

## **2024 Health Director Professional Development Forum**

### **March 6 & 7, 2024, Delta Hotels by Marriott Vancouver Downtown**

#### **What We Heard**

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Health Directors were welcomed to the traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̅əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, for the first Provincial Health Director Professional Development Forum on March 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>. In between sessions, the Forum provided the opportunity for Health Directors to gather together, share meals, and network with other Health Directors from across the province to share best practices, and discuss the problems they are facing in community.

Over the first day and a half, 18 different professional development sessions were offered which each built capacity in Health Directors personally, professionally, and on a community level. The personal capacity building sessions included a traditional medicines workshop, a discussion on taking charge of your own wellness, and an introduction to somatic trauma therapy. Professional capacity building sessions covered leadership and negotiation training, a human resources workshop, and a suicide prevention certification. Finally, the Health Directors built community capacity through discussions on how to create community health and wellness plans, preparing responses to the toxic drug emergency and others, and conversations on the collective wisdom of undoing & unlearning in a colonial health system.

Following the professional development sessions, the Health Directors were invited to participate in an engagement session, which sought to gather the wisdom of our Members on each of the 4 Engagement Priority areas: (1) Mental Wellness: Toxic Drug Supply & Overdose Crisis, (2) Traditional Wellness: Cultural Safety and Humility, (3) FNHA Health Benefits: Medical Transportation, and (4) Social Determinants of Health: Anti-Indigenous Specific Racism.

Overall, the Forum was a great success, and the results from our evaluations survey found that 95% of participants felt that the event met their expectations, fully (74%) or partly (21%). Building off of the success of this year, we are hoping to be able to continue to host an annual Professional Development Forum for our Health Directors. As one of the mandates of the First Nations Health Directors Association, we believe that investing in the professional development of our Members directly translates to an investment in communities.