

NAVIGATING HEALTH CARE

COMMUNITY HANDBOOK

for the LOWER & UPPER

SIMILKAMEEN INDIAN BANDS



Updated 2013 Edition

Navigating Health Care

COMMUNITY HANDBOOK

***for the* LOWER & UPPER SIMILKAMEEN INDIAN BANDS**

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This Handbook contains updated information about health services and resources available to members of the Lower and Upper Similkameen Indian Bands. The Handbook is part of the *Navigating Health Care* project designed to increase our knowledge and use of mainstream health care.

Background: The Navigating Health Care project was undertaken by the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) with initial funding from the Aboriginal Health Transition Fund to increase the capacity of Okanagan people to access existing health services and act as self advocates within a context of cultural identity and practices related to health and wellness. The community workshops inform participants of their options and rights as health care consumers; provide a chance to practice effective communication with health professionals; and promote self reflection on their own health journey.

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OKANAGAN NATION HEALTH MANDATE

“To advocate for Syilx control and management of their health, programs and services”



Information can be like medicine:
It puts the powerful tools
of awareness and choice in our hands.

Aboriginal Patient Navigators (APN)

Finding our way through the health care system isn't easy. If you or a member of your family has faced health challenges, these questions probably sound familiar:

- ▶ Where do I go?
- ▶ How do I get referred?
- ▶ Who do I need to see?
- ▶ What is available?
- ▶ What does that mean?
- ▶ What happens next?

Partners in Care: Aboriginal Patient Navigators are here to help you answer these questions and find your way to the right health care services.

Your APN:

- ▶ *Knows your Band and your community*
- ▶ *Acts as a bridge between you, your family and the health care system*
- ▶ *Supports you when using hospital services or are in hospital*
- ▶ *Helps to ensure your health care needs are met as early as possible and connects you with the right health care service and/or health professional*
- ▶ *Helps with discharge planning when you are coming home from hospital*
- ▶ *Helps to ensure your health care is culturally safe*
- ▶ *Advocates for your right for traditional practices according to your requests*
- ▶ *Teaches health providers about cultural safety and educates them about accommodating traditional health practices*

You don't have to go it alone. Call your APN.

**Aboriginal Patient Navigator:
South Okanagan Indian Band**

Phone: (250) 770-3533

Cell: (250) 488-1230

LSIB Community Nurse

Your Band Nurse (also called a Community Health Nurse) provides nursing care to you and your family members in your home and/or your Wellness Centre. Your Band Nurse knows about mainstream health care programs and services and can help you to find and use these services. With your permission, she can talk with other health professionals about your health care concerns.

The Lower Similkameen Band Nurse

GWEN BAILEY

700-3rd St, Keremeos

Phone: (250) 499-3000

Health Centres in the Lower & Upper Similkameen

The health centre in Keremeos supports various health care programs and health professionals. Services include:

- Child, adult and family health services,
- Home care,
- GPs.

South Similkameen Health Centre

Location: 700-3rd St, Keremeos

Phone: (250) 499-3000

Hours vary depending on service

Services include: Child, adult and family health services,
home care, GPs

Walk-in Clinics in Lower & Upper Similkameen

Walk-in clinics tend to have longer hours and be open on one day during the weekend. These clinics provide easy access to a doctor who can refer you fairly quickly, if needed, to see a specialist (e.g. a psychiatrist, an orthopedic surgeon, etc). Doctors in clinics can do all the same things as a family doctor, but you may see someone different on every visit and have to re-tell your story.

Clinics in the Upper & Lower Similkameen			
Name:	Phone:	Location:	Hours:
Cascade Medical Centre	(250) 295-3228	77 Billiter St, Princeton, BC	9:00 am – 4:30 pm Monday - Friday
Vermilion Medical Centre	(250) 295-6331	131 Vermilion Avenue Princeton, BC	9:00 am – 5:00 pm Tuesday - Friday

Family Doctors in Lower & Upper Similkameen

Family doctors are also called General Practitioners or GPs. Seeing the same doctor helps to build a relationship over time and avoids having to keep re-telling your health and family history as you will likely have to do at a walk-in clinic.

Family doctors can:

- ▶ Diagnose & treat a health condition, illness or disease
- ▶ Provide medical advice
- ▶ Request tests – x-rays, scans, blood work etc.
- ▶ Prescribe medications
- ▶ Request medical supplies or equipment through (NIHB)
- ▶ Make referrals to see medical specialists

For an up-to-date list of family doctors near you who are taking on new patients, ask your Community Health Nurse.

Mental Health & Addiction Services

Mental health and addiction services provide **confidential** assessment, support and intervention for adults and seniors who are experiencing a mental illness or struggling with substance abuse. Individual and group counseling and therapy are available in a place that you and your family feel most comfortable. **You do not need a doctor's referral.**

To use these services, call to make an appointment or walk-in. You do not need a referral. You will be asked to sign a consent form.

It is important to identify yourself as a member of a First Nation – you will receive services quicker, easier and are welcome to bring a family or community member with you.

Keremeos & Princeton Mental Health & Addictions Services

South Similkameen Health Centre

700-3rd St. Keremeos

Phone: (250) 499-3029

EMERGENCY SERVICES

For people in emotional distress who need immediate help

Phone: 911

or go to your local Emergency Department

BC Suicide Distress Line (Toll Free) 1-800-784-2433

Not sure? Ask your Aboriginal Patient Navigator.

In-Patient Care: Short-term in-patient psychiatric care is available at Penticton Hospital.

Penticton Regional Hospital
550 Carmi Avenue
Phone: (250) 492-4000

Princeton General Hospital
98 Ridgewood Way
Phone: (250) 295-3233

South Okanagan General Hospital
7139 362nd Ave. Oliver
Phone: (250) 498-5000

LSIB & USIB Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program

As members of the National Native Alcohol & Drug Abuse Program (NNADAP), LSIB and USIB provide support, treatment and crisis intervention. The program also connects people with other services and programs.

LSIB Drug and Alcohol Worker

EMORY GABRIEL
Phone: (250) 499-5528 (Band Office)

USIB Drug and Alcohol Worker

JERRY FRAZER
Phone: (250) 295-3356 (Band Office)

Okanagan Nation Response Team (ONRT)

This team of Okanagan Nation front line workers is able to respond to crises in community when they occur. The ONRT also delivers educational workshops.



The Team is built on the principles of Okanagans helping Okanagans. It respects and honors the gifts of the people who are already here, responding to the community by making themselves available to support others in times of crisis. Each community has a protocol agreement with the ONA in which there are designated staff members who can access the Team. When a community experiences a critical incident or crisis, the identified community staff member appointed can invite the team to assist their community.

Səx^w kənxit əlx: “Assisting individuals and communities to find healthy paths.”

OKANAGAN NATION RESPONSE TEAM

KIM MONTGOMERY-WAARDENBURG, MSW, RSW

Toll Free 1-866-662-9609 Email: criticalresponse@syilx.org

Okanagans helping Okanagans.

Community Care: Rehabilitation

Occupational Therapy (OT)

- ▶ OTs help people to be as able as possible in activities of daily living - like eating, dressing, toileting, showering, driving, hobbies and work activities.
- ▶ This may involve education, treatment, and the use of special equipment.
- ▶ OTs can recommend and obtain funding for medical supplies and equipment through NIHB
- ▶ You do not need to be referred by a doctor

To learn more about Occupational Therapy or to find an OT near your community, go to: www.cotbc.org or phone: Toll-free 1-866-386-6822.

Physiotherapy (PT)

- ▶ Physiotherapists are experts in how a person's movement and physical function is impaired due to an injury, disease or disorder.
- ▶ PTs help people to improve, restore or maintain their physical fitness and independence.
- ▶ PTs can recommend and obtain funding for supplies and equipment through NIHB.

To learn more about P.T. or to find one near your community go to: www.cptbc.org or phone: 604-730-9193.

Respiratory Therapy (RT)

- ▶ RTs monitor, assess and treat people with breathing (respiratory) problems and disorders (eg. pneumonia, chronic obstructive airways disease etc).
- ▶ RTs can recommend and obtain funding for oxygen and other medical supplies for breathing problems (eg. puffers).

To find out more about OT, PT or RT

Lower Similkameen Community Services Society

South Similkameen Health Centre

700-3 St Keremeos

Phone: (250) 499-2352

Monday – Friday 8 am – 12 pm

Homecare Equipment & Supplies

An occupational therapist (OT) and physiotherapist (PT) can come onto the reserve and do an assessment with a person and their family members to help decide what type of rehabilitation equipment and supplies are necessary.

A nurse or doctor can also recommend certain medical supplies.

Medical supplies & equipment currently funded through NIHB include:

- ▶ Prosthetic limbs
- ▶ Oxygen therapy equipment
- ▶ Hearing aids
- ▶ Walking aids
- ▶ Custom made footwear
- ▶ Toileting & bathing aids/equipment
- ▶ Dressing & feeding aids
- ▶ Wheelchair cushions & parts

Medical equipment **NOT** currently funded through NIHB includes:

- ▶ Scooters
- ▶ Hospital beds, mattresses and bedding
- ▶ Permanently fixed equipment (e.g., grab bars, ceiling tracks)
- ▶ Lift chairs Pressure relief mattresses
- ▶ for lifts, stair lifts, etc. that are fixed to a wall/ceiling)

If funding is not available through NIHB, these health professionals can help you seek funding or short-term loan through other non-government organizations.

For current NIHB funding guidelines visit Health Canada:

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/branch-dirgen/fnihb-dgspni/nihbd-dssna/index-eng.php>

To request an assessment from an OT or PT contact:

Lower Similkameen Community Services Society

South Similkameen Health Centre

700-3 St Keremeos

Phone: (250) 499-2352

Monday – Friday 8 am – 12 pm

As we age, we all need a little help.

Home & Community Care for Seniors

Seniors living on reserve can receive **home care nursing**, and **home support services** through the Band. Contact your Band Nurse for more information. Everyone 65 years and older is considered a senior in mainstream health care. Mainstream 'Home and Community Care' programs are available to First Nations living on reserve to help people over 65 years of age to stay independent in their own homes for as long as possible.

These programs include:

- ▶ **Rehabilitation Therapists** (Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist etc)
- ▶ **Respite Programs**
 - ❖ Provide caregivers temporary relief from caring for a friend or family member
- ▶ **Adult Day Programs**
 - ❖ Support for seniors still living at home or with family who require some supports in maintaining their independence and quality of life
- ▶ **Assisted Living**
 - ❖ Apartments with 24-hour response, meals, and help with daily living activities.
- ▶ **Care in a Residential Facility**
 - ❖ 24-hr nursing & personal care
 - ❖ Short-term for respite, convalescence, palliative (end of life) care
 - ❖ Long-term stays

More Information: Seniors, family members and caregivers can contact their nearest Home & Community Care office to learn more about the programs available in their community as well as to discuss eligibility.

Home and Community Care

Oliver, BC (250) 498-5080

Osoyoos, BC (250) 495-6433

Penticton, BC (250) 770-3477

S. Similkameen, BC (250) 499-3029

Summerland, BC (250) 404-8060

A description of services, information on eligibility and assessment for eligibility is also available at: <http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/hcc/index.html>

Hospital-based Services

Interior Health has different types of hospitals that provide different levels of services and care. Which hospital you go to will depend on the type of health care services you require, and this decision is usually made when talking with a doctor.

Community Hospitals: Smaller local hospitals with basic in- and out-patient services.

Regional Hospitals: Larger hospitals in the major cities of Vernon, Penticton, Kelowna and Kamloops that offer the most specialized level of services.

Penticton Regional Hospital

This regional hospital provides services to all the residents of the South Okanagan:

- 24-hour emergency services
- Diagnostic imaging (eg. magnetic resonance imaging/MRI)
- Specialists including - obstetrics & gynecology, coronary care, medicine, pediatrics, gastroenterology, oncology, rheumatology, surgery, and psychiatry
- Rehabilitation services – occupational therapy & physiotherapy
- Pharmacy



DON'T FORGET!
**Your Aboriginal Patient Navigator is there to help
when you need to use hospital services.**