

## **An Apology to Indigenous Peoples and a Pledge to Be Anti-Racist**

**As the Board and the Registrar of the College of Psychologists in British Columbia, we apologize to the Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) and communities who have experienced racism while engaging with the College and with the psychology professionals we regulate.**

**Indigenous Peoples have waited far too long for their legal rights to be recognized. And they have waited too long for health-system leaders to dismantle the racism that was built into our colonial health-care system—racism that continues to cause harm to this day.**

We govern more than 1300 professionals who provide psychological services in BC. The job of the regulator is to protect the public by ensuring that the professionals we regulate provide ethical, safe, quality care. Dr. Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond's report, [In Plain Sight](#), documented widespread fear and mistrust of the health-care system due to the prevalence of stereotypes, discrimination, racism and abuse experienced by Indigenous Peoples. The report's findings illustrated how the current health-care system continues to limit access to medical treatment and negatively affects the health and wellness of Indigenous Peoples—and that Indigenous women and girls are disproportionately impacted.

Specific actions must be taken to address these concerns and to ensure that the registered psychologists whom we regulate do the same. Our pledge now is to become anti-racist and to support the health professionals we regulate to do the same.

We will take this journey together, knowing that recognizing racism in ourselves and others will not be comfortable or easy. We will be guided by Indigenous elders and professionals, the recommendations contained in the *In Plain Sight* report, and by the legal and ethical requirements to provide respect, dignity and equity in providing psychological services for the Indigenous Peoples of this province. These actions are key in regaining and sustaining the trust of Indigenous Peoples.

It is only through consistent concrete action to uphold Indigenous rights and eliminate racism within the health-care system that we can begin to slowly earn the trust of Indigenous Peoples.

**The College of Psychologists of BC Board and staff will take the following actionable steps to demonstrate leadership and dedication:**

- Be anti-racist leaders who will foster a speak-up culture, where stereotypes, discrimination and racism are called out and eliminated.
- Establish clear accountabilities for cultural safety and humility within the College and for our registrants.
- Draw on Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and professionals to guide our work.
- Provide relevant and specific continuing competency training and explicit guidance on standards of practice to ensure Indigenous Peoples receive culturally safe services from our registrants.
- Work to remove barriers and include supports to ensure that Indigenous Peoples do not feel isolated or unsafe when filing a complaint.
- Ensure board, staff, and committee members are trained in cultural safety and humility, anti-racism, unconscious bias, and, as appropriate, trauma-informed care.
- Continue and broaden Indigenous participation on our boards and committees and staff teams.
- Promote anti-racism and Indigenous cultural safety and humility as core competencies for current and future health-care providers.

- Build partnerships with Indigenous-led organizations to promote system change and dismantle racism.
- Work with our fellow provincial health regulators to implement the recommendations of the *In Plain Sight* report.
- Work with psychology regulators across the country to promote increased awareness and appropriate changes in professional standards related to research and practice.
- Identify and support changes in legislation and bylaws to deconstruct colonialism, value Indigenous ways of knowing, and eliminate harm for Indigenous Peoples.



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Chair of the Board



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