

# Northern Health Healthy Communities E-Brief

August 2025

Welcome to the Northern Health Healthy Communities E-Brief. This monthly newsletter from the [Healthy Communities](#) team keeps local governments and community organizations in Northern BC informed about resources, upcoming events, and funding opportunities that support community health and well-being. View the current issue as a PDF and explore past editions on our webpage: [Northern Health E-Briefs and Updates](#).

## Have your say

### **Survey: A CARE Assembly - Co-creating Equity Informed Emergency Planning and Policy with Affected Communities to Address Extreme Weather Events in British Columbia**

Do you play a leadership role in emergency response—for example, as a Fire Chief, Emergency Coordinator (municipal or First Nations), or Incident Command Response volunteer? If so, researchers from the University of Victoria, in partnership with the First Nations Health Authority and others, want to hear from you. This [survey](#) is part of a study focused on making emergency planning more inclusive and responsive to extreme weather events. Participants will be entered into a draw to win a \$150 gift card.

## Resources

### [Climate and health](#)

#### **Extreme Heat Community Resources**

The BCCDC Indigenous Knowledge Translation Working group, alongside First Nations Health Authority, Métis Nation BC, and the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, has developed a [four-part resource series](#) to help communities stay safe during extreme heat events.

#### **Free portable air conditioners**

Eligible households can [apply](#) for a free portable air conditioner unit to help stay cool during heat waves and other extreme events.

#### **Stay safe from wildfire smoke with these five health tips**

Watch this short [video](#) with [Dr. Sarah Henderson](#) to learn:

- Who's at most at risk from wildfire smoke
- Why indoor air quality matters
- How to check the Air Quality Health Index
- How to choose or [build your own purifier](#)

## **Indigenous health and well-being**

### **Métis Nation BC Mental Wellness Coordinator**

Renee Berschaminski is the Regional Mental Wellness Coordinator for Northern BC. She supports Métis individuals, including both Citizens and self-identifying Métis, and communities in accessing mental health and substance use resources. Renee also helps connect Métis to programs and services offered through Métis Nation British Columbia and Northern Health. You can reach her at [rberschaminski@mnbc.ca](mailto:rberschaminski@mnbc.ca) or 604-298-4011.

### **With Open Arms harm reduction toolkit**

Created by the First Nations Health Authority, this [toolkit](#) offers practical support for loved ones navigating substance use and healing. It's grounded in lived experience, cultural wisdom, and the voices of First Nations youth.

## **Events and learning opportunities**

### **Webinar: Collaborating effectively with government**

**Date:** August 21, 2025, at 10:00 am PT

Substance use is a complex issue that requires many types of support and solutions. This [webinar](#) from the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction explores how smaller municipalities are working with other levels of government to create lasting change. Learn practical strategies to strengthen partnerships and address substance use challenges in your community.

## **Funding opportunities**

### **Climate Change and Health Adaptation Program (Government of Canada)**

**Deadline:** September 12, 2025

The [Climate Change and Health Adaptation Program](#) supports First Nations and Inuit communities south of 60°N in developing community-led projects to assess and respond to climate-related health impacts.

### **Active Transportation Planning program grants (Union of BC Municipalities)**

**Deadline:** September 30, 2025

Local governments in BC with populations under 25,000 can [apply](#) for up to \$30,000 to develop active transportation plans. These plans help make communities safer and easier to navigate by cycling, walking, or using other forms of active transportation.

### **Food literacy grants (NutritionLink Services Society)**

**Deadline:** September 30, 2025

[NutritionLink Services Society](#) is offering grants to support food literacy programs across BC. Eligible applicants include registered charities and qualified donees providing initiatives that build nutrition knowledge, food skills, and support community health. There are two grant streams: [Start-Up Grant](#) – for new or renewed nutrition-focused projects (up to \$10,000) and [Enhancement Grant](#) – for existing programs seeking additional funds to expand access and participation (up to \$5,000).

### **First Nation Funding Grants (New Relationship Trust)**

**Deadline:** December 5, 2025 or when funding is fully exhausted

These [grants](#) support First Nations in BC for a wide range of community-led projects, including [youth programs](#), [education](#), [language revitalization](#), [elder initiatives](#), and [nation building](#).

### **Local Community Accessibility Grant Program (SPARC BC)**

**Deadline:** Ongoing until March 2026

Up to [\\$25,000](#) is available for BC municipalities and regional districts to remove barriers for people with disabilities. Projects must be identified by local government Accessibility Committees or Accessibility Plans and completed by March 31, 2026.

### **BC Community Climate Funding Finder (Clean BC)**

**Deadline:** Ongoing

Looking for climate action funding? Try the [BC Community Climate Funding Finder](#) to find the right grants for your project.

### **Community Housing Fund (BC Housing)**

**Deadline:** Ongoing or when funding is fully committed

This [fund](#) supports the creation and operations of mixed-income rental housing for individuals, couples, families, seniors, and people with disabilities, who can live independently without on-site support services. Eligible applicants include non-profit societies, housing co-operatives, and municipal housing providers.

### **Funding to Collaborate (United Way BC Healthy Aging)**

**Deadline:** Ongoing or when funding is fully committed

United Way BC Healthy Aging has re-launched the Funding to Collaborate stream, offering \$1,000–\$5,000 to support seniors-focused collaboration through Healthy Aging Community Collaboratives. Funding can cover costs like meetings, venue rentals, food, and facilitator fees. Collaboratives must designate one organization to [apply](#) on their behalf.

## Homelessness Community Action Grants Program (SPARC BC)

**Deadline:** Ongoing

One-time [funding](#) is available for projects that address homelessness through planning and collaboration.

## Indigenous Stewardship Fund Climate Emergency Fund Program (Indigenous Stewart Fund and First National Fisheries Council of British Columbia)

**Deadline:** Ongoing or when funding is fully committed

This program provides rapid support for urgent, Indigenous-led environmental restoration projects that protect and restore salmon populations and their habitats. [Applications](#) for 2025 are now open.

## Northern Health Stories

### Cultural leave: From disconnection to deep belonging

At Northern Health (NH), we recognize that reconnecting with culture is not always a straight path—it can be filled with questions, uncertainty, and courage. Cultural leave is here to support Indigenous staff wherever they are on their journey. Whether you're deeply rooted or just beginning to find your way back, this time is for you. It's about reclaiming who you are, strengthening your spirit, and honouring your story.

As part of our ongoing commitment to Truth and Reconciliation, NH supports Indigenous staff in reconnecting with their cultures, families, and communities through initiatives such as cultural leave.....[continue reading](#).

See the latest stories at [stories.northernhealth.ca](https://stories.northernhealth.ca).

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