

# Indigenous Wellness Engagement Group (I-WEG)



Community Engagement Strategy to Inform Indigenous Health Education in New Faculty of Health

## Who are we?

The Indigenous Wellness Engagement Group (I-WEG) includes Indigenous peoples from Ləkʷəŋən and WSÁNEĆ communities, as well as Indigenous university staff, alumni and students with lived and living experience.

Working together under the leadership of Etalewtxʷ | ÁTOL,ÁUTW | Office of the Vice-President Indigenous (OVPI), I-WEG is striving to advance Indigenous wellness in education, training and research.

## Our shared vision

**Bold Aspirations: 50% Indigenous representation by 2050**

- Enriched Learning Experiences
- Addresses Colonial Legacy
- Ensure Safety and Humility
- Supporting Self-Determination
- Stronger Community Connections
- Expanded Funding
- Extend our Societal Impact

## What we believe

**Distinct and Unique Principles, Protocols & Practices**

- Localization
- Place & Connection
- Reclamation of Rights
- Inclusivity
- Authentic Engagement
- Balanced Representation
- Relational Responsibility
- Reciprocity and Benefits
- Uphold UNDRIP and DRIPA
- Accountability Protocol and Witnessing
- Bringing Care Closer to Home

## Weaving the wisdom

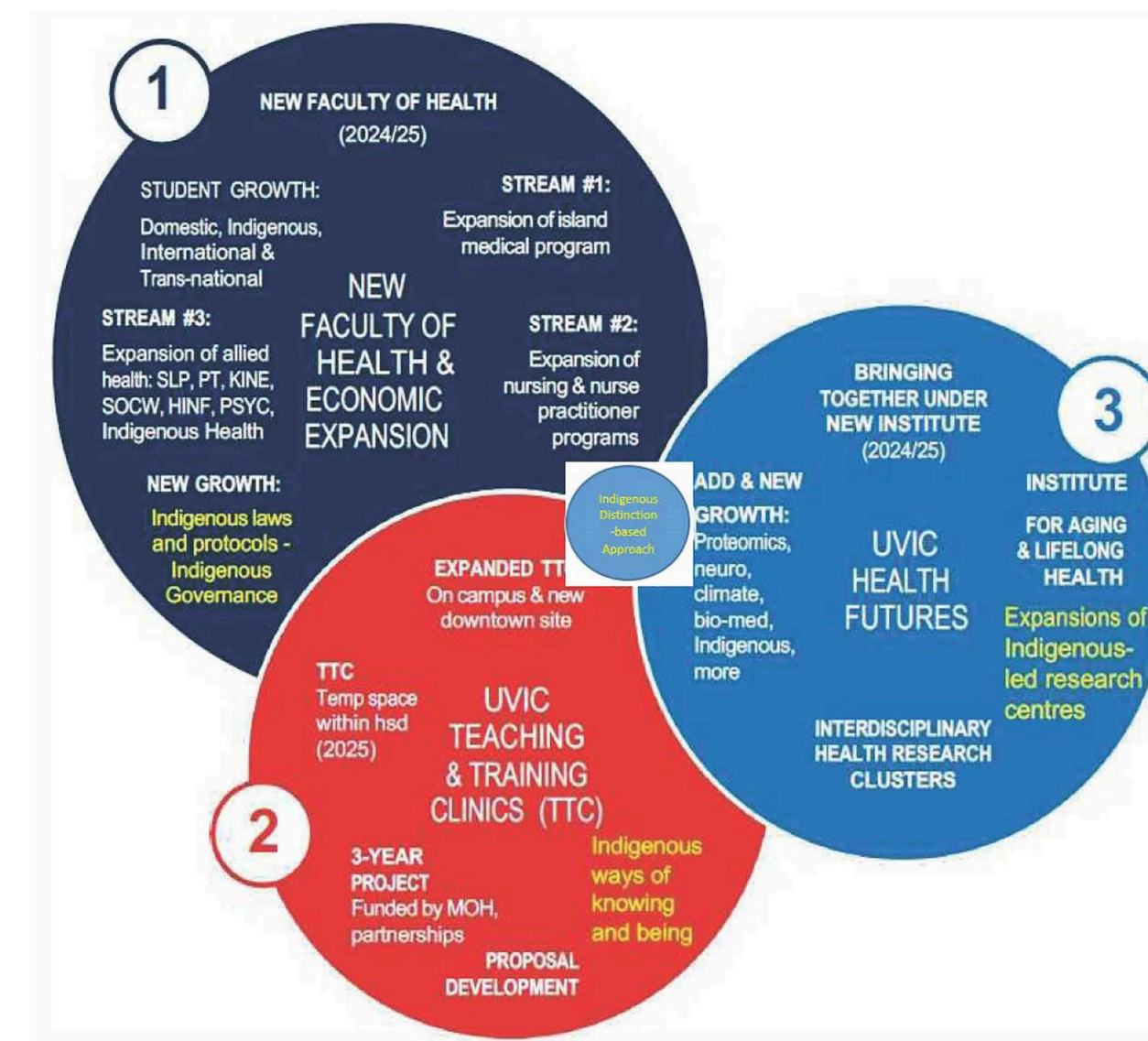
*“Redirect our focus toward community wellness because our kids are coming.”*

## What are we doing?

University of Victoria (UVic) Faculty of Health Initiative

**Unanimous Senate vote supporting the UVic Faculty of Health opening May 2025**

- Clinical Psychology, Counselling
- Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education
- Health Information Science
- Medical Sciences
- Nursing
- Public Health and Social Policy
- Social Work



**Faculty of Health Vision: The Foundational Pillars**

1. Academic – Educational excellence and team-based care training.
2. Clinical Service – Innovative Primary Health Care Service delivery.
3. Research Innovation – Discovery and uncovering real-life solutions.

## Community Engagement Strategy

Co-design a process supporting the new Faculty of Health's vision to advance health education, practice and research by engaging three regions—Coast Salish, Nuu-Chah-Nulth and Kwakwaka'wakw—through one-on-one discussions with Indigenous leaders, focus groups, and a survey addressing academic priorities, primary care and clinical services and research innovation.

**What are we asking you to do?** Seeking your assistance to envision, develop, gather and share information on the the new Faculty of Health Initiative.

**Why is the work important?** Collaboration on UVic's Health Futures Promise initiative fosters innovation and collaboration, contributing to the broader goals of reconciliation and social justice. This is an opportunity for Indigenous Peoples served by UVic to inform the new Faculty of Health.

**Community Engagement Strategy** Co-designing a process that will contribute to the vision of the new Faculty of Health to enhance health education, practice, and research.

**Visioning questions for all**

1. What is your (big dream) vision for Indigenous health education, practice and research in the new Faculty of Health? What does this look like?
2. What are the advantages or benefits of streamlining and/or centering Indigenous health education within the new Faculty of Health?
3. What concerns or challenges should be considered in developing Indigenous health education, practice and research within the Faculty of Health?
4. What should the facility space look like and what infrastructure resources would be needed?

## What have we learned

**What are people telling us about advancing Indigenous health and Wellness education while living up to our four key values:**

**?etalnəwəl | ÁTOL,NEUEL**

Move beyond individual rights and focus on our relationships with one another, showing respect for one another and striving to be in right relationship with all things. Putting our **communities** at the center of *what* we do.

**Xʷkʷənəŋɪstəl | WƏENENISTEL**

Helping to move each other forward—our students, our communities, our ideas and our solutions. Putting **solutions** at the center of *why* we do what we do.

**Nəcəmaat kʷəns čəʔi | ČANEUEL OL**

Work together with our partners and communities to ensure healthy futures. Putting **partners** at the center of *how* we do it.

**Leʔt šxʷ helə ʔə cə mək ʷ sčəʔi səʔ | S,HOL ET MEQ EN ENÁ SE SČA**  
*Be prepared for the work to come.*

## Background literature

- Prioritize on Indigenous-led primary health care education.
- Highlight the necessity of Indigenous governance and delivery of health care services for the establishment of a culturally safe and sustainable primary health care system.



## Quotes

**Community leaders:** “Leveraging a distributed learning approach so that all individuals can access it regardless of their location on Vancouver Island.”

**Students:** “I think that more engagement with Indigenous-led care providers will help me to build trust and experience with the Indigenous community. More experience in general will help as well to develop a person-centered, holistic, and trauma-informed approach to care.”

**Faculty:** “Community, wellness space, rationality. Removing the hierarchy that exists in the world of health, we are all a team. Elders/Knowledge keepers involved”.

