BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) collaborate with the Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada to identify strategies in all domains of nursing to reduce racism and structural discrimination in health care and to improve health equity for Aboriginal Peoples.

Submitted by: Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada

Rationale: The health and well-being of indigenous peoples in Canada continues to be the poorest across all groups of people. Current research strongly supports the link of poor health to historical context and ongoing racism and oppression that Aboriginal Peoples endure. The CNA Code of Ethics, intended for nurses in all domains of nursing [administration, education, direct care (including community and public health), research and policy development], states that “nurses uphold principles of justice by safeguarding human rights, equity and fairness and by promoting the public good” (p. 17).

In nursing education, faculty and students are continuing to request ways of integrating indigenous knowledge that are respectful and responsive to learning needs. The need for more work in terms of anti-racist education that will lead to culturally safe education at all levels is being echoed across all educational institutions.

Together, CNA and the Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada, as the national voices of nursing, can speak to these issues and support the work of aboriginal organizations as co-leaders in addressing these inequities in health-care services with the aim of reducing the individual burden of illness on First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples and their communities. This commitment to addressing institutional barriers such as racism and structural discrimination ensures the integrity of strong and effective professional nursing associations in each province/territory and local governing bodies, so that the distinctive contribution of aboriginal nurses and indigenous knowledge is sustained. The need for a critical examination into the established structural racial determinants of health is embedded in cultural safety and the understanding of indigenous issues within education. Further dissemination of tools on cultural safety for practising nurses for their professional development across the health disciplines is in demand. Experts who participated in the CNA roundtable discussion on aboriginal health in 2014 noted that the literature on racism within the context of aboriginal health and aboriginal nursing is sparse, and that policy discussions would be improved with additional research. They agreed that a more thorough discussion of racism as a foundational barrier and relevant strategies for action are needed. It was also noted that time is required to build trust and openness so that racism can be discussed.

Relevance to CNA’s mission and goals: This resolution, focusing on health equity for Aboriginal Peoples, is relevant to CNA’s mission to improve health outcomes through, among other means, strengthening nursing leadership; advocating for healthy public policy and a quality health system; and serving the public interest. This resolution is particularly relevant to the following goals of CNA: to shape and advocate for healthy public policy.
provincially/territorially and nationally, and to advance nursing leadership for nursing and health.

Since the National Expert Commission’s final report, *A Nursing Call to Action: The Health of Our Nation, the Future of Our Health System*, CNA activities related to aboriginal health have evolved into a number of strategies. These initiatives include: Resolution 10, put forward by the chair of the B.C. Nurses’ Union’s Aboriginal Leadership Circle; the development of a CNA aboriginal health nursing advisory committee; the collaboration with the 2014 North American Indigenous Games; and the delivery of webinars on nursing interests in aboriginal health.

**Key stakeholders:** Canadian Institutes of Health Research — Institute of Aboriginal Peoples’ Health

**Estimated resources required or expected outcomes:** CNA is in a position to leverage their nursing leadership in all five domains to support and promote anti-racism at all levels of the systemic structure involved in health care. Some financial and human resources will be required to focus on deliverables, which could be formalized through a more collaborative partnership with the Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada.

These outcomes could include:
- **Policy:** Develop a policy statement on addressing racism and discrimination in health-care delivery for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples.
- **Research:** Engage with the aboriginal nursing organizations to network and collaborate on research projects that address racism and discrimination in health-care services with a view to mitigating and reversing their negative effects on indigenous health.
- **Administration:** Undertake an assessment of racist and discriminatory health-care policy. Engage in a collaborative project with the Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada to develop online indigenous leadership training in a health-care context.
- **Education:** Support the mandate of compulsory indigenous content into nursing curricula across Canada that is unique to each area.
- **Practice:** Advocate for the networking of provincial and territorial regulatory bodies to work with the Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada to develop and disseminate online cultural competency and cultural safety education with a view that this training become part of the acquisition and maintenance of licensed credentials.

**References:**


