

Truth and Reconciliation Implementation Resource

September 2025

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Land Acknowledgement

Purpose

This Land Acknowledgement may be used by member organizations of the HPA-OHT as one of the actions to support Canada's Truth and Reconciliation commitments. It is encouraged that member organizations add a specific action when the Land Acknowledgement is spoken.

Land Acknowledgement

We formally acknowledge and give thanks for the land on which we convene as the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee (People of the Long House), the Anishinaabe and other Native Nations.

We recognize the ongoing stewardship of this land and water by its First Peoples, noting that the territory operates under the Dish with One Spoon Wampum*, through which multiple nations have agreed to care for the Great Lakes region collaboratively and peacefully. We further acknowledge the treaties relevant to this land, including Treaty #29* and Treaty #45½*, and affirm our shared responsibilities as treaty partners.

Our commitment includes advancing reconciliation by sharing educational resources that highlight the diverse cultures, experiences, and histories of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. We recognize the distinct identities and contributions of each group.

As healthcare providers, we bear witness to the enduring impacts of colonization, including intergenerational trauma from residential schools, forced relocation and systemic inequities that continue to affect the health and well-being of Indigenous communities.

As we honour residential school survivors, their families, and the children who did not return home. We also reflect on the role of the healthcare system in historical harms We commit to

* See Appendix for more information

continuous listening, learning, and the adoption of culturally safe, equitable, and trauma-informed practices for all Indigenous patients and communities.

This acknowledgement serves as both recognition and a call to action, guiding us toward reconciliation, healing, and a healthcare system grounded in respect, dignity, and justice.

Pronunciations

Follow the links to learn the pronunciation of the nations:

[Anishinaabeg](#) Awe – Nish – Nah - Be

[Haudenosaunee](#) Hoe – De – Nah – Show – Nee

Action-Oriented Land Acknowledgement

The steps to writing and delivering a meaningful, action-oriented Land Acknowledgement:

- 1) **Reflect:** Consider your relationship with the land, your understanding of Indigenous issues, and potential ways to support reconciliation and decolonization efforts in both personal and professional contexts. Here are some questions to guide this reflection:
 - What is your purpose for delivering this land acknowledgment?
 - How familiar are you with the historical background of the land and its associated treaties where you reside or work?
 - What is your awareness of contemporary issues and ongoing impacts, such as Land Back initiatives, water security, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQI+ people, treaty rights, and legislation like the Indian Act?
- 2) **Build and grow authentic relationships:** Establishing strong, respectful relationships with Indigenous organizations brings profound benefits to individuals, communities, and institutions alike. By engaging in meaningful partnerships, organizations gain deeper

understanding of Indigenous histories, cultures, and perspectives, which foster mutual respect and enriches community dialogue. Furthermore, these relationships help to ensure that the voices and priorities of Indigenous Peoples are included in projects, policies, services, and programs, leading to outcomes that are more just, equitable, and relevant for all. Through ongoing collaboration, trust is nurtured, which lays the groundwork for long-term partnerships that benefit both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, advance social justice, provide culturally relevant services, and promote shared prosperity.

- 3) **Embrace timelessness and Two-eyed Seeing:** Utilize past, present, and future tenses when discussing Indigenous peoples, acknowledging that these communities continue to thrive. Emphasize current Indigenous neighbours and residents, while recognizing historical land use and previous occupants. Albert Marshall is a respected Mi'kmaq Elder whose concept of two-eyed seeing recognizes the strength of Indigenous ways of knowing and the strength of western ways of knowing and uses both competencies together. In Marshall's words "Two-Eyed Seeing refers to learning to see from one eye with the strengths of Indigenous ways of knowing and from the other eye with the strengths of Western ways of knowing and to using both of these eyes together" (Two-Eyed Seeing, n.d.).
- 4) **Personalize:** Consider your relationship with the land, including your use of its resources and recognition of their importance. Within your organization, evaluate how your role can contribute to reconciliation efforts. Reference both historical and present-day effects of oppression and colonialism on Indigenous communities, connecting these considerations to personal experiences where relevant. Identify specific actions to support reconciliation and decolonization, such as engaging in educational activities, implementing policy changes, or participating in community initiatives.

The Land Acknowledgement encourages action as it relates to Truth & Reconciliation. Member organizations are encouraged to explore, discuss, and identify actions. In

addition, the following actions may be considered for use with the Land Acknowledgement to personalize and bring alive your commitment.

Resources to Explore

[READ](#) A Knock on the Door: The Essential History of Residential Schools from TRC.

[READ](#) Seven Fallen Feathers by Tanya Talaga.

[READ](#) The Advocate online magazine at the Chiefs of Ontario website.

[BUY](#) the Orange Shirt and WEAR it often.

[LISTEN](#) to All Our Relations: 2018 Massey Lectures by Tanya Talaga.

[LISTEN / WATCH / READ](#) The Secret Path by Gord Downie & Jeff Lemire.

[EXPLORE](#) a map of territories, languages and treaties.

Attend local Pow Wows or community events.

Sample of Personalized, Action-Oriented Land Acknowledgement

I want to acknowledge that I live and work on the traditional territories of the Haudenosaunee/People of the Long House, the Anishinaabe and other Native Nations. These lands are cared for under the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant and covered by Treaty 29 and Treaty 45 ½.

As a person of colour, I come to this land with my own history of colonialism, displacement, and survival. I recognize that while I was welcomed here, Indigenous peoples have faced generations of forced removal, cultural erasure, and systemic violence. As a healthcare provider, I recognize the deep and ongoing impacts of colonization, including the

intergenerational trauma caused by residential schools and systemic inequities that continue to affect the health and well-being of Indigenous communities.

Reading *Seven Fallen Feathers* has opened my heart to the realities of families torn apart, young lives lost, and the deep grief carried by Indigenous communities — grief that exists alongside strength, resistance, and enduring love for the land.

This acknowledgement is not only about naming the past, but also about how I choose to live now, and how I choose to raise my children on this land. For me, that means:

- Committing to keep learning about treaties, histories, and the ongoing impacts of colonialism in Huron–Perth.
- Standing in solidarity with Indigenous peoples by supporting their calls for justice, including equity in education, health, and safety.
- Holding space for Indigenous voices in my community, while reflecting on the privileges and responsibilities I carry as a guest on this land.
- Honouring Indigenous youth, whose dreams and futures matter, by challenging systems that continue to fail them and by working toward communities that are safe, inclusive, and life-affirming.
- I hold gratitude to the Indigenous Nations who have stewarded these lands long before me and continue to do so. I commit to walking in reconciliation not only with words, but through ongoing, tangible actions.

Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action Ontario Health Team

Engage – Listen – Learn – Share

The vision of the Ontario Health Team is for *A sustainable people-driven system that strives to provide a positive experience for all*. As part of our learning and unlearning journey, we are committed to the path of ongoing reconciliation with Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples

www.hpaoht.ca

✉ ohr@hpaoht.ca

🐦 [HuronPerthOHT](https://twitter.com/HuronPerthOHT)

based on mutually respectful relationships within an initial commitment with the 94 Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action.

These commitments will serve as a framework for our action as we move forward on reconciliation. The initial recognition of our responsibility with the Calls to Action is based on:

Call to Action #19: We call upon the federal government, in consultation with Aboriginal peoples, to establish measurable goals to identify and close the gaps in health outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities, and to publish annual progress reports and assess long-term trends. Such efforts would focus on indicators such as infant mortality, maternal health, suicide, mental health, addictions, life expectancy, birth rates, infant and child health issues, chronic diseases, illness and injury incidence, and the availability of appropriate health services.

The Ontario Health Team recognizes that these Calls to Action require us to be critical and transformative in our current practices and policies and reflect on reconciliation within all facets of our work.

- Track and report the percentage of Ontario Health Team programs and initiatives that incorporate TRC calls to action annually, ensuring that data collection and usage are transparent and community approved.
- Measure progress in closing health gaps by monitoring year-over-year changes in key indicators such as life expectancy, and rates of chronic disease among Indigenous populations, publishing these metrics in an annual report.

Call to Action # 22. We call upon those who can effect change within the Canadian health-care system to recognize the value of Aboriginal healing practices and use them in the treatment of Aboriginal patients in collaboration with Aboriginal healers and Elders when requested by Aboriginal patients.

The Ontario Health Team recognizes that these Calls to Action require us to be critical and transformative in our current practices and policies and reflect on reconciliation within all facets of our work.

Aboriginal Healing practices should be recognized by the Canadian health-care system. The use of healing practices and treatments should be available to Aboriginal patients when requested and this call to action should occur with including collaboration with Aboriginal healers and Elders.

Develop an understanding of Indigenous Healing practices:

- Offer at least one annual training session on best practices for engaging with Indigenous communities and connecting staff to knowledge keepers, ensuring at least 80% of staff participation each year.
- Track the number of partnerships with knowledge keepers, Indigenous organizations established each year, setting a target of at least one new partnership annually.

Call to Action #92: We call upon the [Ontario Health Team] to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources.

Ontario Health Team recognizes that these Calls to Action require us to be critical and transformative in our current practices and policies and reflect on reconciliation within all facets

- Review organizational visuals and written communications for the inclusion of statements or images reaffirming the commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.
- Host a minimum of three dialogue sessions or relationship-building meetings with Indigenous partners each year, documenting key outcomes.

- Establish or renew partnerships with at least one new Indigenous organization per year, maintaining a registry of active collaborations and evaluating the integration of Indigenous knowledge and voices in at least 75% of jointly developed projects and initiatives.

Ontario Health Team recognizes that reconciliation is not an end itself but is a process of change that is needed in our communities. Our aim is to design meaningful and relevant research that addresses the needs of Indigenous peoples across Perth-Huron. We recognize the need to start conversations, relationships, and partnerships with the Indigenous community and organizations to ensure we are creating a culturally appropriate research approach.

Appendix A: Dish with One Spoon Wampum

The Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant is an Indigenous treaty created by nations in the Great Lakes region, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe, to promote peaceful coexistence and shared stewardship of the land. The “dish” symbolizes the shared territory, while the “one spoon” represents the idea that all people must share the land’s resources respectfully and equitably, without conflict or overuse. This covenant emphasizes cooperation, sustainability, and mutual responsibility, and is represented physically through a Wampum belt, a traditional Indigenous record of agreements.

Appendix B: Treaty 29

The Huron Tract Treaty, formally identified as Treaty No. 29 of 1827, encompassed the region of southwestern Ontario adjacent to Lake Huron and Lake Erie. The treaty delineates one of its boundaries at the intersection of the St. Clair River and a hickory tree marked with a broad arrow on two sides. This agreement was executed between eighteen Anishinaabe Chiefs and the Canada Company.

Appendix C: Treaty 45½

Treaty 45½, also known as the Saugeen Tract Agreement, was signed on August 9, 1836, between the Saugeen Ojibwa and Ottawa Nations and the government of Upper Canada. It involved the surrender of approximately 1.5 million acres of land in exchange for a promise of protection and assistance for Indigenous peoples who settled on the Bruce Peninsula.

References

Huron Tract Treaty (2013) Stratford Public Library. [Huron Tract Treaty | Stratford Public Library](#)

Two-Eyed Seeing (n.d.). Two-Eyed Seeing. <https://www.2eyedseeing.ca/about-5>.

www.hpaoht.ca

✉ ohr@hpaoht.ca

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