

· FOUNDRY ·

Social Services

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Introduction

Our health, both mental and physical, is influenced by many factors such as our employment status, our level of education, our income, our home and community, our culture, as well as the physical environment that surrounds us.

These factors are called the determinants of health and they represent a key part of the social services that are offered as one of the core service streams in Foundry's service model. The variety of social services available at a Foundry centre is currently dependent upon existing community resources and is in development as we explore key partnerships and evolve the service model.

In seeking to support youth with a wholistic approach, it is essential that social services are integrated within a Foundry centre, and when doing so, that we address the unique experiences in each community — especially rural, remote or Indigenous communities. Only by integrating social and health services can we address the patterns of health in populations — patterns that are driven by fundamental characteristics of the society in which people live.

Determinants of health, supported through social services, can be categorized into three areas:

Physical Environment

Shelter, stable ecosystem, peace, sustainable resources

Social Environment

Income, education, social security, equity, social justice and respect for human rights, access to health care services

Biological and Behavioural Determinants

Genetic factors, ethnicity, lifestyle (e.g., smoking), immigration

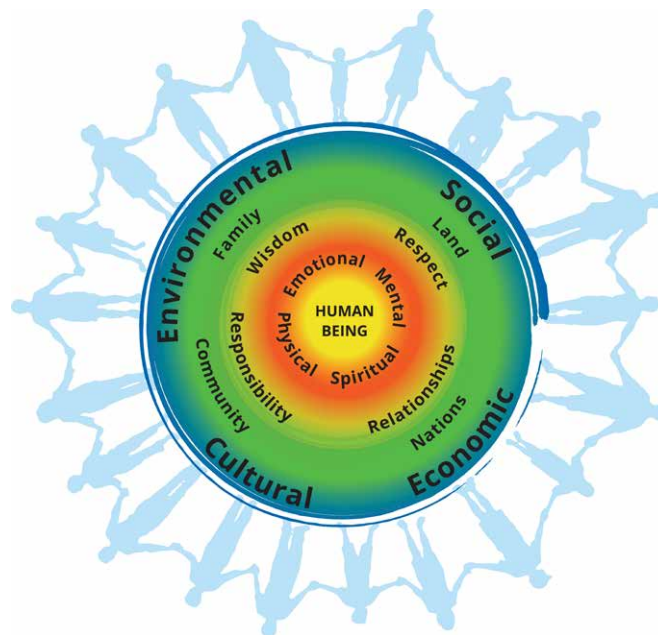
“Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.”

Article 14, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Indigenous wellness and the impact of colonialism on their determinants of health must also be recognized. Colonialism oppresses Indigenous rights in multiple ways, including by attempted cultural genocide, forced removal of people from their lands and systemically racist legal and health care access. This results in a “significant degradation in health and wellness, practices, beliefs, and values”¹ of Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous sovereignty, spirituality, political authority, education, health care systems, land and resource access, and cultural practices were and continue to all be repressed by colonization.²

The First Nations perspective on health and wellness includes factors that promote and maintain physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health and the need for balance in these four areas. It is holistic and includes the broader social, economic, cultural and environmental determinants of health.³ See Figure 1 for a visual expression of the First Nations perspective on wellness, as passed down by the Elders and traditional healers. Wellness belongs to every person and their reflection of this perspective is unique.

FIGURE 1: FIRST NATIONS PERSPECTIVE ON WELLNESS



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To support youth at individual Foundry centres, communities will determine where the greatest need is to address determinants of health. Foundry centres will then integrate services that target these needs within the centre either as stand-alone services for youth or in combination with other services offered.

As with all Foundry services, in social services, an integrated team of service providers work alongside each other. Services are linked and coordinated, with everyone communicating and sharing information to provide a seamless experience for youth and families/caregivers.

Core Social Services

The implementation of social services at Foundry centres has been based on existing or new partnerships with local social service agencies or on re-aligning a non-profit Lead Agency's existing social service as a Foundry- offered service. More recently, the development of employment services as an essential social service offering has been made possible with government funding. The following are social services that are typically available at Foundry centres.

Work and Education Services (MSDPR, Service Canada)

The Foundry Work and Education Program is the cornerstone of Foundry's Social Service Stream. It helps young people in multiple aspects of their journey towards finding work, education or training that is both meaningful and supports their goals and capabilities. Core to this program is an Individualized Placement Support model. This model is recognized as an evidence-based practice for providing supported education and employment services. Rather than focusing on pre-vocational skills, this approach focuses on finding competitive work or education opportunities and supporting individuals to be successful in them.

Foundry's work includes ensuring we create culturally safe and respectful environments for equity-denied groups including IBPOC (Indigenous, Black and People of Colour) communities.

We recognize our role and responsibility as a white settler organization in calling out and dismantling colonialism and racism in the work we do.

Our journey includes committing to the implementation of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) Calls to Action, the Calls for Justice of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) and the recommendations of the report "In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in BC Health Care."

Program activities are focused on supporting youth to develop work or educational goals, engage in rapid job, education, or training searches, and provide ongoing support even after a work, education, or training placement is achieved. Other activities within the program may include employment or education focused workshops, life skills, vocational/educational exploration and individualized placements. These supports are offered in combination with the other Foundry services to form a holistic and integrated approach.

Initial implementation of the Foundry Work and Education Program, with funding from Service Canada and MSDPR, included 12 centres and Foundry's provincial virtual services. Other centres offering work and education supports may already have an existing contract through MSDPR or may partner with a supported employment agency to provide these services. In the future, Foundry Central Office will be working to expand the implementation of the Foundry Work and Education Program across the Foundry network with the goal of providing flexible, wraparound services to help youth in BC realize their educational goals, develop work skills and gain paid work experience to successfully transition into the labour market.

The Foundry Work and Education Program is also offered virtually, through the provincial virtual services team and in most Foundry centres.

For more information, please see the “Virtual Services” section of the [Service Model Guide](#).

“Foundry commits that it “shall in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous peoples take specific measures to protect Indigenous youth from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the young person’s education, or to be harmful to their health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development, taking into account their special vulnerability and the importance of education for their empowerment.”

Article 17, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Income Assistance Services (MSDPR)

Income assistance is available for youth whose current available financial resources are not sufficient to meet their basic needs. In order to access income assistance, a review of eligibility and an application are required. A young person may request support by completing the application and navigating the requirements for submitting an application.

Housing Support Services (BC Housing)

Housing support services are available for youth and/or families who need help finding or maintaining housing within their community. Depending on the youth or family's needs, this may include support in accessing workshops on housing searches and independent living, applying for subsidized housing or access to emergency shelter.

In addition to the above services, depending upon need and available resources in the community, Foundry centres offer various other social services. These may include outreach and advocacy, independent living skills, settlement services and literacy supports. Additional services may also include food banks and clothing donation.



“In particular, Indigenous peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing and other economic and social programmes affecting them and, as far as possible, to administer such programmes through their own institutions.”

Article 23, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Other Health and Wellness Services

In addition to the core social services that support some basic needs like income and shelter, Foundry centres also offer services that support some of the behavioural determinants of health and wellness.

Wellness Services

The Wellness Program focuses on supporting youth in five key domains of wellness, and it is available at each Foundry centre and through Foundry's provincial virtual services. Through this program, opportunities are available to support the wholistic wellness of youth through individual and group activities, community-based activities, nature-based and land-based activities, and virtual activities. Each Foundry centre should offer a diverse range of services to meet the physical, emotional/mental, cognitive/intellectual, social and spiritual/cultural domains of leisure and wellness. Involving young people's perspectives, like through a local Youth Advisory Committee, is essential in the ongoing development of services incorporating the wellness and leisure-related needs of Foundry youth.

Services Focused on Diverse Populations

Each Foundry centre offers services that support and welcome the diverse populations in their community. When developing services, consider the broad range of groups who may seek services, including factors such as race, ethnicity, gender and sexual diversity, neurodiversity, cognitive and physical ability, immigration status, employment status and income.

Services Focused on Indigenous Youth and Families/Caregivers

Recognizing the importance of culture and tradition in a young person's wellness, services within each centre must reflect the specific supports that Indigenous youth and families/caregivers may request — such as connection into groups supporting their cultural and spiritual wellness — in addition to ensuring that all services are delivered in a culturally safe way. Connection and direction from local Indigenous communities are paramount in the development of any services supporting Indigenous youth and must include opportunities for Indigenous youth to engage in co-creation and co-design.

Tools and Resources

Visit [The Foundry Learning Centre](#) to access these tools and resources.

- Foundry Work and Education Program Guide
- Wellness Program Guide

References

- 1 First Nations Health Authority. FNHA's policy statement on cultural safety and humility. Coast Salish Territory. Available at: fnha.ca/Documents/FNHA-Policy-Statement-Cultural-Safety-and-Humility.pdf
- 2 First Nations Health Council. Implementing the vision: BC First Nations Health Governance. British Columbia, Canada. 2011. Available at: fnha.ca/Documents/FNHC_Health_Governance_Book.pdf
- 3 First Nations Health Authority. FNHA's policy on mental health and wellness. Coast Salish Territory, Canada. 2018. Available at: fnha.ca/WellnessSite/WellnessDocuments/FNHA-Policy-on-Mental-Health-and-Wellness.pdf

“Indigenous people have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions.” In conjunction with Indigenous peoples, Foundry commits to taking measures to recognize and protect the exercise of these rights.

Article 31, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples



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