

Access to Services Must Improve, Especially for Indigenous Communities

Indigenous communities are chronically underserved. Awareness and investment in Indigenous mental health and addictions treatment must increase.



Issue Summary

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities in Alberta encounter unique circumstances, challenges, needs and opportunities. Many of the addiction and mental health issues faced by Indigenous populations are rooted in intergenerational trauma, historical and current socio-economic inequalities and discrimination.²⁶



Solution

Supports, culturally informed by Indigenous communities, must be made available and delivered by and for community members. A coordinated approach from multiple sectors can support and advance efforts in this critical area.

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Research

“Services need to respond to the unique needs of the First Nations, Métis and Inuit people and communities, and the increasing diversity in our province. Out of this awareness emerged the priority of better meeting the needs of all Albertans, regardless of culture, geography, language, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability.”

–*Valuing Mental Health: The mental health review*, The Alberta Mental Health Review,²⁶ 2015



Alberta Examples

Youth Hubs are people-centred resources that respond to community needs and work to engage both youth and families. The resources provided assist youth with managing their health and gaining access to specialized services. The programs are designed, developed and implemented based on the needs and vision for each unique community, including Indigenous-focused supports. The evidence-based, integrated model of care provides a framework that supports a true collaborative approach to improving coordinated access to existing services, increase accessibility and increase alignment with youth services provincially.

²⁶ Government of Alberta (2015). *Valuing mental health: The mental health review*. Retrieved from <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/valuing-mental-health-report-alberta-mental-health-review-committee-2015>