

Quarterly newsletter

# SPRING 2022



*Three Corners Health Services Society*

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## VISION

“Working together towards optimal health and wellness for and with our Secwepemc communities”

## MISSION

“To holistically address the Health care needs of our Secwepemc community members by incorporating traditional and contemporary practices”

## GOALS

1. Healthy People - To increase the health and wellness of community members.
2. Healthy Communities - To create a safe environment of care for our community
3. Healthy Organization - To ensure a professional and high quality health structure

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***Are you a Three Corners Health Services Society client who would like to share their story?***

Contact:

**Crystal Getz**

**250-398-9814 ext. 204**

**cgetz@tchss.ca**

Or speak to your Three Corner Health Services Society Service provider

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

Welcome to the latest update from our Three Corners Health Services Society clients, families and communities. In this edition, you can get caught up in the latest updates for the COVID-19 vaccines and Boosters, how you can access a rapid testing kit, review our latest updates with the Society's Home Care program, Healthy living Coach, Jordan's Principal Coordinator, Mental health department, Family connections liaisons staff and more.

Vaccinating our children, our Elders and family members helps us protect one another. I think it has been shared time and time again by our health care system professionals and our Provincial Health Office the best protection from COVID-19 is getting vaccinated. It is one of the best ways to ensure you are protecting yourself, your loved ones and others in the community from getting ill, very sick or dying from COVID-19.

Most recently, our Society confirmed with First Nations Health Authority that COVID-19 Point of Care Rapid test kits have been provided to each of the Society's

communities' health clinics. If you or your family members have questions regarding the use of rapid test kits for COVID-19 please contact our nurses.

Our Society's nursing team has been to each of our communities' health clinics and communities providing both vaccinations 1 & 2, as well as the Booster shot. If you or your family member require a vaccination or flu shot, please call our community health clinic and/or health Society clinic. It is important to note, families, and individuals in communities can also access the COVID-19 vaccinations at the government vaccination clinics, our local pharmacists and by calling the Vaccination toll-free number 1-833-838-2323 as well.



*Lori Sellars*



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE CONTINUED...

### RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENT

The Residential School Announcement shared by Kukpi7 Willie Sellars of the unmarked burials sites is a catastrophic reminder of the abuse, mistreatment, and exploitation of many of our Indigenous children.

There remains a huge need for the Government of Canada to begin to explore the support needed with our Survivors, their affected families and communities and begin to create a space to share their healing journeys.

The Society health team is looking to our Survivors and extended family members to reach out to share their healing journeys. Our team is here to assist in sharing this journey with our families. Part of this support with our Survivors means identifying emotional and counselling support is identified and available with our Society counselling team. The Society has supported the efforts of our community members by requesting them to share their healing journeys, their healing efforts associated with addictions and the effects of residential school. We honour their stories and share them on our Society Youtube site in the hope that our provincial and federal partners will take a moment to learn how our family members and Survivors have become an educator of cultural awareness and sensitivity.

The National Indian Residential School Crisis Line is available to provide support to former residential school students who can access emotional and crisis referral services by calling the 24-Hour National Crisis Line at 1-866-925-4419.



A youth from one of our communities shared the following poem with their school and English teacher after they heard the January 25 announcement and we're excited to share it here.

### MOTHER EARTH FATHER SKY

By Jacob Johnson

Mother Earth, Father Sky  
A culture forsaken will not die  
Children taken from the breast,  
Mother's weeping, children laid to rest,  
School bells ring, families broken  
Elder's stories never spoken  
A cross to bear for spirits past,  
Justice looms for those at last  
A mother cries a highway of tears  
Children lost for a hundred years  
A time forever to be with father sky  
Spirits rage, warriors die  
Hearts will mend and nations will see  
A culture that is completely free  
To drum, to dance, to claim their land  
Mother Earth our last stand

# ACCREDITATION QUALITY IMPROVEMENT UPDATE

The Society has been working with Accreditation Canada towards quality improvements since 2000.

For our team at the Society, this means continually striving to improve our standards.

Simply put, Accreditation means improving our health care structures and systems as a whole including reviewing along the way our performance and improvement efforts of our Society programs.

A list of some examples of our Quality improvement efforts include:

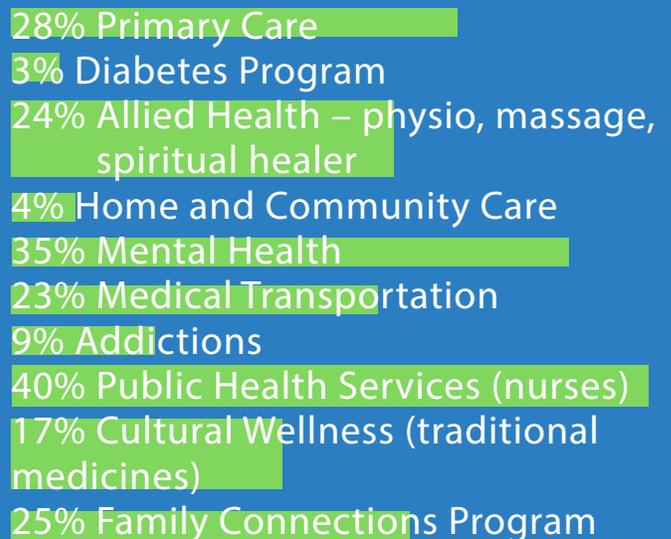
- **Access to a Nurse Practitioner and a Physician.** Dr. Michelle Giles, on Jan. 28 shared a day with us at the Society health clinic. The Society is identifying other physician supports as well.
- **Access to Allied Health Professionals, Physiotherapist and Pharmacists.** The Society is working to secure supports for a massage therapist, and supports for acupuncture for this upcoming year.
- **Access to client feedback.** An important part of Accreditation and Quality improvement includes to continue to provide our community members, families and clients "feedback" when we hold our events for example lunch and learns. This input is very important and we look to incorporate clients / families thoughts into our programming whenever possible.)

Quality improvement from Clients and Communities. Society mental health forums which provide our communities the option of sharing their healing journeys.

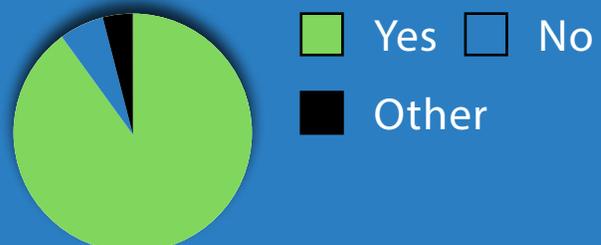
Capturing and sharing our clients' COVID-19 stories shows the perspective of how important it is to be vaccinated and follow up with your local health care nurse.

## WHAT ARE OUR CLIENTS SAYING?

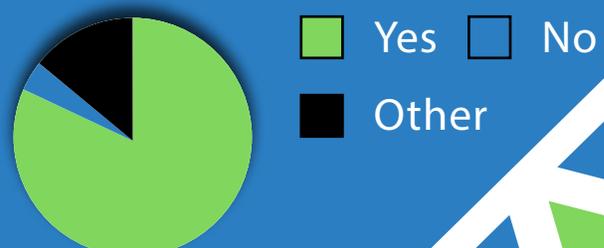
### What services are you accessing within Three Corners?



### Are you satisfied with the services that you received through these programs?



### Do you feel these programs provide you with the tool and knowledge to moderate a healthy lifestyle?



# NURSE MANAGER

In the nursing department, there's been a big change in the testing around COVID-19. Before Christmas break, so December and all the way before, when the pandemic started, our nurses were going out and testing, doing nasal swabs, collecting sputum samples and all of that to be tested for COVID. Now the big change is that we're giving people at home tests rather than them having to come to see the nurse. They can test for COVID-19 at home and then will need to follow-up with their own contacts rather than a nurse doing this. With First Nations' health, they will still get a call from a nurse as long as they report their positive results. There haven't been any big complaints, and the nurses will still help if people want or need it. The tests can be picked up at any of the health stations as well as the hospital for those that live in Williams Lake.

Looking ahead, mobile diabetes clinics are coming back in March for Dog Creek, Canoe Creek and Xat'sull. For Sugar Cane the clinic will be there on February 10. The clinics, which see Carrier Sekani nurses come down, haven't happened in a few years due to COVID. It's a pretty comprehensive screening for those with diabetes already and those that are at risk for developing diabetes. A lot of people have

had their doctors retire or leave the area and are now without physicians which makes it very hard to keep up on their screening every 3 months or annual checks that need to be done for their diabetes. This includes medication adjustments, as they simply don't have a doctor to do all of that for them. The nurses will do kidney screening, eye screening and blood-glucose levels and an endocrinologist can be contacted for those that may need extra follow-up. Finally, those attending will get put in touch with the TCHSS Diabetes care team that can work with them throughout the year.

A pharmacist will be visiting the communities again as well. The pharmacist will review medications with a nurse and the clients with multiple medications and see if there's any way to simplify the list. If people have a lot of medications, they sometimes stop taking them. So if we can remove the ones that aren't as needed and get them to focus on the critical ones, then that helps a lot.



**Stacey  
Isaac**



# JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE SERVICE COORDINATOR

There are some changes coming to Jordan's Principle which I'm hopeful about. They're changing some of the required supporting documentation. It will be limited to one instead of three, four or however many you can get. So they're looking at implementing that in the next coming months.

Previously, you might have needed a letter from the doctors, teacher, speech pathologist etc. Basically, one from everyone in their circle of care, and now Jordan's Principle, is saying that as long as one professional recommendation is included in the application that they should have to accept that.

Hopefully, that'll mean less wait time for clients as it would go from having to wait for multiple people to having to wait for just one. Our doctors here are fantastic but wait times for Jordan's Principle is

definitely a huge barrier - currently, the average wait time for our clients is four to six months.

The most recent quarter had the most approvals and the most amount of money approved since I started, so that's huge. A lot of clients are happy after expecting to be let down. It's not like jumping for joy and more of a sigh of relief.

Please note that as long as you have one parent with or eligible for status you can access Jordan's Principle.



*Rebecca  
Rochon*

# HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE LEAD



*Sandra  
Palombi*

Our home care team has found the pandemic is taking a toll, not just on home care workers or the health departments, it's everyone. There's a need for more mental health services for the people in our communities and better communication on how people can access the mental health

services that exist. I definitely encourage anyone to seek out the supports that are available.

For February, there's a package to make Valentine's cards and there's a competition with prizes for first, second and third. In March there will be another

competition to put together your own plant terrarium through Zoom, but there will be instructions available for anyone who doesn't use Zoom as well. We're excited to see people take part in these.

A quick reminder that foot care is available to the home care clients as well as Elders who are not home care clients but need foot care. To partake, you can simply reach out to the health station and talk to your nurse or home support workers for an assessment. You would simply become a home care client specifically for foot care.

Finally, for medication, many clients are still unaware that support is available for First Nations through some of the pharmacies in Williams Lake.

# MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTIONS PROGRAM MANAGER

Our team of counsellors and clinicians have certainly been kept busy with community members accessing mental health and addiction services. At first, the COVID restrictions appeared to pose challenging barriers to services, as support was having to be provided virtually. However, in-person appointments were increasing prior to the Christmas holidays but diminished again upon the arrival of Omicron. Since then, several members in our outlying communities are now opting for the convenience of ZOOM or phone sessions.

Barriers and challenges aside, Integrative Therapist, Ciel Patenaude, summed up the positives of our more recent observations stating, "Significant change and progress has been witnessed in many members, however, which can be attributed to various factors. Several people went through challenging COVID experiences that actually created motivation for change and healing due to the difficulty of the experience, and were far more willing to stay consistent with supplemental recommendations and more attentive to physical and psychological symptoms." She further reported that, "members have been eager to explore trauma release and remained open to trying different modalities to support such work. It has been amazing to see members stepping up to their life circumstances in more powerful ways."

Medicine for the Soul sessions previously cancelled due to COVID have now resumed in Sugar Cane. This bi-weekly gathering of Secwépemc women provides an opportunity to gain knowledge of culture and traditional practices, learn to make crafts and traditional medicines, feel a sense of belonging and provides peer support for others.

The Family Connection Liaisons continue attending Cultural Nights at Xat'súll which are being well attended as participants have now started making ribbon skirts.



**Lynn Dunford**

## FASD IF YOU DRINK, YOUR CHILD DRINKS



- If you drink alcohol while you are pregnant you can hurt your baby's brain, heart, kidneys and other organs. This can result in Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).
- Babies with FASDs may have trouble learning or controlling how they act. They may have a low IQ or develop more slowly than other kids.



**AS MANY AS 11% OF CANADIAN WOMEN (ABOUT 1 IN 9) CONTINUE DRINKING AFTER THEY FIND OUT THEY'RE PREGNANT**

**40,000 PEOPLE IN BC  
LIVE WITH FASD**

# MUSKRAT WORKSHOPS A VALUABLE LEARNING OPPORTUNITY



Workshops in January and February organized by Three Corners Health Services Society (TCHSS) and Denisiqi Services Society saw about a dozen youth learn about the traditional values of the muskrat, the use of the animals, trapping and furs.

The first day of the workshops consisted of the youth learning to skin and remove the hide from the muskrats while working in pairs. The second day involved scraping the hides and working them with hands.

Blaine Grinder, who led the workshops, talked at length about his experiences with returning to his traditional lands and the traditional practice of trapping, hunting, and working with the furs. Grinder has been back in his Tsilhqot'in and Secwépemc home territories for 10 years.

"[I] have proved to myself that I did not have to leave my territory by attaining my degree here in my community with Thompson River's University and my Master's in Education with Gonzaga University. For my master's degree, I conducted research in how land-based education affects students' learning.

What I found in this research is that the more cultural and practical tools students have — like skinning, tanning, hunting and gathering medicine — the more successful they are in school, socially and, most importantly, their identity is attached to the land."

On the last day, the youth made either medicine bags or pom poms for toques with the muskrat hides. "We put the workshop on to provide a traditional, hands-on, land based activity that would inspire the youth and give them a sense of what is involved in the lost art of pelt preparation," says McLayne Bennett who organized the workshops.

"The response has been good. We had less participation from the youth when we did the skinning on day one. On day two, we had more attendance, not all youth actively participated but many of them listened very attentively when Blaine talked about his experience of returning to his traditional lands and learning his language and what it has meant for him." Bennett says she's looking forward to seeing what kind of workshops they can put on in the future.

# HEALTHY LIVING PROGRAM COACH

I'm going to be working with Dog and Canoe Creek on some cooking programs with the school-aged kids (about 10-13) to get them more familiar with cooking practices and why we do the things we do when we're cooking, such as why we have to make sure meat is cooked through and why we have to measure out when we're baking.

There will also be some snow shoeing in Xats'ull conditions permitting and hopefully in some other communities as well. At the end of April and beginning of May, seed starting and gardening workshops will be coming up again.

A program to help people cook healthy meals had the last sessions put on hold due to limitations on what's been available in the grocery stores. The people who received it seemed to have really liked it, and there have been questions from others to see if we could do some with them as well. So hopefully it'll be possible to get back to that.



**Kayla Jasper**

## TOBACCO TIES HELP IN MOVING FORWARD

The Family Connections Liaisons made tobacco ties for the announcement of the preliminary findings at the St. Joseph Mission residential school site.

When you're making the tie, you're saying your prayer and you have to give something to the Creator for that to happen. People will give the ties as an offering to their prayer so they don't owe anything.

The packages included four colours of fabric.

"These four colours represent each race. So it's kind of like you pray for all people, all nationalities," says Mary Harry, Family Connections Liaison. The colours can also represent the four directions or the four seasons.

Some people will also use the colours to pray for something specific. Yellow can be used if you're thankful for something in your life.

"People also use green and blue because green and blue represent the earth and the sky."

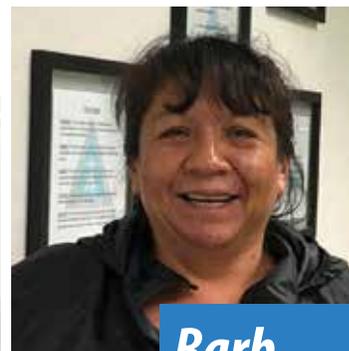
From there, they're used in a couple of ways, she says. Some will carry it around with them for a while. It's common to put into the fire after that.

"The fire just brings it to the Creator or higher god or whatever you believe in. So you can do it that way or you can put it back into the ground."

Besides tobacco you can also put other things like sage or cedar in there, which you



**Mary Harry**



**Barb Wycotte**



would wash and dry so it's clean when you're using it.

People will generally grind it smaller after that, a grinder or a chipper is common in modern times, says Harry.

All prayers are answered but in the Creator's time.

"We prayed for some of the survivors who are needing that extra support and it gives some comfort that other people are praying for them.

# RECOVERING FROM COVID-19

While some COVID-19 patients report feeling relief after just a week, others are in it for a long recovery time.

When Julie Harry started the rehabilitation process at Cariboo Memorial Hospital on August 28, 2021, she noticed several effects after being diagnosed. "I now have Parosmia, it is when someone has distorted smell and taste. I noticed now I can't eat chicken, salad, and chocolate. I can't stand the smell of popcorn because of the smell of butter. I am trying to retrain my sense of smell. My olfactory senses have been so damaged due to COVID-19, everything smells burnt or rotten."

Julie thought her ability to ever taste and smell would not return. Until in October, she started smelling and tasting again but only certain foods. "This is not a common cold," and "these are the long-term side effects of COVID-19." I am still worried since there are certain foods I cannot taste – it has been crazy."

Julie has been working hard to get her life back on track. It has been well over 5 months and she is adamant about rebuilding her strength, both physically and emotionally.

"Part of my recovery is getting both of my vaccinations. I am always working on building my immune system. I have done energy healing and acupuncture. Most recently, I have been completing appointments for cranial massage. Even though I still get shortness of breath, I continue to get what exercise I can in a week."

Julie shares how much she enjoys seeing Ciel Patenaude, with Three Corners health, she will continue to practice her regime of taking her vitamins, and self-care routine with her and the Society.

"I feel like I am getting better but I am still worried I won't be able to experience what I enjoyed fully before I had COVID-19." Each month since



diagnosed with COVID-19 I have been a little bit better. I have my kids and my family to help me. Everyone needs to remember none of us are invincible. Look after one another, and it is so important to be safe: wear your mask, and take the precautions not to get COVID-19. I am determined to continue to get better every day."

The Society thanks Julie for her encouraging words and for sharing her healing journey from COVID-19 with our readers. "You're a champion in our eyes," says Executive Director Lori Sellars.

# RESOURCES

Three Corners Health Svcs. Society	250-398-9814	Hostel (Friendship Centre)	250-398-6821
Residential School Survivors Society	250-305-2355	Native Court Worker	1-877-811-1190
AXIS Family Resources Ltd.	250-392-1000	Noopa (Boys & Girls Club)	250-392-5730
Women's Contact Society	250-392-4118	FASD Key Worker	250-392-4481
Mental Health & Addictions Svcs	250-392-1483	Knucwentwecw	250-392-2995
Problem Gambling Program	1-888-795-6111	Desniqi Services Society	250-392-6500
Canadian Mental Health Assoc.	250-398-8220	Legal Aid Society	1-866-577-2525
Specialized Victim Services	250-398-8220	Family Justice Worker	1-888-764-3663
Youth & Family Mental Health	250-398-4963	Crisis Line	1-888-353-2273
Child Development Centre	250-392-4481	Gateway Crisis Stabilization Unit	250-392-8261
Pregnancy Outreach Program	250-392-3583	Salvation Army	250-392-2429
Children Who Witness Abuse	250-398-7005	Alcoholics Anonymous	250-392-2264
Kuu-us Crisis Line	1-800-588-8717	Kids Help Phone	1-800-669-6868
Hope for Wellness	1-855-242-3310	310 Mental Health Support	310-6789



## OUR LOCATION

150 1 Avenue North  
Williams Lake,  
BC V2G 1Y8

We're open Monday to Friday  
from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm  
(closed for lunch 12 - 1 pm)

*We're currently hiring a Home  
Care Nurse and a Community  
Health Nurse!*

## OUR NUMBERS

<b>Lori Sellars - Executive Director</b>	<b>250-302-9814</b>
<b>Lynn Dunford - Mental Health &amp; Addictions Manager</b>	<b>250-302-2871</b>
<b>Nurses</b>	<b>250-305-4162</b>
<b>Glenda McCulloch - Medical Office Assistant</b>	<b>250-855-8314</b>
<b>MyLayne Bennett - Youth Counsellor</b>	<b>250-8558240</b>
<b>Rebeca Rochon - Jordan's Principle Coordinator</b>	<b>250-302-2616</b>
<b>Bill McGinnis - Counsellor</b>	<b>250-267-3034</b>
<b>Terry Buhler - Dental Therapist</b>	<b>250-440-5651</b>

*Be loud about the  
things that are  
important  
to you*