



Guidelines Indigenous Acknowledgement

This document outlines how and when to use the Indigenous acknowledgement at Kingston Health Sciences Centre



KHSC Inclusion Steering Council
Land Acknowledgment Working Group – Fall 2022

Background

The Inclusion Steering Council (ISC) for KHSC was established in 2021 to further the journey to address the gaps and needs toward achieving the overall goal of inclusion, which inherently involves improving diversity, equity, access to opportunities, acknowledgement, recognition, and celebration of our people, regardless of who they are or where they are coming from.

People with a desire to join the steering council, completed an Expression of Interest where they also identified various potential working groups that they would be willing to participate in – and this is how the Land Acknowledgement Working Group was formed in August of 2022.

A working group is designed to be short-term, doing focused work with specific outcomes.

Land Acknowledgement Working Group Members:

- Melissa Colbourne
- Kendra Goodman
- Gillian Jackson
- Mary Myers (Lead)
- Dionne Nolan

Approach

Our goal was to create a land acknowledgement for use at KHSC along with guidelines of how/when/if to use. At the kickoff meeting held in mid August 2022, we established an approach and committed to completing the task within 8-10 weeks.

At a high level, our approach was first to **review current thinking**, do our own **research and review the approach of other organizations** around land acknowledgments and share amongst the group. The second part of our approach was to **use dialogue, stakeholder engagement, and other research methods** to create an appropriate approach for KHSC. The third part speaks more to implementation where we will determine required resources and develop a communication plan to launch what we have created.

Recognizing that other like and local organizations have put effort in establishing meaningful acknowledgements, we drew our inspiration from these works – **building on the work of others** versus starting from nothing. We reviewed the acknowledgments from the City of Kingston, Loyalist Township, Queens University, other universities and healthcare organizations or services both close to home and further away. Some of the working group members were part of the groups that created the acknowledgements for some of the more local organizations and communities.

The ask of the group prior to having our formal meetings was to circulate and share resources and information – any exemplars or dissatisfiers – for review and discussion. This primed our first two meetings where we brainstormed and spent time defining what we want this to be and what we don't want this to be – and then documenting our thoughts. The next week we started a draft and worked on a shared document that we refined and distilled over time. The group had formed a first draft that members were **to review with others, with their communities, with language speakers, with other stakeholders, including senior leadership, for testing and validating**¹ – and we took feedback and worked further to refine the statement. Once we had the long form we focused on how and when to use – creating a shorter form and identifying moments for use for KHSC.

Please contact the working group lead if you require further details on stakeholder engagement – inclusion@kingstonhsc.ca

Indigenous Acknowledgement

Land acknowledgments are often well intentioned and there is a growing prevalence of land acknowledgements used to demonstrate respect for the land, and in Canada, they have typically been connected as an action towards reconciliation. While not listed in the Truth and Reconciliation Committee's 94 Calls – this is one way to raise awareness and move towards dialogue and action.

Here are the calls to action that relate to health care and the working group and stakeholders felt it was of the utmost importance to integrate these into the KHSC acknowledgement as a way of demonstrating in a meaningful way the organization's commitment to indigenous peoples and to truth and reconciliation.

CALLS TO ACTION ON HEALTH

18. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to acknowledge that the current state of Aboriginal health in Canada is a direct result of previous Canadian government policies, including residential schools, and to recognize and implement the health-care rights of Aboriginal people as identified in international law, constitutional law, and under the Treaties.
19. We call upon the federal government, in consultation with Aboriginal peoples, to establish measurable goals to identify and close the gaps in health outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities, and to publish annual progress reports and assess longterm trends. Such efforts would focus on indicators such as: infant mortality, maternal health, suicide, mental health, addictions, life expectancy, birth rates, infant and child health issues, chronic diseases, illness and injury incidence, and the availability of appropriate health services.
20. In order to address the jurisdictional disputes concerning Aboriginal people who do not reside on reserves, we call upon the federal government to recognize, respect, and address the distinct health needs of the Métis, Inuit, and off-reserve Aboriginal peoples.
21. We call upon the federal government to provide sustainable funding for existing and new Aboriginal healing centres to address the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual harms caused by residential schools, and to ensure that the funding of healing centres in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories is a priority.
22. We call upon those who can effect change within the Canadian health-care system to recognize the value of Aboriginal healing practices and use them in the treatment of Aboriginal patients in collaboration with Aboriginal healers and Elders where requested by Aboriginal patients.
23. We call upon all levels of government to:
 - i. Increase the number of Aboriginal professionals working in the health care field.
 - ii. Ensure the retention of Aboriginal health-care providers in Aboriginal communities.
 - iii. Provide cultural competency training for all healthcare professionals.
24. We call upon medical and nursing schools in Canada to require all students to take a course dealing with Aboriginal health issues, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, and Indigenous teachings and practices. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.



Truth and
Reconciliation
Commission of Canada

These are the health highlights from the
2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's 94 Recommendations and Calls to Action.
The complete report can be found at: www.trc.ca

A land or Indigenous acknowledgement is something that a non-Indigenous person or visiting Indigenous person may do.

A welcome to territory is something an Indigenous person may do when on their home territory to welcome guests.

Preparing to Say/Use our KHSC Indigenous Acknowledgement

To be meaningful and respectful, an acknowledgement needs to be intentional so the listener hears the giving of thanks, the consideration for the individual and collective roles in truth and reconciliation, and how relationships between Indigenous people and communities and the rest of the country are being built. You can make it meaningful and respectful by preparing in advance. Here are some ideas to help you do this:

- Practice pronouncing some of the words that may be new to you:
 - Anishinaabeg [Ah-nish-ih-nah'-beg]
 - Haudenosaunee [Hoe-den-o-shown-ee]
 - Tyendinaga [Tie-in-da-neigh-ga]
 - Katarokwi [Ga-da-ra-gway]
 - Weeneebayko [Wii-knee-bay-coo]
 - Greetings: Shé: kon [Say go], Aanii [Ah knee], Wacheya [waa-chee-ya], Kwey Kwey [Kway Kway], Tanashi [Tun'shay]
 - Thank you: Nya:wen [Newo-wah], Miigwetch [Meeg-wetch], Marci [Mar-cee]
- Prepare your own addition to the acknowledgement:
 - consider adding in your own greeting
 - add in a sentence about what this acknowledgement means to you and the work you do
 - include additional actions you or your teams are taking in an effort towards reconciliation.

Remember, the best acknowledgements are personal, authentic, meaningful and action-oriented.

See the Resource page at the end of this document for some additional inspiration.

When and How to Use

The full Indigenous Acknowledgement should be used as an opening statement in the following gatherings, meeting and/or events:

- Formal organization wide meetings (e.g., Staff Town hall; Portfolio meetings, AGMs)
- Opening to Board meetings, All-Leader meetings, special events, staff meetings
 - Say full acknowledgement at first meeting of the year and alternate one at subsequent meetings within the year.
- Orientations: Corporate; Resident; Student
 - Include in welcome packages
 - Add to agendas
- Opening to other special events, workshops, and conferences including committee meetings and professional development sessions
- Add to websites (internal and external)
- Email signatures (including official emails to all students)

The full acknowledgement **takes less than three minutes to read** so can easily be incorporated in full for most virtual and in-person meetings or sessions.

The KHSC Indigenous Acknowledgement

***Shé: kon [Say go], Aanii [Ah knee], Wacheya [waa-chee-ya], Kwey Kwey [Kway Kway],
Tanashi [Tun'shay] Greetings
<Add your greeting>***

We begin by acknowledging that Kingston Health Sciences Centre is located on the ancestral lands and waters of the Anishinaabeg [Ah-nish-ih-nah'-beg] and Haudenosaunee [Hoe-den-o-shown-ee]. We also serve a wider geographical area that encompasses many Indigenous communities including Tyendinaga, Katarokwi as well as communities within the Weeneebayko Area Health Authority.

We acknowledge and welcome the presence of all Indigenous Peoples, including the Métis, Inuit, and other First Nations who also make this place home. The lands we are on today are recognized in the Two Row Wampum, Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, Treaty 27, and the Crawford Purchase.

To acknowledge this territory is to recognize its longer history, one predating the establishment of the earliest European colonies. It is also to acknowledge this territory's significance for the Indigenous Peoples who lived, and continue to live, upon it and whose practices and spiritualities were and are tied to the land and continue to develop.

We recognize the past and present systemic harms committed against Indigenous Peoples throughout Canada. These atrocities have resulted in continual intergenerational trauma and are enabled by racist attitudes and imperialist and colonial ideologies. They include the dispossession of Indigenous Peoples from their ancestral lands, and acts of cultural genocide by the Crown, the government, and the churches.

As we partner in care, discovery, and learning to achieve better health outcomes for our communities. KHSC is committed to actively advocating for, and acting upon, the Truth and Reconciliation Committee's Calls to Action on Health. We commit to moving forward together in the spirit of partnership, respect, compassion, excellence, and innovation. We will do this by learning about histories, Indigenous languages, customs, traditions, and working to integrate these into the care we provide. As a colonial-based institution, we are accountable to Indigenous peoples to make the promise of Truth and Reconciliation real in our communities.

We invite you to reflect on this acknowledgement and your own accountabilities to advance the process of Reconciliation. We are grateful for the opportunity to meet here, and we thank all the generations of people who care for these lands and waters.

<Add your thank you>

Nya:wen [Newo-wah], Miigwech [Meeg-wetch], Marci [Mar-cee] Thank You

Alternative Formats for Use in Print and Electronic Communications

Use the alternate format in the following situations and formats:

- Formal meeting print agendas
- Email signatures (including official emails to all students)
- Clinical education agendas and within learning guides
- Communication templates
- Job postings and related recruitment materials
- Newsletters
- Banner on external and internal web sites
- Wall banners and posters
- Add to websites (internal and external)

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Note: future evolution would have the above translated into multiple languages.

Resources

Here are some additional resources you can use to inspire and educate yourself further:

Kingston and area:

<https://www.queensu.ca/indigenous/ways-knowing/land-acknowledgement>

<https://www.cityofkingston.ca/explore/culture-history/history/indigenous-people>

<https://www.loyalist.ca/en/living-in-loyalist/land-acknowledgement-statement.aspx>

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/KACINKingstonAboriginal/>

<https://kingstonindigenoulanguage.ca/>

<https://tto-kenhteke.org/>

Additional Resources to Explore:

https://teaching.usask.ca/curriculum/indigenous_voices/land-acknowledgements/module.php

<https://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/redrawing-the-lines-1.4973363/i-regret-it-hayden-king-on-writing-ryerson-university-s-territorial-acknowledgement-1.4973371>

<https://native-land.ca/resources/territory-acknowledgement/>


<https://guides.library.ubc.ca/distance-research-xwi7xwa/landacknowledgements>

<https://indigenous.utoronto.ca/about/land-acknowledgement/>

<https://yfile.news.yorku.ca/2019/01/14/new-video-explores-the-importance-of-understanding-the-land-acknowledgement/>

<https://www.erudit.org/fr/revues/onhistory/2020-v112-n2-onhistory05560/1072237ar/>

<https://digitalcommons.osgoode.yorku.ca/sclr/vol88/iss1/2/>



“We must continually work to listen and learn from Indigenous persons’ lived experiences as we work to respect and support not only their physical needs, but also their emotional, cultural and spiritual needs now and into the future.”

Dr. David Pichora – President and CEO