

Building Reconciliation at the U of S

College of Nursing

Building an Indigenous Nursing Workforce

THE NEED FOR MORE INDIGENOUS NURSES

Registered Nurses (RNs) are the single-largest health professional group in Canada and they are essential contributors in Northern, First Nation and inner city health centres, where they deliver primary care and help prevent and manage infectious and chronic disease.

As of the 2011 Census, only 760, or 6.1% of Saskatchewan RNs were Indigenous.

Increasing the number of Indigenous nurses is important to:

- improving access and continuity of care;
- reducing nursing turnover rates in Northern and Indigenous communities;
- reducing the costs involved in attracting and retaining outside nursing professionals to Indigenous communities;
- improving Indigenous health and well-being;
- spurring Indigenous economic development through a better educated and well-paid local workforce (the health sector is typically the second-largest employer in rural and remote areas); and
- improving community self-sufficiency and self-determination.



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STRATEGIES



The College of Nursing has adopted two main strategies to increase its representation of Indigenous nursing students. The first is our **UCAN program**, which provides supports all along the pathway towards a nursing career, from school-age health career awareness opportunities, to science and math prerequisites bursaries, from building community and providing tutorial and financial support, to mentorship and NCLEX preparation to support the transition to workforce, and finally encouraging graduate studies.

The second is our distributive learning approach, **Learn Where You Live**. With campuses in Saskatoon, Regina and Prince Albert (PA), full access sites in La Ronge, Ile a la Crosse and Yorkton, and even more opportunities to complete the Pre-Professional Year, students have a chance to live and study close to home. Half of our 198 Indigenous students study in PA & the North even though only 20% of our seats are there.



STEADY GROWTH IN INDIGENOUS STUDENT PROPORTION



Aboriginal Undergraduate Student Representation in the College of Nursing

HOW IT BUILDS RECONCILIATION



The TRC specifically calls on us to:

- *Increase the number of Aboriginal professionals working in the health-care field.*
- *Ensure the retention of Aboriginal health-care providers in Aboriginal communities.*
- *Provide cultural competency training for all healthcare professionals.*

The College of Nursing is leading the country in Indigenous student numbers (18.9%), retention (93%) and program accessibility, with the highest known proportion of Indigenous students of any university in the country. We will continue to seek new and better ways to contribute to a culturally safe and accessible health care system for all people.

