

BCANDS NATIONAL INDIGENOUS FEDERAL ACCESSIBILITY LEGISLATION

UBC LEARNING CIRCLE PRESENTATION



British Columbia Aboriginal Network
on Disability Society (BCANDS)

Who Is BCANDS

- Multiple award winning Indigenous disability and health, not for profit organization
- Incorporated in 1991
- Is the only “Stand alone” Indigenous organization of its kind in Canada



BCANDS Programs and Services

- Indigenous Disability Case Management
- Indigenous Registered Disability Savings Plan (IDSP)
- First Nations Persons with Disabilities /Monthly Nutritional Supplement (MNS)

BCANDS mission

“Advancing the unique disability and health priorities of Indigenous persons through collaboration, consultation, and the delivery of comprehensive services”.

Indigenous Population Data

- Experience disability at a rate twice as high as the non-Indigenous population at 30%
- 619 First Nations communities, 53 Inuit Communities, 5 provincial Métis organizations.
- 1.5 Million individuals in Canada identify as Indigenous
- 450,000 persons live with one or more disabilities

Federal Accessibility Legislation will Address:

- Specific disparities among Indigenous youth
- First Nations populations suffering from diseases found in developing countries at a drastically higher rate than non-Indigenous populations
- 1 in 8 First Nations children are disabled
- Address social needs of individuals, families and communities experiencing social issues surrounding disabilities.

Consultation Process

- Beginning in mid 2016, BCANDS and Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) began initial discussions about BCANDS playing a role in the consultation process.
- Government of Canada's commitment to developing new accessibility legislation
- December 2016 BCANDS and ESDC contract was finalized, BCANDS Federal Accessibility Coordinator was hired commencing responsibilities January 2017

Consultation Process

- Practicum student from the University of Victoria School of Nursing researched, updated and assembled contact information relating to all First Nations communities in Canada
- Federal Accessibility Coordinator developed two accessibility surveys
- These surveys were designed to gain feed back from the public sector-government bodies, relevant stakeholders and Indigenous communities

Government/Stakeholders Survey

- Engaging with two primary government bodies that provide funding/support and policy direction that impact Indigenous individuals and families living with disabilities
- Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) and First Nations and Inuit Health-Health Canada (In BC the First Nations Health Authority has assumed responsibility for Health Canada)
- BCANDS has forwarded over 500 (and counting) surveys to INAC and Health Canada employees

Government/Stakeholders Survey Feedback

Specific themes identified

- Funding/Community Needs- 40%
- Increased Coordination/Information Sharing- 30%
- Specialized Services/Training- 15%

“ A major challenge is the jurisdictional ambiguities between many layers of government and even the many different departments within government that generally do not function in a cohesive and concerted way to help support individuals. Second, it is important to recognize that Indigenous people already suffer from huge power imbalances and ongoing structural and overt discrimination and racism, including access of care, and those Indigenous persons with disabilities are therefore disadvantaged in multiple ways down to the way in which they are treated and cared for (or not) by society. Therefore structural changes and policies are needed to promote inclusion of Indigenous persons and particularly those with disabilities” *Health Canada employee*

Indigenous Community Survey

- From January until today BCANDS has been contacting First Nations communities, health and social services departments and Indigenous organizations both through telephone interviews and surveys, and will be meeting with specific Nation/community leadership over the next six months across Canada.
- To date, BCANDS has contacted First Nations communities in most provinces and territories across Canada

Indigenous Community Survey Feedback

- Fully Accessible Communities- 50%
- Increased Training/Access to Disability Related Supports and Services- 49%
- Transportation- 31%

“My granddaughter has disabilities, trachea and g-tube for feeding. Needs 24/7 care and constant air compressor going along with many other equipment on an as needed basis. For instance, kangaroo feeding pump, suction machine, nebulizer, oxygen, etc. It is very difficult for this mother to get out into community to take part in any activities within community that are social or economic”. *Community member*

In Conclusion

- Higher rates of environmental and trauma-related disabilities
- Type II diabetes described as “one of the most serious chronic diseases among Indigenous populations in Canada” (Durst et al. 2006)
- Limited access to resources and services which result in exclusion from full participation in community life
- First Nations individuals with disabilities must suffer “dual-dilemma” in deciding to stay in community or move to an urban centre

References

- Durst,D., Manuel, S., Bluecharadt, M., *Urban First Nations People with Disabilities Speak Out.*, Journal of Aboriginal Health., pp34-48., September, 2016.
- British Columbia Aboriginal Network on Disability Society., *National Indigenous Federal Accessibility Legislation Consultation.*, BCANDS Accessibility Consultation Report., January 2017 – March 2017.
- Native Women’s Association of Canada- L’Association Des Femmes Autochtones Du Canada., *The Voice of Indigenous Women and the New Accessibility Legislation: Phase I.*, March 2017.