

ONTARIO REGION UPDATE



IN THIS ISSUE

Health

- [Communicating about tuberculosis](#) 2
- [Guided toolkits for mental health support](#) 2
- [iGAS awareness resources](#) 3

Funding & Operations

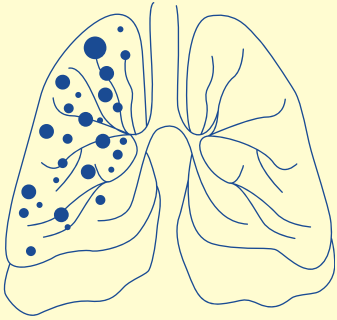
- [Policy Changes: Additions to reserve](#) 4
- [2025 Tax tips and highlights](#) 4
- [Call for webinar participants: Traditional food security](#)..... 5
- [New annual report about responsibilities under the Indian Act](#) 5

For newsletter questions, ou pour recevoir une version française, please email Ontario Region Communications: ontario-communications@sac-isc.gc.ca



Communicating about tuberculosis

Tuberculosis remains a disease of concern in northern Ontario. Below is a list of communication resources that can be used for community initiatives around tuberculosis education.



- Graphic: [Are you TB aware?](#) (full size)
 - [Version with space for branding](#)
- Graphic: [Inactive vs Active TB](#) (full size)
 - [Version with space for branding](#)
- Infographic: [Tuberculosis in Canada 2022](#)
- Video: [Tuberculosis Journey in Northern First Nations Communities](#)
- Learning activity: [TB spreads through the air](#)

Guided toolkits for mental health support

Children and teens can find it difficult to connect with others while grieving. Their loved ones can have difficulty finding the “right” words or ways to support them as they work through loss, sadness and grief. The organizations We Matter and MyGrief have published a number of online toolkits aimed at helping youth and the adults who care about them communicate better. They are self-paced, free, and intended for a variety of audiences and settings, including ones for educators, parents, children and teens.

A selection of key tools can be found below for your ease of reference. For more information about the organizations, visit their websites at wemattercampaign.org and www.mygrief.ca.

We Matter ♥

This organization makes content specifically for Indigenous youth. After selecting the toolkit(s) you would like to use, scroll down to fill out and submit the request form. You should receive your toolkit shortly after. Some toolkits are available as hard copies for communities that do not have a strong enough internet connection to access all their parts. If this is a concern for you, please e-mail info@wemattercampaign.org with a brief outline of who you are and what you need.

- Mini-toolkit: [General, for youth](#)
- Toolkit: [For support workers](#)
- Toolkit: [For teachers](#)
- Toolkit: [For youth](#)

MyGrief ♥

MyGrief, YouthGrief and KidsGrief are online platforms that provide a number of self-help resources to support someone experiencing grief and loss. This is often done through self-paced modules, available to anyone with internet access. KidsGrief also hosts lesson plans for educators helping students through grief. If you have trouble accessing the platform or with any of the content, please e-mail info@virtualhospice.ca.

- MyGrief: [Because losing someone is hard](#)
- MyGrief: [Making sense of intense emotions](#)
- MyGrief: [When your friend has died](#)
- YouthGrief: [Stuff that might help with grief](#)
- KidsGrief: [Understanding children’s grief and finding teachable moments](#)

iGAS awareness resources

Invasive Group A Streptococcus (iGAS) is a relatively rare disease. However, when it does happen, it can worsen rapidly. Knowing the symptoms of iGAS, and the difference between invasive and non-invasive Group A Streptococcus, can help people identify an issue early and get treatment. The following communication resources can help spread the word about iGAS.

Communication Resources

There are two versions of each graphic; one copy is sized for printing, and one copy is sized to fit social media. Both include the same information. Click each link to view and download.

- Speaking points: [iGAS & safety precautions](#)
 - Points are organized by topic and can be used to create your own PSA, radio, etc.
- Radio Script: [Protecting against iGAS](#) (page 3)
- ALT text for all of the following image files (accessibility): [Word document](#)
- Graphic: What is iGAS?
 - [Format for social media](#)
 - [Format for posters](#)
- Graphic: Protecting against iGAS
 - [Format for social media](#)
 - [Format for posters](#)
- Graphic: GAS symptoms and treatment
 - [Format for social media](#)
 - [Format for posters](#)
- Graphic: Are you iGAS aware?
 - [Format for social media](#)
 - [Format for posters](#)

Help is Here Whenever You Need It

Support is available 24/7 for all First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. Please find a list of mental health helplines below that are able to provide culturally relevant support. To find more services and resources, [click here to go to the national Indigenous mental health page](#).



Hope for Wellness Helpline

Phone: 1-855-242-3310

Online chat: www.hopeforwellness.ca

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Support Line

Phone: 1-844-413-6649

Indian Residential Schools Crisis Line

Phone: 1-866-925-4419

Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Services

Phone: 9-8-8 (call or text)



Policy Changes: Additions to reserve

The Land Advisory Board recommended [nine interim changes to the Additions to Reserve \(ATR\) Policy](#) in 2024. These changes aim to benefit First Nations who wish to add land to reserve by reducing restrictions, improving operational requirements, and removing paternalistic language from the policy. Two of the changes came into effect in August 2024; they removed the ATR justification requirement and narrow categories in ATR proposals, respectively.

The remaining seven interim changes were reviewed and recommended for implementation by the [Technical Advisory Committee](#) (TAC). The TAC is made up of representatives from the Assembly of First Nations, the First Nations Land Management Resource Centre, National Aboriginal Land Managers Association, self-governing First Nations, and the Government of Canada. The Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs accepted the TAC's recommendations to implement and announced the seven remaining interim changes on December 5, 2024.

A working group has been tasked with developing the necessary tools to implement them. The Government of Canada will continue to collaborate with First Nation partners to overhaul the current ATR Policy beyond these changes.

Click the links below for more information about the interim changes to ATR.

- [Questions & Answers of the Interim Changes to ATR](#)
- [Overview of ATR: Policy Redesign](#)

Please e-mail politique.aar-policy.atr@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca if you have questions about the interim changes or the ATR policy redesign.

Please e-mail cct-tac@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca if you have questions related to the TAC.



2025 Tax tips and highlights

Filing your taxes every year allows you to receive any related payments you are entitled to. This includes individuals whose income may be tax-exempt, or who have no reportable income.

The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) has released a highlights page for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis navigating the 2025 tax season. It includes important dates, where to go to get help for filing your taxes, and other helpful tips. [Click here to read the highlights](#) page in full. [Click here to access a calculation tool](#) for First Nations workers organizing their payroll deductions and contributions.

Community members can also sign up to the [stakeholder message electronic mailing list](#) for important news and updates on CRA issues.

For any questions about this topic, please contact the CRA Consultations and Stakeholder Engagement Team by e-mail at engagement@cra-arc.gc.ca.



Call for webinar participants: Traditional food security

Health Canada is drafting a paper about assessing traditional food security in Canada. To date, there are relatively few methods that assess the general state of traditional food security, nor the impacts of major projects on traditional/country food systems in Canada. The paper's goal is to bridge this gap. It will include a summary of the limited case studies, and propose the Health Impact Assessment method to guide traditional food security assessments in Indigenous communities. [Health Impact Assessments measure the effects a policy or project may have on human health.](#)



Indigenous individuals are invited to provide feedback on the draft paper through online webinars. Three Sisters Consulting will host these sessions and facilitate open discussions on the concepts and layout of the draft paper. The webinars are divided into smaller focus groups. Participants are asked to register for the session that best represents their expertise and/or experiences. Click on the Eventbrite link for each session below to learn more.

Please contact Project Manager Donna Smyl at donna.smyl@threesistersconsulting.com for questions about the webinars.

Webinar sessions

* Times align with the Eastern Standard time zone

First Nations Focus Group

Date: February 13, 2025

Time: 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Register: [Eventbrite link](#)

Métis Focus Group

Date: February 25, 2025

Time: 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Register: [Eventbrite link](#)

Urban Indigenous Focus Group

Date: March 5, 2025

Time: 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Register: [Eventbrite link](#)

FYI: New annual report about responsibilities under the Indian Act



The first edition of the [Annual Report on Registration under the Indian Act, First Nations Membership and Status Cards](#) covers the 2023 calendar year and is now available online. The report focuses on legal responsibilities related to registration, membership, documentation and services under the Indian Act. In 2023, nearly 160,000 individuals received registration, membership, and/or status card services under this legislation. More applications were processed than any year in the past 25 years.

The new report comes from recommendations made by the Standing Senate Committee on Indigenous Peoples in their own report, [Make it stop! Ending the remaining discrimination in Indian registration](#). Click on each of the links in this section to read the respective reports.