditional Indigenous symbol, is shown against a dark background. The belt is made of white and blue wampum beads, forming two parallel rows that curve downwards. Two long, thin, light-colored cords hang from the bottom of the belt. Two wooden canoes are positioned above the belt: a smaller one at the top and a larger one below it, both with oars.

Two Row Wampum Belt (1613)

- Trust
- Friendship
(Shared Values)
- Mutual Respect

Medicine Chest

- Symbol of health care commitment

Robinson Huron Treaty of 1850

- Signed by 21 Anishinaabe nations in 1850.
- Territory covers much of northeastern Ontario.
- Sharing of the land, Anishinabek did not cede land.
- Promised annuities, resource sharing, and support.
- Modern legal cases show ongoing treaty obligations.

Treaty 9

- Signed in 1905, with additions in 1906.
- Covers northern Ontario, including 4 communities in our service area.
- Promises of land, resources, and health care.

The Importance of Treaties to Public Health

- Treaties as the foundation for health services.
- Unmet promises lead to health disparities.
- Culturally safe, accessible care is essential.

Responsibilities

- Acknowledge Treaty rights and historical harm.
- Commit to equitable health services for Indigenous peoples.
- Collaborative leadership in public health reform.



Conclusion and Next Steps

- Reconciliation as an ongoing process.
- Continuing education, collaboration, and action.
- Aligning health work with Treaty obligations.



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