



PUBLIC RESOURCE

Indigenous Cultural Safety, Cultural Humility, and Anti-racism

About the artist

CPSBC thanks artist Andrew Williams, who created the original illustrations used in this public resource. Andrew is part of the Raven clan in Old Masset on Haida Gwaii. He is a self-taught artist working with argillite, silver, gold, and other materials and is well known for his breathtaking inlay work. Andrew Williams is greatly influenced by Gary Minaker-Russ as well as by Christian White.

Your voice matters

If you do not feel like you were provided culturally safe care, you have the right to speak up without fear of consequences. Contact CPSBC to learn about the complaints process.

Email: inquiries@cpsbc.ca

Phone: 1-800-461-3008

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1. Self-reflective practice

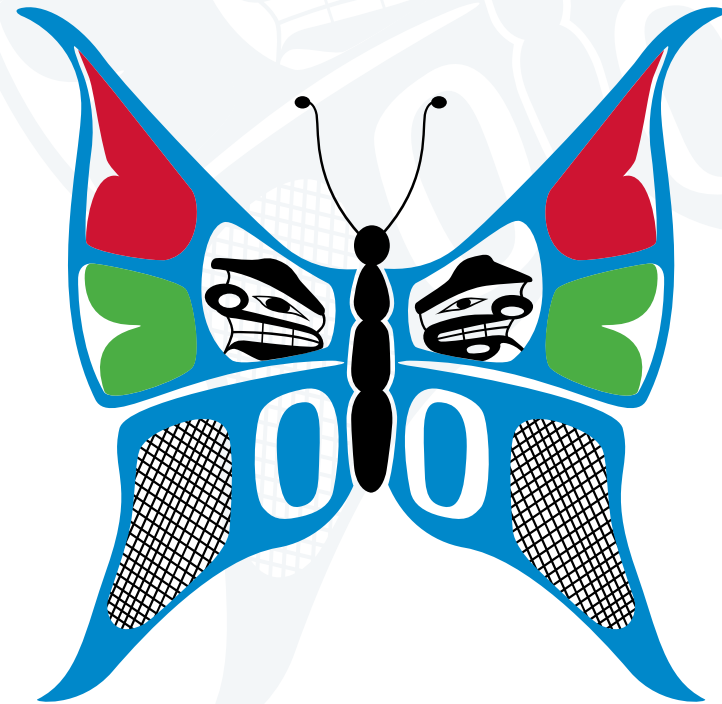
Reflection helps build trust and respect from the very first interaction.

What it means:

Your physician or surgeon reflects on how their own values, experiences, and cultural background influence their relationship with you. They approach this reflection as a way to build trust, strengthen connection, and support healing.

Physicians and surgeons will:

- Honour the uniqueness of individuals and remove assumptions and stereotypes.
- Acknowledge how their role and beliefs can affect the way they engage with you.
- Ask for feedback and look at how their actions and words may affect your care.



The butterfly is a symbol of transformation and regeneration. Because of its ability to change itself so thoroughly, it can be viewed as representing transition, grace, and hope.

2. Building knowledge through education

When your physician or surgeon learns, you are met with understanding.

What it means:

Physicians and surgeons commit to learning about Indigenous Peoples, local Nations, and the ongoing impacts of colonialism and racism on health. This learning supports safer, more trusting relationships and honours the histories and experiences that shape how people engage with care.

Physicians and surgeons will:

- Seek out and engage with Indigenous cultural-safety learning, committing to continuous growth and learning.
- Learn how racism against Indigenous Peoples affects their access to health care, especially for Indigenous women, girls, and gender-diverse people.
- Recognize that seeking out health-care services may not make you feel safe, and work with you to understand what safety means for you.
- Learn about the local Nations and honour the diversity of Indigenous communities.
- Take responsibility for their own learning so you can focus on your care, not on teaching or justifying your experiences.



The bear is a respected teacher, known for strength and leadership. Your physician or surgeon takes the same approach to learning.

3. Anti-racist practice

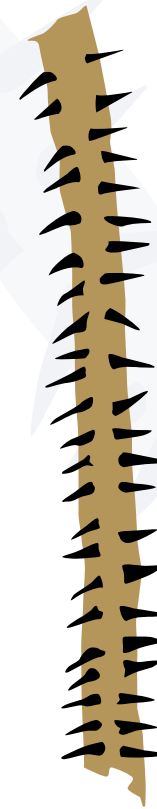
Anti-racism means action, not just words.

What it means:

Physicians and surgeons speak up and act when racism or discrimination occurs, and work to remove barriers that cause harm.

Physicians and surgeons will:

- Take racism seriously and respond right away with action.
- Model restorative, culturally safe behaviour within the care team and advocate for learning that supports safer, more respectful spaces.
- Support you if you face unfair treatment, helping you feel protected and valued.
- Offer safe, respectful ways to share concerns, so your voice can be heard without fear.
- Reflect on their own actions and work to challenge racism at every level, helping create a health system where everyone can feel safe and respected.



The devil's club is a symbol of protection and warding off evil. The plants' sharp spines are seen as a shield against negative energy and evil spirits.

4. Creating safe health-care experiences

Safety is created when the whole person is honoured.

What it means:

Safe care respects your physical, emotional, spiritual, and cultural needs. It supports trust, healing, and connection.

Physicians and surgeons will:

- Welcome you with respect and compassion, acknowledging your cultural identity.
- Give you time and space to speak, ask questions, and share your experience.
- Honour the role of family or support people, including larger or extended families.
- Recognize and include Indigenous cultural traditions, values, and practices in the care plan, such as ceremonies and customs for illness, birth, and death, when possible.
- Care for your whole self—mind, body, emotions, spirit, and culture—and respect Indigenous healing or cultural practices that support your wellness.



The salmon is the source of life and the provider of food for all animals and humans. When salmon are seen in pairs, it symbolizes good luck.

Salmon can represent renewal, continuity and prosperity in the context of health care, where Indigenous patients feel they can heal and thrive in the environment. It reflects a shift away from systems that have caused harm and working towards ones that nurture growth, dignity, and trust.

5. Person-led care

Good care is built on respect, communication, and genuine relationship.

What it means:

You are at the center of your care. Your physician or surgeon will work with you to understand your health and wellness goals and make decisions together that reflect your needs and values.

Physicians and surgeons will:

- Respectfully learn about you and understand why you are seeking care.
- Work with you, and those who may be supporting you, to identify and reach your health and wellness goals.
- Support your right to choose the care that feels best for you.
- Give you time and space to share your needs and ask questions.
- Explain your options clearly so you understand what to expect during your care.

The frog is known for its adaptability and knowledge.

The frog can traverse different worlds, just as person-led care means meeting people where they are.



6. Strengths-based and trauma-informed practice

When care honours both trauma and strength, healing can happen safely.

What it means:

Physicians and surgeons recognize that many Indigenous patients carry both strength and the weight of personal, family, and historical experiences and that each person's health-care journey is unique.

Physicians and surgeons will:

- Focus on your personal strengths to support your health and wellness goals.
- Understand that past and generational harm affects how many Indigenous people experience and move through the health system.
- Ask for your permission before any exam, test, or treatment, explaining everything clearly and respectfully.
- Recognize that past interactions with health care may bring stress or fear and create space for you to express what you need to feel safe.
- Know that healing takes time and grows through trust, care, and connection.



The hummingbird is the joyful messenger and a symbol of health. When a hummingbird appears, healing will follow.

The resilience and strength of the hummingbird reflect the strength patients carry into their health-care journey.