

TELEHEALTH READINESS ASSESSMENT FOR MANDATED FIRST NATIONS HEALTH ORGANIZATION'S IN BC

As part of its Aboriginal Telehealth development process, the Provincial Health Services Authority is seeking to identify Mandated First Nation Health Organization (MFNHO) within each of the province's six Health Authorities with whom to partner. The intent is that six MFNHOs will provide leadership in the development of a sustainable Aboriginal Telehealth services model by working directly with Health Authorities to develop Telehealth service models and protocols in one or more member communities and to diffuse Telehealth innovations to other First Nations within their Health Authority.

MFNHO Definition

A Mandated First Nation Health Organization has negotiated a transfer arrangement with Health Canada. Specifically, a MFNHO is "a health agency that is created by First Nations governments with a defined mandate and ratified through Band Council Resolutions or a motion passed by a duly convened meeting of representatives of the Chiefs and Councils and authorized for that purpose. Usually, but not always, such a mandated agency would be incorporated under the *Societies Act*.

MFNHO Selection Process

Selection of a MFNHO in each Health Authority will follow these steps:

- Identification of MFNHOs and validate with the Aboriginal Telehealth Planning Partnership (ATPP) and First Nations Leadership Council
- Identification of MFNHOs from this list that include one or more remote/isolated First Nation(s).
- Identification from this list MFNHOs that provide or support health services in more than one First Nation, preferably, the MFNHO has service agreements with a number of First Nations of varying sizes and circumstances.
- Identification of those MFNHOs making investments implementing Telehealth and/or e-Health services for its member communities.

MFNHOs meeting the criteria listed above will be assessed using the *Organizational Telehealth Readiness Assessment Tool* (below) developed by the Health Telematics Unit, Faculty of Medicine, University of Calgary. For a discussion of the development and application of this tool please see: Jennett et al "The Essence of Telehealth Readiness in Rural Communities: An Organizational Perspective." *Telemedicine Journal and e-Health*. April 2005.

Dispute Resolution

Should the selection process result in a dispute between MFNHOs within a region, the Aboriginal Telehealth Advisor will interview the MFNHO Executive Directors – or their designates – and score the organizations using the MFNHO Telehealth readiness assessment tool.

MFNHO Telehealth Readiness Assessment Tool

Using the five-point scale rate **MFNHOs** on the following statements

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neutral
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree
- 0 = Don't Know

A. ORGANIZATIONAL CORE READINESS

Your organization:	SCORE
Is aware of, and able to clearly articulate needs	
Expresses and feels dissatisfaction with the ways it currently has available to deliver care (e.g. status quo)	
Other (please explain)	
(A) Sub-total	

B. ORGANIZATIONAL ENGAGEMENT & PLANNING READINESS

Your organization:	SCORE
Has organizational buy-in for telehealth	
Has individuals who are champions for telehealth (clinical/provider, senior administration, & community champions)	
Has leadership who are risk-takers and pioneers for reaching novel innovations	
Is aware of organizational dynamics between innovators and resisters	
Has the commitment and support of senior administrators	
Has access to sufficient ongoing funding from local, provincial and federal institutions	
Has established collaborative partnerships	
Has in place methods for telehealth communication/profiling/awareness, and is actively involved in promoting these	
Has examples and evidence of telehealth applications in similar contexts/environments/communities	
Exhibits healthy inter-organizational dynamics in telehealth promotion activities	
Is willing to consider short-medium- and long-term timelines for implementation	
Has established mechanisms of knowledge transfer among staff members	
Participates in a community consultation process	
Conducts ongoing needs assessments and analysis	
Has a strategic business plan including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A marketing, communication, and evaluation plan ▪ A cost benefit & cost effectiveness assessment, including benefits and risks ▪ Financial readiness for sustainability 	
Other (please explain)	
(B) Sub-total	

Continued.....

C. ORGANIZATIONAL WORKPLACE READINESS (Administrative, Human, and Physical Structures)

Your organization:	SCORE
Ensures that workplaces are prepared for telehealth technology & equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establishes proper facilities (i.e., location, lighting, size, HVAC, and other appropriate equipment) ▪ Locates telehealth equipment where it is convenient for providers to use as a tool to deliver patient care ▪ Facilitates the creative use of equipment by practitioners and patients ▪ Provides administrative support for clinical decisions, functioning, & the process of using the telehealth system ▪ Has a standardized, well defined easy to use referral system ▪ Has a standard and consistent method of record keeping at both the receiving and referring site. 	
Recognizes and addresses policies & procedures/professional & regulatory barriers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ascertains that telehealth practices conform to health protection laws ▪ Ascertains that telehealth practices conform to professional regulatory policies ▪ Reviews existing policies, standards, and procedures to determine if telehealth is covered under them, if not, revises as appropriate ▪ Formulates and integrates written policies on reimbursement, liability, cross-jurisdiction use, and privacy issues ▪ Prepares related written procedure manuals ▪ Formulates policies for defining who gets privileges to use telehealth at the receiving and referring sites 	
Establishes open lines of communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manages open communication, keeping all stakeholders well informed ▪ Participates in communication to facilitate team building ▪ Liaises with practitioners, patients, and the public as important players in the successful implementation of telehealth 	
Addresses change management readiness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has a change management plan in place to deal with organizational input ▪ Has effective scheduling and integration of innovations into established practices 	
Addresses human resources readiness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has adequate and dedicated human resources to implement the strategic plan ▪ Employs a local telehealth coordinator ▪ Determines classification of roles and responsibilities in relation to specific telehealth application(s). 	
Addresses training & continuing professional development (CPD) readiness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepares staff, and all end-users for initial and ongoing training ▪ Has a training and CPD plan in place related to telehealth ▪ Has past telehealth experience gained from projects or pilot programs & their evaluation 	
Other (please explain)	
(C) Sub-total	

D. ORGANIZATIONAL TECHNICAL READINESS

Your organization:	SCORE
Has addressed the technical feasibility and technical requirement issues	
Has established interoperability of equipment & technology	
Has a consistent approach to verification of the fidelity of data transmission	
Has validated that the technology actually works	
Has access to comprehensive technical support that is available locally and on-call	
Other (please explain)	
(D) Sub-total	

Total Score: A+B+C+D = _____

SCORING:

- 130 + The organization is in a good position to implement telehealth successfully
- 86 – 129 Certain items may adversely impact successful telehealth implementation.
- 0 – 85 There are barriers to successful implementation that need to be addressed before moving forward in implementation