



Statement on Indigenous Nurses Day by Jessy Dame, Director: Indigenous

On behalf of ARNBC as the Director, Indigenous, I am excited to wish a happy Indigenous Nurses Day to all nurses across British Columbia!

Indigenous Nurses Day is a time to celebrate Indigenous nurses across Canada. In keeping with this year's National Nursing Week theme, #YesThisIsNursing, today we recognize the ways in which Indigenous nurses contribute to the health and well-being of communities through the integrated use of traditional knowledge, healing practices and nursing education. As a Métis nurse who has found healing and community through my journey of reconnecting to my heritage and culture, I know first hand how the strength in our collective work as Indigenous nurses can support each other and lead to cultural healing.

I am proud of the work ARNBC has accomplished since I came to my position in the spring of 2017. We continue to work with previous director, Laurie Dokis, to support the development of a platform for Indigenous nurse leadership and guide practice to improve Indigenous health in the province. In the fall we established an Indigenous Health and Nursing Policy Table which is comprised of RNs, NPs, LPNs and RPNs who have expertise in Indigenous health issues. Key priorities have been to address and offer solutions on issues that impact Indigenous nurses and the health of Indigenous peoples across B.C. This group has also advocated to the emerging single professional association called Nurses and Nurse Practitioners of BC (NNPBC) to include an Indigenous nurse on each of the councils that will represent nursing designations with a specific seat reserved at the NNPBC Board table for an Indigenous Director. It is through the development of these structures that we will continue to honour the expertise and voices of Indigenous nurses in the province.

While we celebrate our strength, resiliency and advocacy each day, today we stand together to honour our work and our dedication to the people we serve. My hope for all of us is to take the time to show appreciation to ourselves, our colleagues and our support systems so that we may empower each other to lead the country and the world in celebrating and advancing Indigenous health and social policy.

I wish you all a Happy Nursing Week and a Happy Indigenous Nurses Day!

Jessy Dame, ARNBC Director: Indigenous