

Description of initiative:

The [Indigenous Cultural Competency Training \(ICC\)](#) training is a unique, facilitated online training program designed to increase knowledge, enhance self-awareness, and strengthen the skills of those who work both directly and indirectly with Indigenous peoples. The goal of the ICC training is to develop and promote individual competencies and positive partnerships.

Skilled facilitators guide and support each participant through dynamic and interactive learning modules. Participants will learn about terminology, diversity, anti-racism, inclusivity, aspects of colonial history such as Indian residential schools and Indian Hospitals, a timeline of historical events, and contexts for understanding social disparities and inequities. Through interactive activities, participants examine culture, stereotyping, and the consequences and legacies of colonization. Participants will also be introduced to tools for developing more effective communication and relationship building skills.

How has the initiative contributed to the promotion of diversity, anti-racism, inclusivity and human rights in London and promoting London as a welcoming city?

This program addresses institutionalized racism within London's health care organizations. It is a process of re-education designed to break stereotypes, unconscious bias, and support a better patient experience for Indigenous peoples accessing services in London.

London offers a wide-range of health care services intended to support many urban Aboriginal, rural and First Nation communities residing both inside and outside the city.

We know that based on information presented in the recent report "[First Peoples, Second Class Treatment](#)"¹ that racism can be identified as a social determinant of health for Aboriginal peoples, and that the institutionalization of racism has created access barriers within our healthcare institutions, resulting in negative patient experiences to the extent that Aboriginal peoples have been noted to avoid services provided through the healthcare sector. This is despite the fact that Aboriginal peoples have some of the worst health outcomes of any population in Canada, and the end result is a population that has significantly higher early mortality rates, and a lower life expectancy than the general population. This suggests that we need to proactively address and acknowledge the institutionalization of racism within our systems of care and services is a barrier to care. There is evidence and research that recognizes that racism can be addressed through a deliberate and systematic approach through education and training. This is where the ICC has been recognized as an emerging best practice that is having impacts on improving both the patient experience and improving health outcomes for Aboriginal peoples.

This training is designed to increase knowledge, develop skills and enhance self-awareness for health care practitioners and to provide the support and education needed to address the needs of the

¹ Allan, B. & Smylie, J. (2015). First Peoples, second class treatment: The role of racism in the health and well-being of Indigenous peoples in Canada. Toronto, ON: the Wellesley Institute.

Aboriginal population, in a more culturally competent way, while respecting the enormous diversity across the different Aboriginal nations.

What short or long-term impact has/will the initiative have on the promotion of diversity, anti-racism, inclusivity and human rights in London and promoting London as a welcoming city?

Spread: The [South West LHIN](#) has embedded the [ICC training](#) as a [funding obligation](#) across the health care system in order to drive the expectation that all health care organizations are responsible for providing culturally competent care for all Indigenous peoples. 96 Health care providers, from hospitals, to community based services in the areas of mental health and addictions, community support services, community health centres and the community care access centres are all being held accountable for developing a plan and identifying staff to participate in this training year over year.

Based on best practice: The ICC training is a best practice from the province of British Columbia (BC) that has been adapted to address the context within Ontario. Initial research of this initiative in BC has identified an immediate improvement in the patient experience for Indigenous peoples.

Short-term outcomes: To date more than 500 health care professionals in London have completed this training. Through the LHIN's Aboriginal Cultural Safety Strategy, it is anticipated that over the next few years, we will have built up a critical mass of health care professionals that have taken the training, and interventions and post-training can be identified to address institutional and organizational barriers to enable more equitable access. Through increasing knowledge, developing skills and enhancing self-awareness, the ICC training contributes to better relationships between providers and Indigenous patients and families, and improves the quality of care received. This in turn will contribute to more Aboriginal peoples accessing care in a timely manner, and will reduce the likelihood that people will avoid services until their conditions deteriorate further. This can help reduce pressures on acute care services, and also reduce avoidable hospital readmissions.

Long-term outcomes (patient & system): Driving systemic and institutional change, reduce pressure on emergency and acute services, strengthen connections to primary and community care, to contribute to better health outcomes for Indigenous peoples. It is also anticipated that this training can act as a catalyst across the system in order to support a culture shift so that marginalized and vulnerable Aboriginal peoples will be treated with more dignity, empathy and respect within the City of London.

What is the potential for expansion and/or inspiration for replication of the initiative?

London has been the pilot site for this program in Ontario. Due to the success within this municipality, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has identified funding to spread to other areas in Ontario.

How can receiving this Award be used to further promote diversity, anti-racism, inclusivity and human rights in London and to further promote London as a welcoming city?

This award would improve the profile of the initiative and support adoption in other sectors.