

Measurement and Monitoring of Cultural Safety Interventions



Christi Belcourt, *Reverence for Life*, 2013, acrylic on canvas, collection of the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health.

Issue

Anti-Indigenous racism is widespread in Canada's health systems and results in avoidance of medical care, traumatic experiences and negative health outcomes, including preventable deaths. Despite the serious consequences, there are no national measurement guidelines or national standards to facilitate comparisons, track progress and help drive change.

The measurement of cultural safety will support improvements in health systems and the health outcomes of Indigenous Peoples through enhanced insight and accountability. Ongoing monitoring will identify where gaps exist to advance improvement where it is most needed. As stated in CIHI's 2021 report [Measuring Cultural Safety in Health Systems](#), the process of developing cultural safety measurement must be accomplished in a culturally safe way — led by Indigenous Peoples and in accordance with Indigenous data sovereignty.

Scope

CIHI is collaborating with First Nations, Inuit and Métis advisors and partners to co-design a tool that measures interventions that lead to culturally safe care. The aim is to assess the extent to which interventions that address anti-Indigenous racism are being implemented (see the section on health system interventions in [Measuring Cultural Safety in Health Systems](#)). This tool will capture baseline data and enable ongoing monitoring of progress in participating health service organizations (e.g., hospitals; organizations that provide primary care, home care and long-term care).

This project builds on foundational work with First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples, including the [development of a cultural safety measurement framework](#), the [pilot testing of the framework](#), [standards development](#) and [national dialogues](#). Concurrent efforts are underway to develop a national set of indicators for cultural safety measurement, to [collaboratively address systemic racism](#) and to [create national awareness and change](#).

Work on this initiative — a literature review and engagement with subject matter experts — commenced in spring 2023 and will continue through spring 2024. The tool and associated guidance resource will be tested during this time to enable refinement and planning for a future pilot. All work will be co-designed with Indigenous advisors and partners, and a Cultural Safety Measurement Working Group.

Next steps

Findings from the literature review and engagement will be published on CIHI's website in spring 2024. Additional engagement, combined with expanded pilot testing using the refined cultural safety measurement resources, is expected to take place in 2024–2025.

CIHI's work on cultural safety

First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples have the right to access culturally safe health care that is responsive to their world views and knowledge systems. Cultural safety in health systems can be defined only by the Indigenous person receiving care. Culturally safe care does not profile or discriminate but is experienced as respectful and safe and allows meaningful communication and service.ⁱ

The Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) provides comparable and actionable data and information that are used to accelerate improvements in health care, health system performance and population health across Canada.

CIHI is on a journey, guided by what we have learned, and continue to learn, from Indigenous Peoples. Our work is grounded in cultural safety and humility, respectful engagement, and Indigenous-driven processes and partnerships. We all have a role to play to address anti-Indigenous racism in our health systems.

CIHI is committed to advancing cultural safety and humility and recognizes that our role is to support accountability and transparency through better measurement. For more information on this collaborative work with First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples, refer to our [website](#) or contact us at IndigenousHealth@cihi.ca.

i. Canadian Institute for Health Information. [Measuring Cultural Safety in Health Systems](#). Ottawa, ON: CIHI; 2021.



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