

## AD0100 – WELCOME AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FIRST NATION TRADITIONAL TERRITORY

### 1.0 PURPOSE

Acknowledging Traditional Territory recognizes and respects Aboriginal peoples and the relationship First Nations have with the land on which we gather. Acknowledgment is an essential component of reconciliation. The recognition of Traditional Territory is consistent with Interior Health's (IH) commitment to embed cultural safety and humility within the Interior Region.

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction to IH staff for the protocols on Welcoming and Acknowledgement of the First Nation Traditional Territory.

### 2.0 DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
Aboriginal	All Indigenous people of Canada. The Canadian <i>Constitution Act, 1982</i> Section 35 (2) recognizes three groups of Aboriginal people: First Nations/Indians (status and non-status), Métis and Inuit. These three separate groups have their own unique heritages, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs. It is at the discretion of our Nation partners that IH has committed to using the term 'Aboriginal' rather than 'Indigenous.'
Acknowledgement	A way to honour and show respect that the First Nation has had a relationship since time immemorial with the land. A land acknowledgment is a reflective process in which one builds mindfulness and intention walking into a gathering. It is rooted in whose land you are honoured to stand on and should guide how you move forward in both conversations and actions.
Cultural Competency	Cultural competency refers to cultural knowledge, skills in understanding cross-cultural interactions, and an awareness and acceptance of the dynamic variety of people and populations. All three components are essential to understanding the Aboriginal health care experience.
Cultural Safety	An outcome of cultural competency, defined and experienced by those who receive the service – they feel safe and valued. Cultural safety is based on understanding the power differentials and potential discriminations inherent in the health service delivery system.
Elder	Elders may be male, female or two-spirited, and are the carriers of the wisdom and teachings rooted within the culture. The term Elder does not refer to one's age, but rather to one's place within the community and the level of cultural and traditional knowledge that they possess.
Gifting	Gifting is a protocol which shows respect and appreciation to the receiver and their ancestors. It acknowledges their time, their knowledge, and their sharing of this space. Gifting is also sharing one's resources to benefit and support others and an intrinsic part of the sharing ideology of Aboriginal peoples.
Honoraria/ium	Elder or Knowledge Keeper honoraria are not payments for engagement or services rendered, but rather are protocol for monetary gestures of appreciation for what has been taught and shared.

Policy Sponsor: VP, Population Health & Chief Medical Health Officer	1 of 5
Policy Steward: Corporate Director Aboriginal Health	
Date Approved: December 2018	Date(s) Reviewed-r/Revised-R:

## AD0100 – WELCOME AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FIRST NATION TRADITIONAL TERRITORY

TERM	DEFINITION
Internal Events	IH educational opportunities, events or conferences, meetings using an official IH agenda, and formal staff gatherings not open to the general public. Examples include lectures or educational presentations, visioning or planning workshops, multi-stakeholder committee meetings, and awards ceremonies.
Knowledge Keeper	Persons recognized within a community who possess a level of cultural and traditional knowledge. The term is bestowed by the community to individuals who are deemed spiritual and cultural knowledge keepers.
Public Event or Gathering	An IH-hosted gathering where general members of the public and/or community representatives are invited to attend or participate.
Traditional Territory	The geographic area identified by a First Nation to be the area of land which they and/or their ancestors traditionally occupied or used.
Welcoming	A Welcome to the Traditional Territory is only offered by the First Nations people who are traditionally from the territory. The Welcome follows a traditional protocol for Aboriginal Nations where people entering another's traditional territory or language area would seek permission from the traditional stewards. Guests granted permission to enter another traditional territory would be welcomed to the area through an opening ceremony.

### 3.0 POLICY

- 3.1** IH is committed to strengthening the cultural competence of the organization and its staff in order to provide culturally safe and relevant care for Aboriginal peoples. IH staff have a responsibility to recognize and acknowledge that their work takes place on the Traditional Territories of the First Nations peoples of the interior.
- 3.2** For Internal Events and Public Events or Gatherings, IH staff should provide an Acknowledgement of the Traditional Territory on which the event, gathering or meeting is taking place.
- 3.3** For Public Events or Gatherings, IH staff should consider inviting an Elder or Knowledge Keeper from the local Nation(s) to provide a Welcoming to the Traditional Territory. IH staff are advised to recognize the Knowledge Keeper or Elder's wisdom and time with an Honorarium.
- 3.4** In the event IH staff are invited to witness special events, such as a signing ceremony or the grand opening of a health centre within a First Nations community, gifting to honour the Nation is advised to demonstrate respect to the achievement and success of the event.

Policy Sponsor: VP, Population Health & Chief Medical Health Officer	2 of 5
Policy Steward: Corporate Director Aboriginal Health	
Date Approved: December 2018	Date(s) Reviewed-r/Revised-R:

## AD0100 – WELCOME AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FIRST NATION TRADITIONAL TERRITORY

### 4.0 PROCEDURES

#### 4.1 Acknowledgement of Traditional Territory

- 4.1.1 At all Internal Events and Public Events or Gatherings IH staff should provide an Acknowledgement of the Traditional First Nations Territory on which the event, gathering or meeting is taking place.
- 4.1.2 An Acknowledgement can be provided by IH staff or by a person who is not traditionally from the territory (e.g. the emcee or speaker).
- 4.1.3 An Acknowledgement is the first item on a meeting or event agenda.
- 4.1.4 Traditional Territory Acknowledgements include the following considerations:
- Acknowledge the Traditional Territory on which the event is occurring.
  - Name the First Nations peoples on whose Traditional Territory the event is occurring.
  - Refer to the [Aboriginal Communities and Organizations Map](#) to see communities that IH serves and the geography of First Nation Traditional Territory in the Interior.
  - Refer to the [Basic Guide on Pronunciation of First Nations](#) on how to pronounce First Nations that IH serves.

If uncertain about the Traditional Territory or pronunciation, contact the [Aboriginal Health team](#).

#### Example Acknowledgement

“Interior Health would like to recognize and acknowledge the traditional territory of the [insert Nation Name here] Nation where we live, learn, collaborate and work together.”

#### 4.2 Welcoming to First Nation Traditional Territory

- 4.2.1 In addition to the Acknowledgement, IH staff should consider inviting the local First Nation(s) to provide a Welcoming at Public Events or Gatherings such as conferences and special events held within First Nations Traditional Territory.
- 4.2.2 A Welcoming and/or Acknowledgement is the first item on a meeting or event agenda.
- 4.2.3 A Welcome is provided only by the First Nations people who are traditionally from the territory. Honoraria are given to Elders or Knowledge Keepers who are invited to a Public Event or Gathering to provide a Welcoming.

Policy Sponsor: VP, Population Health & Chief Medical Health Officer	3 of 5
Policy Steward: Corporate Director Aboriginal Health	
Date Approved: December 2018	Date(s) Reviewed-r/Revised-R:

## AD0100 – WELCOME AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FIRST NATION TRADITIONAL TERRITORY

**4.2.4** IH staff responsible for planning or hosting the event will ask the local First Nation(s) to provide the appropriate Welcoming or Opening, as protocols vary between First Nations.

- Refer to [First Nation Communities Contact List](#) for information on communities that IH serves. Identify yourself and your position, the organization, and the event/request, to ensure the community has enough information to connect you to the correct person.
- When contacting an Elder, a phone call may be preferred over email. Ensure communication is open and ongoing until the event is complete. Be sure to confirm how the Elder would prefer to be introduced at the event.
- Nation specific protocols, regarding offering of traditional ceremonial tobacco, sage or sweetgrass to the Elder prior to the Welcoming of the Traditional Territory, can be discussed when an invitation is initially extended. If it is determined that an offering of traditional ceremonial medicines is appropriate, ensure that the offering is given to the Elder prior to the Welcoming of the Traditional Territory.
- Honoraria are given to the Elder right after their function to demonstrate appreciation for their knowledge and time.

### 4.3 Honoraria and Gifting

#### 4.3.1 Honoraria

- Honoraria should be considered a component of the Welcoming protocol and show respect for wisdom and intellectual contribution.
- In most cases, an honorarium includes travel time and expense to and from the event, and the amount of time required for event.
- Multiple factors including distance travelled will determine an appropriate Honorarium. Below are recommended minimum amounts:

Type of Welcome/ Acknowledgment	Per First Nation Representative (e.g. Elder, Knowledge Keeper)
Opening of an event	\$150
Closing of an event	\$150
Opening and closing of an event; inclusive of all-day participation	\$300

- Presenting the Honorarium to the individual can occur at the closing of the requested event. For instance, if a Welcoming to the Traditional Territory has been asked of an Elder, present the Honorarium to the Elder at the end of the Welcoming.

## AD0100 – WELCOME AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FIRST NATION TRADITIONAL TERRITORY

- Honoraria are not to be used to support IH employees or employees of other provincial health authorities.

### 4.3.2 Gifting

- IH employees attending special events, such as a signing ceremony or the grand opening of a health centre within an Aboriginal community, are encouraged to present a gift to honour the Nation. This is typical to demonstrate respect to the achievement and success of the event. Gifts can vary in their substance and value, but it should be meaningful and proportionate to the scale of the event.
- A gift is an item of moderate value such as a framed picture, woven wool blanket, or beaded art. In deciding the value of the gift, consider the importance of the event. A small gift would include items of value such as shawl, glassware, etc.
- The manager should ensure the decision to provide a gift aligns with [AU0100 Standards of Conduct for Interior Health Employees](#) (Section 2.8).

### 4.3.3 Prior manager approval is necessary to ensure funds are available from the respective host's cost centre to purchase or provide Honoraria or gifts. Refer to [AP0700 Signing Authority](#) for protocols related to employee and organization expenses.

### 4.3.4 If uncertain about the type or value of the Honoraria or gift, ask the [Aboriginal Health team](#) or community member contact.

## 5.0 REFERENCES

- Adapted from Interior Health Authority (2016) Welcome and Acknowledgment of First Nation Traditional Territory Guidelines
- Adapted from Vancouver Coastal Health (2015) Aboriginal Cultural Competency Policy
- Adapted from Fraser Health (2017) Fraser-Salish Territory Acknowledgement Protocol

Policy Sponsor: VP, Population Health & Chief Medical Health Officer	5 of 5
Policy Steward: Corporate Director Aboriginal Health	
Date Approved: December 2018	Date(s) Reviewed-r/Revised-R: