

# NAVIGATING HEALTH CARE

COMMUNITY HANDBOOK

*for the* OKANAGAN INDIAN BAND



Updated 2013 Edition

## **Navigating Health Care**

### **COMMUNITY HANDBOOK**

### ***for the OKANAGAN INDIAN BAND***

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**This Handbook contains updated information about health services and resources available to members of the Okanagan Indian Band. 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.

#### **Okanagan Nation Alliance**

101 – 3535 Old Okanagan Hwy

Westbank, British Columbia

Canada, V4T 3J6

Tel: (250) 707-0095

Website: [www.OkanaganNation.com](http://www.OkanaganNation.com)



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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:  
Okanagan Indian Band**

**Phone: (250) 868 2230**

**Cell: (250) 309 9436**

## OKIB 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.

### Okanagan Indian Band: Nurse

**SHARON CULLEN**

Phone: (250) 542-5094

Location: Health Centre

Tuesday-Friday 8:00am -4:30pm

## OKIB Health Centre

Adult and Elder programs and services currently available through the Health Centre include:

- ▶ Dietician
- ▶ Home & Community Care
- ▶ Mental health crisis management
- ▶ Addictions prevention & support
- ▶ HIV/AIDS prevention
- ▶ Foot care
- ▶ Vision care

### Health Centre

Phone: (250) 542-5094

Monday to Friday 8.00am – 4.30pm (closed 12-1pm)

Website: [www.okib.ca/departments/health\\_care](http://www.okib.ca/departments/health_care)

**Health care close to home.**

## Walk-in Clinics in Vernon

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.

Walk-In Clinics in Vernon – No appointments necessary			
Name:	Phone:	Location:	Hours:
Gartree Medical Clinic	(250) 545-9112	Vernon Square Mall	9am-6pm Mon-Sun
Vernon Family Doctors Medical Clinic	(250) 545-8332	Fruit Union Plaza	9am-9pm Mon-Sun
North Okanagan Medical Clinic	(250) 545-8338	2 <sup>nd</sup> floor Superstore 5001 Anderson Way	9am-9pm Mon-Sun

## Family Doctors in Vernon

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.

## Vernon Downtown Primary Care Centre

This centre offers confidential health services to anyone needing health care. It is located in the **First Nations Friendship Centre**.

The centre is staffed by:

- medical office assistant,
- nurse practitioner,
- part-time doctors, and
- clinical coordinator/case manager.

Services available include:

- Treatment for illness and injury, wound care, chronic disease management (e.g. diabetes) and advice on diet & nutrition.
- The nurse and doctor know about the other health care services in your area & can refer you to the right specialist, health professional and/or health care program.

With the NOYFSS Street Clinic, this centre also offers:

- HIV/AIDS prevention, testing, & education
- Adult immunization for prevention of illness
- Hepatitis A, B, & C testing & education
- Sexually transmitted disease screening, treatment, and education
- Reproductive health services, including pregnancy testing and contraceptives

### Vernon Downtown Primary Care Centre

Phone: (250) 541-1097

Monday to Friday 9am-4pm (closed noon to 1pm)

At the First Nations Friendship Centre  
2902 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vernon

**A good first stop for health care services.**



## Vernon First Nations Friendship Centre

A range of health programs for adults and Elders are available at this Native Friendship Centre. Programs include:

- ▶ Addiction counseling
- ▶ Alcohol & drug programs
- ▶ Diabetes program
- ▶ Elders program
- ▶ Mental health programs
- ▶ Pregnancy outreach
- ▶ Trauma therapy

### The Friendship Centre

2902 29th Ave, Vernon

Phone: (250) 542-1247

Monday to Friday 8.30am-4.30pm (closed 12-1pm)

## Vernon Métis Community Services Society

Métis Community Services has some health programs that are available for all adults and Elders of Aboriginal ancestry.

### Vernon Metis Community Services Society

Location: 2913B-29<sup>th</sup> Ave, Vernon

Phone: (250) 545-0350

**You don't need an appointment – just come by.**

## Pleasant Valley Health Centre in Armstrong

The health services available at this health centre located in Armstrong include:

- ▶ X-ray examinations
- ▶ Diabetes education program
- ▶ Mental health & addictions services
- ▶ Pregnancy information & referral
- ▶ Residential care services

### Pleasant Valley Health Centre

Phone: (250) 546-4700

Hours: Monday to Friday 8.30am-4.30pm

3800 Patten Drive, Armstrong

Not sure? Ask your Aboriginal Patient Navigator.

## 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.**

The Vernon Mental Health Team provides community-based services for adults and seniors who are experiencing a mental illness. Individual and group counseling and therapy are available.

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.

### Vernon Mental Health Services

Phone: (250) 549-5737

messages may be left on voicemail

Vernon Health Unit

1440-14<sup>th</sup> Ave, Vernon

**In-Patient Care** – A 17-bed in-patient psychiatric unit is located on the main floor at Vernon Jubilee Hospital. It provides mental health and addictions services from a team of specialists for people living in the North Okanagan.

### 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

## Alcohol & Drug Abuse Services

Individual, group and family counseling services are available for adults who have concerns about their substance abuse OR are affected by the substance abuse of a loved one. These services are funded through Interior Health and are available to everyone.

The Alcohol & Drug services at these location are funded through Interior Health and are open to everyone:

### **Vernon Health Unit**

1440-14<sup>th</sup> Ave., Vernon

**Phone: (250) 549-5737**

### **Whitevalley Community Resources**

2114 Shuswap Ave, Lumby

**Phone: (250) 547-8866**

### **Pleasant Valley Health Centre**

3800 Patten Drive, Armstrong

**Phone: (250) 546-4700**

Hours: 8.30am-4.30pm Mon to Fri

## OKIB Drug & Alcohol Program

This has expanded over the years to include other addictions besides drug and alcohol. Mental health is an important component of the addiction program. A large component is family support and crisis intervention.

### OKIB Alcohol & Drug Program

**Gary Bonneau**

Addictions Support Worker

**Lane Brewer**

Addictions Support Worker

Phone: (250) 542-4328

## 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<sup>w</sup> 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](mailto:criticalresponse@syilx.org)

## 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](http://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](http://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**

**Community Rehabilitation**

Vernon Jubilee Hospital  
2101 32<sup>nd</sup> St, Vernon

**Phone: (250) 558-1200 (ask for local 1730)**

## 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:

### Community Rehabilitation

Vernon Jubilee Hospital  
2101 32 St, Vernon

Phone: (250) 558-1200 (local 1730)

**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.

### Vernon Home & Community Care Office

Phone: (250) 545-9288

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

## Elders Society

Each week the Nkampulux Elders Society meet to share a meal, socialize, speak the Native language, and share current and past events. Assistance is provided with transportation. For more information contact the Elders Liaison.



## 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 that offer a basic range of 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.

### Vernon Jubilee Hospital

This regional hospital provides hospital services to all the residents of the North Okanagan. The services available include:

- 24-hour emergency services
- Diagnostic imaging (eg. magnetic resonance imaging/MRI)
- Specialists including - medicine, surgery, psychiatry, maternity and continuing care
- Community rehabilitation services – occupational therapy & physiotherapy

#### Vernon Jubilee Hospital

2101 32<sup>nd</sup> St, Vernon

Phone: (250) 558-1200

Standard Visiting Hours: 2pm-8pm

**DON'T FORGET!**

**Your Aboriginal Patient Navigator is there to help when you need to use hospital services.**