



Supporting Indigenous Birth During the Pandemic

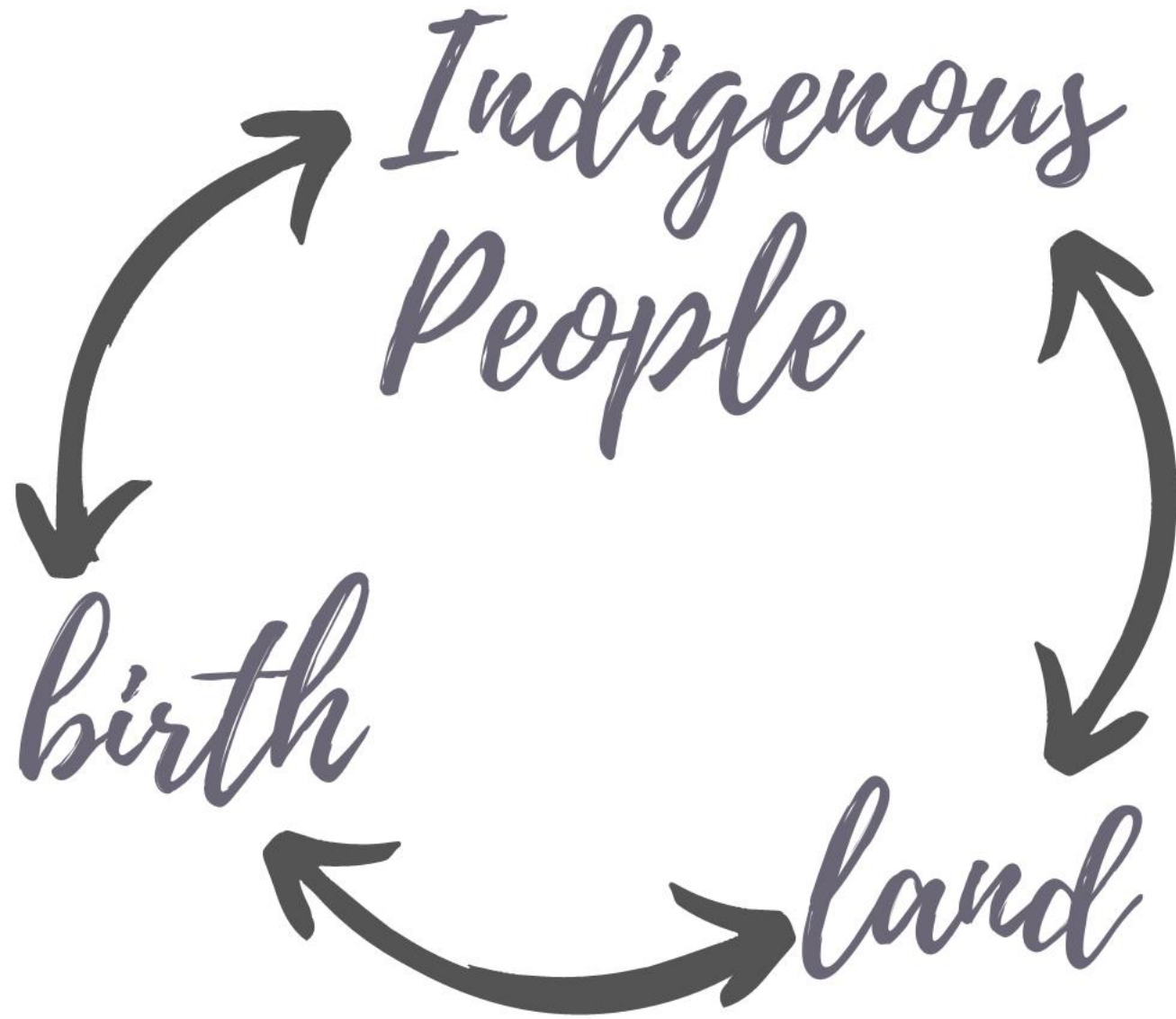
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What aspects of pregnancy, birth
and early parenting have been
impacted in your community?



Prenatal Care

- Phone appointments/Fewer in-person appointments
- Partners/children/support people not permitted to appointments
- Fewer in-person options for prenatal education, massage, chiropractic care, acupuncture, physiotherapy, etc.
- Social isolation



Health starts in the womb.

KATHLEEN BLUESKY



Prenatal Care: Family is Frontline

- Know your rights
- Know your options
- Stay informed
- Participate in virtual appointments/education
- Household support for:
 - Groceries & meals
 - Childcare
- Companionship





What Are My Rights When Accessing Health Care?

As a patient, you are entitled to dignity and respect. When it comes to health care in Canada, you have certain rights that are protected by law.

If you think your rights have been violated, you can make a complaint. Please see the complaint section in this toolkit.

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Right to Medical Treatment

Receive culturally safe, quality, competent, and timely care that is free from discrimination and harm in a safe environment while being treated with respect, courtesy, and compassion.



Right to Information

Have a health care professional completely and clearly explain all aspects of your health, diagnosis, treatment, options, prognosis, and care in a manner you understand.



Ask questions, express concern, and have them addressed in a timely manner.

Be informed of the names and roles of all members of your care team.

Right to Choices



Give or refuse (unless stipulated by law) **consent** for any medical intervention or procedure and be informed of the consequences for both acceptance and refusal.

Participate with the health care team in developing your health decisions and treatment plans in a manner that addresses your needs and wishes.

Be accompanied or represented by a person of your choosing who can support you in making decisions about your care.



Right to a Second Opinion

Within reason, request and seek a second opinion.



Right to Privacy

Receive consultations, treatments, and evaluations while ensuring confidentiality and respecting your privacy.

Be assured that your health information is secure and remains confidential.

Right to Access Personal Health Information



Request access to your health information records.

Request the transfer of your health records to another health care provider.

Right to Complain

Take action and express concern when you are not satisfied with your health care by filing a complaint, which needs to be responded to in a timely fashion.





All women have the right to a safe and positive childbirth experience, whether or not they have a confirmed **COVID-19** infection.



Respect and dignity



A companion of choice



Clear communication by maternity staff



Pain relief strategies



Mobility in labour where possible and birth position of choice



Women with COVID-19 can **breastfeed** if they wish to do so. They should:



Practice respiratory hygiene and wear a mask



Wash hands before and after touching the baby



Routinely clean and disinfect surfaces



Empowered
births can
happen
anywhere,
anytime





Hospital Policies





my ancestors are with me

Bring your
Ancestral
medicine with
you



- **Preferences**

- "I would prefer..."
- "I want..."
- "I want to avoid..."
- "I'm comfortable with..."
- "I'm not comfortable with..."

- **Saying No**

- "No"
- "Not right now"
- "Stop"
- "I need more time to decide"
- "I'm not ready"
- "I need time to discuss with my partner/family/support person"
- "I disagree."
- "I withdraw my consent."

- **"I feel..."**

- "bullied"
- "unsafe"
- "pressured"
- "coerced"
- "threatened"

- **Clarification**

- "I would like more information"
- "I don't understand"
- "Please explain it again"
- "Can you repeat that?"
- "What are the benefits?"
- "What are the risks?"
- "What are the alternatives?"
- "I would like a second opinion."
- "I would like to speak to a different nurse/doctor/midwife."

- **Body Language**

- Shake head
- Refuse to move
- Ignore the request
- Use silence
- Make eye contact (if this feels okay to you)

- **Rights**

- "This is my choice."
- "I have the right to..."
- "I understand and accept the risks."
- "I will sign an "Against Medical Advice" waiver"
- "I would like to speak to the Indigenous Patient Liaison."



Doula Support

- Non-medical companion
- Emotional, physical, mental, spiritual support



Postpartum Care



- No visitors/doulas in the postpartum unit
- Missed follow-ups
- Partners/children/support people not permitted to appointments
- Fewer in-person options for postpartum mental health, massage, chiropractic care, acupuncture, physiotherapy, etc.
- Social isolation





Postpartum Care: Family is Frontline

- Create a postpartum plan
- Postpartum care IS essential
- Assign helpers to make supplies runs
- Stock freezer in advance
- Look to ancestral foods and plant medicines for nourishment, nutrition, comfort and connection
- Consider midwifery care if available





Alana's Story



What can we learn from those
giving birth during the pandemic?



Contact Us

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