



**East Toronto
Health Partners**

*Introduction to ETHPs
Indigenous Community
Engagement and
Partnership*

EastTCaN Health and Social Collaborative
September 23, 2026

Background



- East Toronto Health Partners (ETHP) OHT wanted to better understand the current state of programs and services for Indigenous peoples living in East Toronto.
- Prior to embarking on community engagement, ETHP sent a survey to its partners which yielded minimal feedback.
- The purpose of the community engagement was to meet with Indigenous and non-Indigenous providers in East Toronto (and beyond) to learn about programs, policies or practices in their organizations that provide Indigenous Cultural Safety (ICS) and trauma informed care, and/or are Indigenous-led.
- The Indigenous community engagement occurred between November 2024 - October 2025. It was led by Nena Pendevska, ETHP Engagement Lead with support from Laurie Poole, member of ETHP Community Advisory Council (CAC) and member of the Wolastoqey First Nation (New Brunswick).
- The work was undertaken with the understanding that Indigenous community engagement needs to be ongoing and integrated into ETHP's strategy.

Summary of Key Findings



GAPS

1. Indigenous peoples living in East Toronto will travel outside the area to access care from Indigenous-led providers (Anishnawbe Health, Unity Health Centre for Indigenous Wellness, Health and Reconciliation).
2. There is limited data sources:
 - On where Indigenous peoples access care in EHP, as well as outside the catchment area.
 - Number of EHP partners or other health care organizations in East Toronto that have completed Indigenous Cultural Safety training (ICT).
 - Number of health care providers that identify as Indigenous in East Toronto.
3. Lack of centralized navigational resources on where and how to access Indigenous led programs and/or non-Indigenous led services that offer cultural safe and trauma informed care – both for providers and Indigenous peoples.

Summary of Key Findings



GAPS

4. Gaps in care were identified for high needs Indigenous clients, homeless or under housed with comorbidities, and struggling with mental health and addictions.
5. The harmful impact of the circumstances surrounding the closing of MGH's Aboriginal Healing Program on community members who sought trusted advice, counsel, care and meaningful connection to their spiritual identity and Indigenous way of being.
6. Indigenous providers/leaders feel they are expected to carry the role of educating non-Indigenous organizations on cultural safe, trauma informed care. There is a sense of feeling overwhelmed.
7. Most partners that were engaged do not have a strategy to advance Indigenous health and reconciliation. However, there is willingness to become more engaged.

Progress



- Leadership buy-in/ commitment to support and prioritize Indigenous engagement across the OHT.
- ETHP EDI CoP (through VHA) continues to offer Indigenous Cultural Safety and Anti-Indigenous racism training to ETHP partners
- Unity Health will be opening a Centre for Indigenous Wellness to advance Health and Reconciliation at its Providence location.
- Indigenous Health Navigator at MGH
- East End CHC resource for Indigenous programs and services
- WoodGreen is supporting an Indigenous community event in partnership with BAIN co-op and Withrow School (Oct 17th)

Next Steps and Recommendations



- Address identified needs to support transitions to home for high needs Indigenous clients, homeless or under housed with comorbidities, mental health and addictions.
- Someone from the leadership team to be the champion/ point of contact.
- Improve service navigation for the Indigenous Community in East Toronto.
- Indigenous Cultural Safety training for front line staff.
- Data collection.
- Fund Indigenous community engagement events.

Questions for the Collaborative



- How can we make this part of a joint strategy for partner agencies?
- How do we keep each other informed on how partner agencies are supporting Indigenous engagement and partnerships?
- Can the gaps that we have identified be addressed through existing ETHP initiatives like the Integrated Care Pathways, and the Collaborative? (e.g. the need to support transitions to home for high needs Indigenous clients, homeless or under housed with comorbidities, mental health and addictions.)

Questions?

Please raise your hand or
use the chat



Resources Shared During Session



Resources shared during the session:

- [Home - Elder Abuse Prevention Ontario](#)
- [Domestic/Intimate Partner Violence Resources](#)
- [Abuse and Violence - Family Service Toronto](#)
- [Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee | ontario.ca](#)
- [Neighbourhood Community Officer Program- Toronto Police Service](#)
- [Vulnerable Persons - Toronto Police Service](#)
- [Indigenous Canada | University of Alberta](#)

If you missed the session, you can listen to an audio recording by [clicking here](#) (Link expires Nov 23,2026)