

*Sharing knowledge. Making a difference.*

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peoples. Our program focus priorities include child and youth health, the “social determinants of health,” and emerging priorities in Aboriginal health.

#### Highlights of our work:

- The NCCAH facilitated the input of Canadian and international Indigenous perspectives to the World Health Organization as it crafted the 2008 global study into health: **“Closing the Gap in a Generation: equity through action on the social determinants of health.”**
- We published in partnership with UNICEF Canada a report that shone a national spotlight on the health gap for Aboriginal children in Canada. This document identified both challenges and solutions, and reached 63,651 individuals, 1,213 parliamentarians, 3,000 educators, and one prime minister. It also received coverage in 169 media outlets in the first week of its release in June, 2009.
- Aboriginal health is more than doctors and hospitals. It’s about housing, safe drinking water, sports and recreation, environmental health, food safety, and much more. We’ve broken new ground in Canada by gathering nearly 50 national Aboriginal organizations from a wide variety of sectors to explore how best to work together in support of Aboriginal health and well-being. Documentary videos of these gatherings have been distributed to more than 35 countries and may be viewed on our website. Our work on the “social determinants of health” continues.

#### Visit Us

We invite you to visit us at: [www.nccah.ca](http://www.nccah.ca) to access our resources, explore our work, view our videos, and link to partners and collaborators in Aboriginal health. We at the NCCAH are pleased to be working with communities, frontline practitioners, policy-makers, researchers, and program managers in support of the health and well-being of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in Canada.

**When it comes to Aboriginal health, we can share knowledge and make a difference.**



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NATIONAL COLLABORATING CENTRE  
FOR ABORIGINAL HEALTH

CENTRE DE COLLABORATION NATIONALE  
DE LA SANTÉ AUTOCHTONE

The National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health is one of six collaborating centres created by the Public Health Agency of Canada to strengthen and renew public health in this country.



National Collaborating Centres  
for Public Health  
Centres de collaboration nationale  
en santé publique

**UNBC** UNIVERSITY OF  
NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

# Sharing knowledge. Making a difference.

## Welcome to the National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health

### Who We Are

The National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health (NCCAH) supports Aboriginal communities across Canada in realizing their public health goals and reducing the health inequities that currently exist for First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. The centre uses a coordinated, holistic and comprehensive approach to ensure Aboriginal peoples are included and respected in a renewed public health system in Canada.



The NCCAH is one of six collaborating centres created by the Public Health Agency of Canada in 2004 to address key public health issues:

- Aboriginal health
- Infectious diseases
- Environmental health
- Healthy public policy
- Determinants of health
- Methods and tools enhancing public health

Each centre is hosted by an institution that supports its program focus. The NCCAH is located at the University of Northern British Columbia in Prince George, B.C., a region rich in cultural diversity. For more about the **National Collaborating Centres for Public Health** program, please visit: [www.nccph.ca](http://www.nccph.ca)

### Our focus on Aboriginal health in Canada

About 1.7 million Aboriginal people live in Canada; 61% are First Nations, 34% are Métis and 5% are Inuit. Persistent and serious disparities exist between the health indicators of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples, and other Canadians. Commissions, studies, and national reports consistently call attention to the population health gap. Some recent findings:

- Inuit have the highest lung cancer rates in the world, and in 2003 experienced TB rates 10 times higher than the national average.
- Twice the number of Inuit and Métis children live in poverty than do other Canadian children.
- An epidemic of type 2 diabetes mellitus is affecting many of Canada's First Nations, with a trend toward earlier age at onset. The current health and social repercussions of the disease are considerable.
- Social determinants of health include poverty, overcrowding, and unemployment. The socio-economic status of each Aboriginal group is lower than that of non-Aboriginal Canadians on virtually every measure.
- 100 Aboriginal communities needed to boil their water in 2008 owing to contaminated water supplies.
- There has been a steady rise in the proportion of reported AIDS cases and positive HIV test reports among Aboriginal persons in Canada.

In just a few short years, First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples have succeeded in reducing infant mortality rates and significantly increasing life expectancy. Resilient communities, dedicated organizations, committed experts, and changes in health management and governance are helping to support healthy families and strong communities.

### Our Goals

At the NCCAH, we work with First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples to realize their public health goals. Our relationships have resulted in many partnerships on key health initiatives with governments, Aboriginal organizations, our sister National Collaborating Centres, research institutions, non-government organizations, and communities across the country.



Our role is to identify relevant knowledge, and to synthesize, translate, and exchange information in priority program areas. The National Collaborating Centre program:

- ensures knowledge is translated into useful evidence for public health
- identifies gaps in knowledge and relevant applied research to better inform programs, policy and practice
- develops networks of regional, national and international expertise and practice to better address public health priorities
- promotes the use of evidence to support mechanisms and interventions that improve public health programs, policies and practices

A major goal for the NCCAH is to increase a broader understanding of Aboriginal public health issues. We also work with partners to facilitate greater Aboriginal participation in initiatives that affect First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

### Working for Change

Our focus on collaboration means we work across government jurisdictions, organizational boundaries, and geographical divides. That's especially important in addressing the multi-faceted and historically rooted issues associated with the health of Aboriginal



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