

Cowichan Tribes

LEARNING SESSION

Health Research BC is on a learning journey towards meeting our organizational commitments to Indigenous cultural safety and Indigenous health research. This journey is grounded in respect for Indigenous self-determination and awareness of reconciliation as an active and ongoing process.

This work is taking place across the organization. One of Research Ethics BC's (REBC) priorities is to highlight models for culturally safe ethics reviews in Indigenous Research.

INDIGENOUS SELF-DETERMINATION IN RESEARCH



Photo from the International Indigenous DOHaD (Developmental Origins of Health and Disease) meeting in Vancouver, August 2022.

Pictured (L-R): Brenda Yuen, Lynsey Johnny, Eugenia Tinoco (with baby), Joban Dhanoa, Elder Doreen Peter, Jennifer Murray and Elder Lydia Seymour. Other team members not pictured: Liz Spry, Barbara Webster, Ashley Simpson, Maia Thomas, Fairlie Mendoza, Marnie Elliott, Shannon Waters and Diane Sawchuck.

Cowichan Tribes undertook a remarkable example of a community-led ethics review, grounded in ceremony and guided by community members and Elders. See: "[Bringing Ethics Review Home to Cowichan: Indigenizing Ethics Review in British Columbia, Canada](#)," published by Cowichan Tribes.

In February 2023, REBC worked directly with the community in facilitating a virtual learning session. Elders and community members shared their experience leading an ethics review process in their community. This was a learning opportunity for the REBC network and showed that institutional partners have a strong interest in learning how to do this work with humility and in culturally safe ways.

Next steps: At REBC, we recognize that we are still learning how to respectfully support reconciliation efforts and develop meaningful relationships and partnerships with Indigenous people in BC. Our work continues to be guided by our Indigenous partners.

WHO ATTENDED

270
WESTERN CANADA REGISTRANTS

150
DIFFERENT ROLES

80+
INSTITUTIONS

- Health authorities
- Universities
- Colleges
- Wider research ethics community



ABOUT THE COMMUNITY-LED STUDY

WITH OVER
5,000 MEMBERS

COWICHAN TRIBES IS THE LARGEST

FIRST NATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

In 2018, Cowichan Tribes recognized a high rate of preterm births compared to the national average of Indigenous peoples in Canada.

In response, Ts'ewulhtun Health Centre staff began an exploratory study in partnership with the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) and Island Health. This study is funded by the Vancouver Foundation.



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Rooting the ethics process in the ceremony creates accountability between researchers and the community and builds the relationship.

Elder Doreen Peter

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CORE TRADITIONAL TERRITORY COVERS
900,000 ACRES



Cowichan Tribes is the governing body of the Cowichan people, located in the Cowichan Valley on Vancouver Island. It is part of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group and has seven traditional villages throughout their traditional territory: Kwa'mutsun, Qwum'yiqun', Xwulqw'selu, S'amunu, Lhumthumuluts', Xinupsum, and Tl'ulpalus.

