



ULKATCHO
FIRST NATION

November 6, 2024

Dear Ulkatcho First Nation community,

RE: Ulkatcho First Nation (UFN) Health and Wellness Evaluation Plan

We firstly wanted to acknowledge and thank everyone that attended the recent UFN Annual General Assembly. Significant work has been completed over the past 1.5 years - thank you to everyone for attending – we remain stronger together as a united distinct community.

UFN are proud sui generis from three different ancestral backgrounds: Nuxalk, Dakelh Carrier, and Tsilhqot'in. UFN has a diverse history of languages, trade and cultural activities. As we know our traditional practises were impacted by the Indian Act and its assimilation policies that resulted in years of intergenerational trauma that we still experience today.

Today, we are pleased to share the UFN Health and Wellness Evaluation Plan (2024-2027). We thank everyone that contributed to share their wisdom and insights to inform the plan.

We know that our health and wellness is at the centre of everything we do, and we must return to celebrating our successes, measuring our outcomes, and move back to a constant cycle of improvement. Your voice was essential to a plan grounded in our current realities and telling us that data is root of good health governance and self-determination. We know that UFN Health and Wellness comes in many forms, including culture, language, traditional foods, and governance. This includes the gatherings at Tanya Lake and Gatcho Lake, sports events with snowmobile races, waterskiing, and hockey, and cultural activities with mushroom picking and fire burning that we could be evaluating as part of our health and wellness moving forward. We heard loud and clear that UFN Health and Wellness must strive to a higher standard of transparency and accountability to better meets our community needs.

That's why the engagement approach was important to us, and we took the time to engage at all levels (on and off reserve) and took the plan back to community for validation and further refinement before it was finalized. The plan will also be ever green and updated annually, so our community will continue to provide input for ongoing updates and revision going forward.

We are proud to share two key assets from our evaluation engagement – one, that our community has incredible strength and resilience, and two - we cared and looked out for one another. As we think about what UFN health and wellness will look like moving forward, we can continue to remind ourselves about our remarkable strength and taking care of each other.

We lift the feedback and key priorities provided by the UFN community that included nine (9) immediate areas of focus and improvement to support the implementation of our plans:

1. Expanding support for mental health and addictions;
2. Expanding cultural activities and support;
3. Expanding community activities and events;
4. Prioritizing the completed development of a Wellness Centre and gym;
5. Enabling more Ulkatcho members to access Doctor appointments;
6. Implementing education workshops on healthy living for Ulkatcho members (adults and youth);
7. Expanding staff capacity to support increased and new services delivered to the community;
8. Reviewing, updating and enforcing Health & Wellness planning, policies and procedures, particularly the privacy and confidentiality, conflict of interest, and client communications policies and procedures; and,
9. Reviewing the governance and management structures for Ulkatcho Health & Wellness and considering a new model.

In support of this, we are happy to share that we have passed BCR 2024-74 & BCR 2024-75 that directs the UFN health and wellness teams to develop a new health governance and management structure for the health clinic, and appointment of our own UFN representatives to the First Nations Health Authority health governance tables. These decisions were based on the community engagement feedback and that we need the ongoing community advocacy at all levels and health expertise to design a health model to better meet our needs on the ground. We look forward to engaging with you all (on and off-reserve) over the next few years.

We are so proud that UFN has made significant progress in health and wellness while being unrepresented within the BC First Nations health governance levels, these includes:

1. Securing 2M to build a new wellness centre (in-progress);
2. Moving to a FNHA Block/SET agreement and developing a new evaluation plan;
3. Being chosen as a new BC First Nations Regional Data Demonstration Project (in-progress);
4. Developing a new set of health and wellness policies (final – review stage);
5. Unified UFN Chief and Council decision on implementing the nine (9) UFN health and wellness evaluation recommendations (above);
6. Implementation of a new Five-Year Capital Plan; including renovating and expanding health professional accommodations, and planning for a new health clinic; and,
7. Engagement planning underway for a new UFN health governance model for the clinic.

We could not do all this work alone. UFN has been fortunate to have many UFN post-secondary students return home in various capacities, including supporting the development of this evaluation plan. We have many community members and partners to thank, including

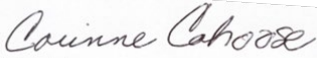
Indigenous Services Canada – Federal and BC Region and the Ulkatcho Group of Companies.
Thank you for supporting and lifting up our community in the darkest of days.

We continue to call upon and encourage all UFN post secondary students to reach out to UFN Human Resources Department (hr@ulkatcho.ca) in returning home to support our community. We need your help in transforming all aspects of our community, and not be against or divide us. We need more capacity on the ground. We are united and must remain as one community.

We are planning a community event in December 2024 to celebrate this huge accomplishment, so please keep posted.

We need you and call you home!

Chanalya,
Ulkatcho Chief and Council



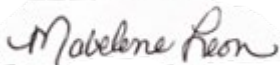
Councillor Corinne Cahoose



Chief Lynda Price



Councillor Nelson Williams Jr.



Councillor Mabelene Leon



Councillor Pamela Garner



Councillor Anthony Sims

Cc:

Interior Regional Nation Executive

Richard Jock, CEO, FNHA

Lisa Montgomery Reid, VP – Operations, Interior Region, FNHA

Al Jamal, Chair, Ulkatcho Group of Companies

Indigenous Services Canada – BC and Canada

Wilma Mack, UFN Operations Manager

Courtney Elliott, UFN Health Director