

This newsletter looks at progress over the past year on the 2020–2025 Comprehensive Plan for Implementing Cultural Safety in the Health and Social Services System.

We hope you enjoy it!



## Project background

### Publication of a guide entitled Cultural Safety in Health and Social Services – Towards Culturally Safe Care and Services for First Nations and Inuit (MSSS, 2021)

In 2018 Direction des affaires autochtones (DAA) at Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS) formed a committee of stakeholders with the expertise to develop a guide to cultural safety in health and social services for use by executives and managers of health and social services system (HSSS) institutions. As a result, an Advisory Committee on Cultural Safety was set up with the assistance of the Québec projects and knowledge transfer team at Institut universitaire de première ligne en santé et services sociaux (IUPSSS), Centre intégré universitaire de santé et services sociaux (CIUSSS) de l'Estrie – Centre hospitalier universitaire de Sherbrooke (CIUSSE-CHUS). After more than two years of work, the guide was released in June 2021. It describes best practices for the provision of unbiased care and services.

### Investments to implement cultural safety and renewal of the Advisory Committee's mandate

In November 2020 the Minister of Health and Social Services and the Minister Responsible for Indigenous Affairs announced \$15 million in funding over five years to put in place key measures to improve access to and ensure the continuity of culturally safe RSSS services for First Nations and Inuit. This announcement was a concrete response to Call to Action #75: Listening, reconciliation, and progress of the Inquiry Commission on Relations between Indigenous Peoples and Certain Public Services in Québec (CERP). HSSS institutions are encouraged to “develop services and programs that comply with the principles of cultural safety developed for and in collaboration with Indigenous peoples.”

MSSS has therefore proposed five priority measures to be taken as part of the 2020–2025 Comprehensive Plan for Implementing Cultural Safety in the RSSS:

- Help institutions implement the best practices described in the Cultural Safety Guide
- Design and implement training plans for managers, professionals, and providers
- Have HSSS liaison officers work with First Nations and Inuit
- Employ service navigators (Indigenous if possible) in the HSSS to improve service accessibility and continuity for First Nations and Inuit
- Adapt methods for providing information, assistance, and support under the complaints review system

As such, given the Advisory Committee's role as a place for sharing and dialogue, its mandate was renewed and amended to ensure that its members continue to support the implementation of new cultural safety measures strategically and operationally.

## Support for the implementation of best practices

### Support for institutions component

In April 2021 MSSS tasked the CIUSSE-CHUS IUPSSS national knowledge transfer project team, which helped write the Cultural Safety Guide, with developing a strategy to help institutions implement best practices. After the strategy was published, a first Cultural Safety Guide activity was conducted in June 2021 with Indigenous case managers (RDAs). This activity consisted mainly of an overview of the Guide and looked at how to ensure buy-in and support (individual and collective).

Over the summer and fall of 2021, the CIUSSE-CHUS team focused on developing information tools to help institutions put the Guide's principles into practice. These tools aim to empower the people directly involved in implementing the cultural safety approach when they present the Cultural Safety Guide to different key players in their institutions.

To make sure certain tools are useful and to validate the Cultural Safety Guide buy-in activities, a pilot one-on-one coaching experiment was conducted in December 2021 with Centre intégré universitaire de santé et de services sociaux (CIUSSS) de la Mauricie-et-du-Centre-du-Québec. At the same time, a survey was sent to RDAs and institutional liaison officers to determine their need for and expectations of help with putting the Guide's principles into practice and, more specifically, one of its proposed methods: creating a cultural safety community of practice.

### Next steps

The results of these two initiatives will help us prioritize a variety of activities that will help institutions take ownership of the Guide and best practices. Those activities can be phased in starting in winter 2022.

### Cultural safety call for projects component

A call for cultural safety projects was issued to all RSSS institutions in summer 2021. It was meant to provide financial support for implementing and perpetuating a cultural safety approach in RSSS institutions, in keeping with the principles and best practices set out in the Cultural Safety Guide. Participating institutions also had to commit to funding at least 50% of the project.

The projects had to aim to achieve one or more of the following objectives:

- Work with organizations that provide care and services to First Nations and Inuit (required for all projects)
- Foster the development of an organizational culture that takes a cultural safety approach
- Foster the development of culturally safe care and services
- Improve the quality of culturally safe care and services as experienced by target clientele and their loved ones

The MSSS team assigned to oversee the project analysis process developed an evaluation chart that was presented to the Cultural Safety Advisory Committee. The projects were analyzed in fall 2021 by a group of representatives from Indigenous organizations and from the evaluation and quality units of RSSS institutions. All comments and recommendations from the analysis group on each project were validated by the end of November 2021. Analysis group participants viewed the analysis process and the quality of the projects positively. As of December 1, 2021, each institution had received a response to their project funding request, along with comments and recommendations for improvement.

At the January 2022 Cultural Safety Advisory Committee meeting, a presentation was made on the analysis process, the projects selected, and the analysis group's recommendations.

### Next steps

The institutions will move forward with their plans immediately.



## Cultural safety training

### Training: Awareness of Indigenous realities

Steps were taken with Secrétariat aux affaires autochtones (SAA) to make general “Indigenous awareness” training available to all RSSS employees. The training program was developed in collaboration with Québec’s Ministère de la Justice and has been available to staff at RSSS institutions in the Digital Learning Environment (ENA) since June 1, 2021. The objective is for at least half of staff to have been trained by March 31, 2022, and all staff by September 30, 2022. Given the pandemic, institutions are encouraged to continue working toward this objective as they are able.



As of February 1st, 2022, 59 125 employees, or roughly 17.48% of all RSSS staff, had completed the online training.

Centre d’expertise en santé de Sherbrooke has been asked to adapt the mandatory modules to ensure the training program:

- Is accessible in English for learners working in public facilities recognized by Sec. 29.1 of the *Charter of the French Language*
- Meets web accessibility standards for the visually and hearing impaired

Learning progress is monitored on an ongoing basis (compilation of the percentage of people who have completed the program at each RSSS institution).

### Next steps

An additional Indigenous awareness module specifically addressing the health and social services sector is expected to be released in spring 2022. CIUSSS du Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean has been asked to help design that module via its Centre de recherche appliquée en intervention psychosociale (CRAIP).

In addition, since December 2021 MSSS has been conducting “Tikinagan” cultural safety training for troubled youth via Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue. By March 31, 2022, 800 managers and stakeholders are expected to have been trained. The goals of improving intervention practices go well beyond awareness. Indigenous awareness training is therefore not a substitute for “Tikinagan” training.

### Continuum of cultural safety training

In early 2022 CIUSSS du Saguenay–Lac-St-Jean will present to MSSS the results of its analysis of cultural safety training needs for the entire continuing education continuum. Training content for other programs and services could be developed or adapted based on this analysis. The analysis results will be used by the working group on cultural safety training.

## Service navigators and liaison officers

As of December 4, 2021, nine liaison officers and four service navigators were working in institutions (staffing process underway for six officers and eight navigators). In 2021–22 MSSS funded 12 liaison officer positions and 13 navigator positions. Worker scarcity and the pandemic explain the low number of officers and navigators.

In March 2021, work was completed on identifying job titles institutions could use to find service navigators. It might also be possible to enter into a service agreement with an Indigenous organization or body.

A working group was created in early summer 2021. It met five times between June and December 2021 to work on two deliverables:

- Documenting conditions conducive to employing liaison officers and service navigators in RSSS facilities, considering regional and Indigenous organization realities (document shared with institutions in fall 2021)
- Beginning to look at how Indigenous affairs roles (service navigators, liaison officers, and Indigenous case managers) complement each other.

### Next steps

In winter 2022 MSSS will schedule the follow-up and evaluation of the first cohort of service navigators.

## Complaints review system

### Information, assistance, and support for Indigenous clients

In spring 2021 the complaints review commissioner hosted a meeting with a number of complaints and service quality commissioners for RSSS institutions. Discussions focused on how to adapt the complaints review process to better reflect the realities and needs of Indigenous users. What came out of the meeting will inform the next phases of work (needs analysis and identification of areas for improvement).

In summer 2021 the Cultural Safety Guide and the 2020–2025 Plan for Implementing the Cultural Safety Approach in the RSSS were presented to the institutions’ local complaints commissioners.

### Next steps

A working group will be set up in the coming weeks to begin work on adapting the complaints review system.



This newsletter was prepared by **Direction des affaires autochtones**.

Thank you! We look forward to continuing this work in the coming year!