

**British Columbia Aboriginal Network on
Disability Society (BCANDS)**



National Indigenous Federal Accessibility Legislation Consultation

March 2017 – March 2018



BCANDS Accessibility Consultation Report

March 2017 – March 2018

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1) Preamble

The Government of Canada created new accessibility legislation in 2016. This legislation was proposed by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in November of 2015 with the goal to “help remove barriers and prevent new barriers from being created for persons with disabilities” (Government of Canada- Accessible Canada). The purpose of this legislation is to ensure inclusion, equality, and opportunities for Canadians who experience disabilities at all levels and face limitations due to functioning. This legislation encourages the Government of Canada and delegated organizations to engage further with those who are living with disabilities and unpack what is needed to be done to create full accessibility and increased participation on all levels.

Former Minister Carla Qualtrough of Sport and Persons with Disability was originally appointed to undertake the new accessibility legislation. As of January 2018, Kara Duncan became the new Minister of Sport and Persons with Disability and has now undertaken the responsibility of the accessibility legislation and the role of reaching out to those living with a disability and those closely associated. Methods of engagement included meetings with individuals on a one-on-one level and in group settings. Public consultations and on-line surveys were also conducted and distributed across Canada to reach the majority of people living with a disability. Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) noticed that there was a need for further communication and engagement, specifically with Indigenous peoples living with disabilities. To ensure that all Indigenous persons living with disability’s voices were being heard the ESDC contracted 3 Indigenous organizations to help realize this need. The British Columbia Aboriginal Network on Disability Society (BCANDS) was one of the organizations contracted by ESDC.

1.1) Federal Accessibility Contractor

The federal accessibility contractor from BCANDS reached out to a vast majority of Indigenous communities, organizations, individuals and Government stakeholders in Canada. Conversations occurred around the needs of Indigenous peoples living with disabilities and what the Government of Canada can do to make sure Indigenous voices are heard and action is taken. BCANDS was able to hear from Indigenous peoples who are living with disabilities by using methods such as cold calling, facilitating groups, and through surveys both online and in person.

Indigenous peoples often face limitations that impact their physical health, mental health, and quality of life. Some of the disparities that are faced are access to health care and supplies, funding to access services, housing, transportation, accessible communities, along with economic and social inclusion. There are close to 1.5 million people residing in Canada, living on and off reserve, who identify as Indigenous. Approximately 450,000 of those individuals are living with disability; which makes a disability rate of 30%. There are 619 First Nation communities, 53 Inuit communities and 5 provincial Métis organizations. As the fastest growing population in the Nation, the Government sees inclusion and meeting the needs of Indigenous peoples, particularly those living with a disability, as a high priority.

For more information on First Nations communities in Canada, please visit:

<http://fnp-ppn.aandc-aadnc.gc.ca/fnp/Main/Search/SearchFN.aspx?lang=eng>

For more information on Inuit communities in Canada, please visit:

<https://www.itk.ca/about-canadian-inuit/>

For more information on Métis organizations in Canada, please visit:

<http://www.metisnation.ca/>

For more information on the Government of Canada's Accessibility Consultations, please visit:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/planned-accessibility-legislation/consultation-legislation.html>

For more information on Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), please visit:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development.html>

2) The British Columbia Aboriginal Network on Disability Society

The British Columbia Aboriginal Network on Disability Society (BCANDS) is an award winning, Indigenous disability and health, not-for-profit Society. Incorporated in 1991, BCANDS is the “stand alone” Indigenous organization of its type in Canada.

Viewed as a leading organization on disability in Canada, BCANDS was recommended for Special Consultative Status to the United Nation Economic and Social Council as a Non-Governmental Organization. This Status allows the Society to bring forth Indigenous disability issues to a global audience and work collaboratively on a larger scale.

BCANDS oversees a variety of health and disability related programs and services including, but not limited to:

- Indigenous Disability Case Management Services;
- Indigenous Registered Disability Saving Plan (RDSP) Navigation Program;
- First Nation Persons with Disabilities (PWD) Adjudication Program
- Monthly Nutritional Supplement (MNS) Adjudication Program;
- First Nations Health Information;
- Coordination / Collaboration with Indigenous, Federal and Provincial Governments in relation to Indigenous disability;
- Accessibility Legislation Consultation

BCANDS Mission

“Supporting the unique and comprehensive disability, health and resource needs of Indigenous persons and organizations across British Columbia, through relevant, timely and accessible client services”

For more information on BCANDS, please visit: www.bcands.bc.ca

3) Consultation Introduction and Methodology

From March 2017 to March 2018 BCANDS continued in their role, set out by ESDC, to ascertain the needs of Indigenous peoples living with disabilities. A new Accessibly Coordinator was hired in January of 2017, by BCANDS, working 3 days a week on federal accessibility legislation.

Based on the analyzed findings from the March 2016 to March 2017 survey the accessibility coordinator adapted the survey appropriately and developed a comprehensive list of who should be reached for the March 2017 to March 2018 consultations. The updated surveys were sent out to First Nations Communities across Canada; a majority of surveys sent to the same people who completed the surveys the year before: First Nations communities in Ontario, Health Organizations in Canada, and Government Stakeholders. Conversations were held over the phone with many Indigenous organizations and communities, including Indigenous people currently living with disabilities.

This report discloses the results of the federal government accessibility survey From March 2017 to March 2018. From the results of each question the coordinator was able to find patterns of needs and concerns in Indigenous communities and potential recommendations on what the government can do to best support and provide for Indigenous peoples living with disabilities.

BCANDS did face some challenges while reaching out to Indigenous peoples, communities and government stakeholders. The first challenge was the method of cold-calling; many calls were made, but not all phone calls were returned. This may have been due to a few factors: Weariness on the purpose of call, lack of knowledge of new accessibility legislation and a limited idea of the needs of Indigenous communities. Another challenge that BCANDS faced was that venues would cancel. These venues were book to facilitate conversations with Indigenous community members and stakeholders. This impeded on the survey process. For the March 2017 to March 2018 survey the ESDC contract only allowed for BCANDS to hire a coordinator for 3 days a week, which is a decrease compared to the full-time position BCANDS provided the previous year. This proved to be a challenge as there was not enough time allotted for the coordinator to conduct meetings, make all the calls needed and hold in depth conversations to educate to the fullest extent.

During the process of conducting surveys and holding conversations over the phone, Indigenous peoples organizations became more aware of the federal accessibility legislation, but also about services the BCANDS provides. Some survey participants stated that they themselves are living with a disability and would like to receive case management services from BCANDS. They were then transferred over to a Disability Case Manager to start creating plans and interventions for support. BCANDS currently has two Disability Case Managers that support Indigenous peoples living with a disability, both on and off reserve. With this program being the only one of its kind in BC, there is a high demand for Disability Case Management services through BCANDS.

4) **BCANDS Accessibility Survey – Government / Stakeholder Survey**

Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) is the new body of government that provides funding support and policy direction that impacts Indigenous peoples and families living with disabilities. As of August 2017, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada was eradicated then developed into ISC and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC).

ISC “works with First nations, Inuit, other federal departments and provincial and territorial partners to support healthy First Nations and Inuit individuals, families and communities” (First Nations Inuit Health).

Indigenous Services Canada provides program policy and funding in relation to several areas of Indigenous communities in Canada. These programs include but are not limited to:

- Indigenous Health;
- Education;
- First Nations Housing;
- Social Programs;
- Emergency Management;
- Water in First Nations Communities;
- First nations Community Infrastructure;
- First Nations Funding;
- Consultation and Engagement

For more information on Indigenous services Canada, please visit:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/indigenous-services-canada.html>

For more information on First Nations and Inuit Health – Health Canada, please visit:

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniiah-spnia/index-eng.php>

Government / Stakeholder Survey

From March 2017 to March 2018, BCANDS has contacted the various Indigenous Services Canada regions across Canada. Through this contact BCANDS has sent 137 surveys by email to various government stakeholder employees and 341 surveys to various Indigenous Services Canada employees.

The survey asked seven key questions (condensed).

- 1) What in your view, can be done at the federal level to improve services and access to care for Indigenous persons living with disabilities?
- 2) What are the limitations of current federal government programs that impact Indigenous persons living with disabilities?
- 3) What in your opinion would be a strategy to ensure coordinated and timely access to relevant information on programs, services and opportunities for persons living with disabilities within the federal jurisdiction?

- 4) When thinking about your Ministry, how would you describe your intergovernmental relationships and how those relationships incorporate the needs of Indigenous persons living with disabilities in program funding and delivery? If relationships are limited how would you improve them?
- 5) What potential / positive change do you see new Federal Accessibility Legislation bringing to Indigenous communities and Indigenous persons living with disabilities in Canada?
- 6) When the legislation comes into effect, who should be responsible to monitor and ensure compliance within Indigenous communities?
- 7) Please provide any other insight or comments you have in relation to areas of concern, potential outcomes, best practice or other, as it relates to Indigenous disability within the federal jurisdiction.

Government / Stakeholder Survey Themes

The following is an overview of the top themes that emerged from the Government / Stakeholder Survey.

Question 1: What in your view, can be done at the federal level to improve services and access to care for Indigenous persons living with disabilities?

BCANDS received a variety of responses in relation to this question; however, a number of dominant themes emerged:

- **Funding** – 31% of the respondents indicated that Indigenous communities require an increase in funding to meet the needs for all community members, including funding for appropriate Elder care;
- **Programs and Services** – 35% of the respondents identified that an increase in programs and services available specifically for those living with disabilities are needed: Training at a community and government level on how to appropriately support and interact with those living with a disability.

Question 1 - Potential Recommendations from Respondents Input:

- 1) Provide more system navigator services to support those living with a disability in receiving the supports they require and navigating the system;
- 2) Direct grants for those who are in need of housing and medical services;
- 3) Funding that goes directly to the individual instead of through the band or organizations.

“Ensure that Indigenous persons living with disabilities have adequate access to quality and culturally safe care. The federal government could take measures to ensure that provincial governments are upholding their responsibility to provide access to primary health care services to all provincial residents, including First Nations.”
First nations Health Authority Employee

Question 2 - What are the limitations of current federal government programs that impact Indigenous persons living with disabilities?

BCANDS received a variety of responses in relation to this question; however, a number of dominant themes emerged:

- **Funding** - 26 % of the respondents indicated that increased funding is needed for many of the programs already in place to run effectively and reach a broader range of participants;
- **Housing** - 12% of the respondents indicated that current housing policies and the availability of housing is very low. The housing units that are safe and up to standard are filled to capacity leaving many without the proper care and home facility for their needs;
- **Programs** – 19% of respondents indicated that there are programs in place in larger cities, but the rural communities and reserves do not have the programs needed or the means of transportation to attend these programs.

Question 2 - Potential Recommendations:

- 1) Funding that is monitored by the government or Indigenous organizations to ensure the funds are being distributed and shared equitably within the community;
- 2) Safe, up to standard and accessible housing available on a larger scale. The demand is very high and families may not always be equipped to continue to care for their child living with a disability.

“Funding, antiquated policy, and transfer agreements are major barriers as they prevent the full development of resources on-reserve, particularly trained staff and supply chains for needed equipment and goods”
Health Canada Employee

Question 3 - What in your opinion would be a strategy to ensure coordinated and timely access to relevant information on programs, services and opportunities for persons with disabilities within the federal jurisdiction?

Question 3 provided no clear themes from the respondents in relation to ensuring access to information. Input ranged from using a social media platform to contacting the individual in person to share information. There seems to be a common understanding that there needs to be more jurisdictional solidarity along with a connection with First Nations Communities.

Question 3 - Potential Recommendation:

It was clear from the respondents that no one method of communication was favoured over the other and that perhaps a formal communication strategy needs to be put in place to ensure effective communication. A support network could be put in place along with a designated contact person in each community that is aware and up to date with current information that needs to be shared with the community.

“Community engagement through regular meetings, workshops, training, etc. And follow up at least once a year!”
Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada Employee

Question 4 - When thinking about your Ministry, how would you describe your intergovernmental relationships and how those relationships incorporate the needs of Indigenous person living with disabilities in program funding and delivery? If relationships are limited how would you improve them?

BCANDS received a variety of responses in relation to this question; however, two themes emerged:

- **No Meetings** – 63% of the respondents indicated that they are unfamiliar with meetings that are held in the community and feel much uninformed due to the lack of notice provided for the community.

Question 4 – Potential Recommendation

- 1) Holding monthly meetings or phone calls between the different Nations to ensure everyone is on the same page and information is being shared with even the most remote communities.

“Ensure that Indigenous people with disabilities receive complete coverage for their healthcare needs and that there is no gaps in service where the Ministries do not overlap.”
Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada

Question 5 - What potential / positive change do you see new Federal Accessibility Legislation bringing to Indigenous communities and Indigenous persons living with disabilities in Canada?

BCANDS received a variety of responses in relation to this question; however, two themes emerged:

- **Clarity** – 47% of the respondents indicated that they felt the new Federal Accessibility Legislation will bring more clarity to the government on what their roles and responsibilities are in regards to Indigenous persons living with disabilities;
- **Accessibility** – 31% of the respondents indicated that they felt this legislation will increase accessibility into buildings, programs, and services. More funding may be provided along with transportation options or an increase of services provided in rural communities.

“Equitable access to and acceptance of health promotion, disease prevention, care, treatment and support for Indigenous persons living with disabilities.”
Research Funding Agency Employee

Question 6 - When the legislation comes into effect, who should be responsible to monitor and ensure compliance within Indigenous communities?

The results indicated common themes:

- 47% of Respondents indicated that Health Canada should be responsible;
- 5% of Respondents indicated that INAC and Health Canada should share responsibility;
- 18% of Respondents indicated that INAC should be responsible;
- 15% of Respondents indicated that an Indigenous organization should be responsible;

- 10% of respondents indicated that it should be a joint responsibility between INAC and the provinces / or a collaboration of various government agencies;
- 5% of Respondents provided no answer.

Question 7 - Please provide any other insight or comments you have in relation to areas of concern, potential outcomes, best practice or other, as it relates Indigenous disability within the federal jurisdiction.

Some examples of comments / recommendations received under Question 7:

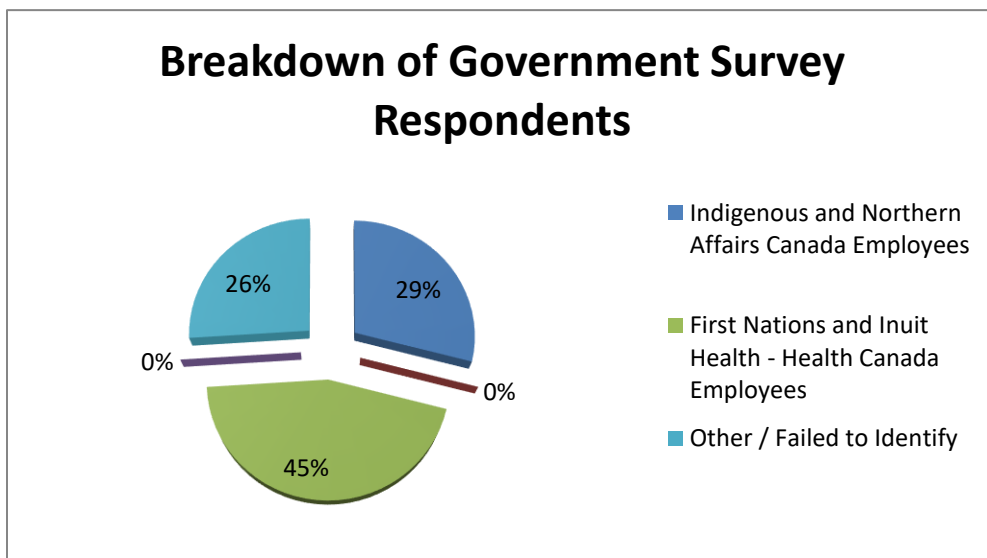
“As a professional health care provider, in my experience, best practice is expected. However, the available infrastructure is non-existent therefore best practice and or access to appropriate care is impossible to provide”

“The aging population should also be addressed. As First Nations peoples are living longer, many have to leave their homes/reserves to live in personal care homes due to disabilities caused by deteriorating health (diabetes, amputations, dementia, etc.). Funding to assist in establishing professional care in the home or personal care homes on reserve for as long as possible. Training people on-reserve and providing funding for salaries for those caring for the elderly/disabled.”

“Duty to accommodate people with disabilities should be in line with duty to accommodate federal employees.”

“Have a disability conference to introduce the federal jurisdiction to First Nations communities.”

“Even within Health Canada, let alone across other departments, there is not enough engagement of the many public health physician experts from across the country. The public health experts in the Office of Public Health can advise of a wide range of topics from health care services quality to social determinants of health such as housing, education and discrimination.”



The BCANDS Government Accessibility Legislation Survey can be accessed on-line at:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BCANDS>

3.2) Indigenous Community Survey

From March 2017 to March 2018, BCANDS contacted First Nation communities, on-reserve departments and Indigenous organizations through telephone interviews and surveys, connecting with 42 communities and agencies and sending out over 100 surveys.

The Indigenous Community survey asked seven key questions (condensed).

- 1) What strategies should be developed for an Indigenous persons living with disabilities that would assist in their ability to be active and included members of their communities, economically, socially and within the built environment?
- 2) What, in your opinion would be the best way for the federal government to engage and include Indigenous persons living with disabilities in the planning, development and implementation of disability related policies and programs?
- 3) What do you feel are the main barriers to accessibility that community members face within Indigenous communities across Canada?
- 4) In your opinion, what would it take to fix those barriers?
- 5) What barriers, in relation to attitudes and prejudices, face Indigenous persons living with disabilities in Canada?
- 6) What actions do you think could be taken by the federal government that would help reduce stigma and promote the inclusion of all people living with disabilities, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous?
- 7) If you could send ONE message to your community's leadership regarding disability issues / services in your community - what would that be?
- 8) In relation to accessing information about available disability related services and programs, how does your community receive information? What would be the best way for your community to receive information?
- 9) Why should OR why shouldn't Indigenous communities in Canada fall under new federal disability legislation?
- 10) Are there any other areas and/or issue that Indigenous persons living with disabilities experience?



Pictured left: Formal Honourable Minister Carla Qualtrough and BCANDS Board President Stephen Lytton at Accessibility consultation in Victoria, British Colum

Indigenous Community Survey Themes

The following is an overview of the top themes that emerged from the Indigenous Community Survey.

Question 1: What strategies should be developed for Indigenous persons with disabilities that would assist in their ability to be active and included members of their communities, economically, socially and within the built environment?

BCANDS received a variety of responses in relation to this question; however, a number of dominant themes emerged:

- **Funding** – 11.7% of the respondents indicated that communities and programs require increased funding in order to meet the needs of the community and persons living with disabilities. This funding increase is needed in the areas of programs/services and capital projects;
- **Infrastructure** – 28.7% of the respondents indicated that new infrastructure needs to be developed so that all abilities will be able to access the building. Alongside new buildings, older buildings that are not wheelchair or fully accessible need to be updated;
- **Community Inclusion** – 17% of the respondents indicated the need for Indigenous persons living with disabilities to be included in the communities in all aspects: events, committees, and employment;
- **Programs/Services** – 19.5% of the respondents indicated the need for programs and services to be created and implemented to meet the needs of Indigenous persons living with disabilities, this includes increased accessibility to services and programs already in place.

Question 1 - Potential Recommendations:

- 1) Free admission into events and recreational facilities within the community. This would include free admission for the support worker or family members assisting the person living with a disability;
- 2) Employment opportunities and programs for persons living with a disability that accommodates their needs along with equal pay as others at the job;
- 3) Provide funding that can go directly to the person living with a disability so they have full control of how the money is used to best support their needs.

“Engagement on all levels from childhood to elders on what their wants, wishes and desires are for a happy and fulfilled life, through contribution on all levels despite their disabilities: Mental and Physical.”

Question 2 - What, in your opinion would be the best way for the federal government to engage and include Indigenous persons living with disabilities in the planning, development and implementation of disability related policies and programs?

BCANDS received a variety of responses in relation to this question; however, a number of dominant themes emerged:

- **Engagement with Person Living With Disability/Family/Support Worker** – 32.1% of the respondents indicated the need for the federal government to address and speak in person with Indigenous persons living with a disability along with speaking directly to their family members and support workers that know the individual best;
- **Community Engagement** – 22.1% of the respondents indicated the need for the federal government to physically travel to Indigenous communities and engage with the community through focus groups and forums;
- **Accessible Meeting Locations** – 20.4% of the respondents indicated the need for the federal government to hold meetings in locations that are accessible to all persons living with disabilities along with providing methods of communication that work to accommodate diverse needs.

Question 2 - Potential Recommendation:

- 1) Provide an honorarium or incentive for persons living with disability to come forward and speak on behalf of themselves and their specific needs and concerns;
- 2) The federal government needs to give the community a voice and listening to members that can state the needs in their specific community; then, give the community members a chance to create programs that will be beneficial and effective in their specific community;
- 3) Increased sharing of information within all communities to ensure that everyone is aware of the programs, services and information that is applicable to them and may be beneficial.

“Include the person living with a disability in the community conversation and include the community workers directly with the individual. Be open and think outside of the box. Be open to cultural safety and cultural humility. Not every story is the same (even if everyone comes from the same community).”

Question 3 - What do you feel are the main barriers to accessibility that community members face within Indigenous communities across Canada? Example - lack of sidewalks or ramps for wheelchair accessibility, programs, services, respite care, Non-Insured Health Benefits, etc.?

BCANDS received a variety of responses in relation to this question; however, a number of dominant themes emerged:

- **Infrastructure/Housing** – 31.2% of the respondents indicated that current housing policies and the availability of safe, adequate and accessible housing, for individuals and families living with a disability, must be of priority. Along with the need for accessible infrastructure and sidewalks to allow for all members in the community to have access to buildings and walkways;
- **Programs/Services** – 30.8% of the respondents indicated the need for programs and services that can be accessed by all members in the community. Along with increased funding to provide trained workers and staff to work with individuals attending these programs;
- **Non-Insured Health Benefits** – 13.4% of the respondents indicated the current limitations of Health Canada’s NIHB program. In particular these respondents want to ensure that all members of society have equitable access to health services and the equipment needed to have a good quality of life.

Question 3 – Potential Recommendation:

- 1) Elimination of wait times for applications to be reviewed and approved. Along with a re-assessment of restrictions in regards to applying for services needed;
- 2) Increased training for service providers and members of non-Indigenous communities to work effectively with Indigenous communities, in addition to the increased availability of specialized personnel such as respite care providers in all communities;
- 3) Transportation strategy which allows for community members to travel within their community without being concerned about accessibility and fees for transportation.

“Indigenous people should have the same access that provincial citizens have and should not be denied based on their address.”

Question 4 – In your opinion, what would it take to fix those barriers?

BCANDS received a variety of responses in relation to this question; however, a number of dominant themes emerged:

- **Jurisdictional/Funding** – 24.7% of the respondents indicated that the government needs to make changes by providing more funding to community programs and services to make them more accessible to all community members and benefit everyone;
- **Community Involvement** – 29.8% of the respondents indicated the need for the community to be educated in providing services and care for those facing barriers. The government also needs to go to the community members include them in conversations and the creation of programs and services.

Question 4 – Potential Recommendations

- 1) Increased awareness and training in regards to accessibility and how to support those living with a disability along with training on navigating the system and programs that are available for Indigenous individuals and families living with a disability, away from their home community;
- 2) The fixing and up keeping of houses on reserve to fit the needs and health standards of persons living with a disability.

“Health Care Providers require more awareness and training regarding the “hurdles” that peoples living with a disability face on a daily basis. They must become a strong voice/effective liaison person for their clients. More awareness on the community level in regards to the barriers that can impede those with disabilities from being a productive member in the community. Fixing the barriers have to start on the community level.”

Question 5 – What barriers, in relation to attitudes and prejudices, face Indigenous persons living with disabilities in Canada?

BCANDS received a variety of responses in relation to this question; however, a number of dominant themes emerged:

- **Stereotypes/Discrimination** – 48.6% of the respondents indicated that the stereotypes associated with Indigenous people create major barriers. When there is an Indigenous person living with disabilities they face double stigma and discrimination, which keeps them from integrating and becoming a valuable member of society;
- **Resources/Education** – 42.3% of the respondents indicated the need for education and resources to be provided to non-Indigenous people about the history Indigenous peoples have endured. Education to teach community members about the different types of disabilities and how to treat everyone equally has been indicated as a high priority.

Question 5 – Potential Recommendations:

- 1) Educate the community in order to eradicate the assumptions about Indigenous peoples and the funding they receive;
- 2) Government and members working in social and medical services to hear directly from the person who has a disability and listen to their requests and needs.

“Indigenous people are already marginalized. A disability increases this marginalization, especially in terms of advocating for services.”

Question 6 - What actions do you think could be taken by the federal government that would help reduce stigma and promote the inclusion of all people living with disabilities, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous?

- **Awareness Campaign** – 44.9% of the respondents indicated that the federal government needs to provide education, campaigns and awareness about people living with a disability in order to reduce the stigma and promote inclusion;
- **Jurisdictional/Legislation** – 24.7% of the respondents indicated the need for the government to reassess policies and legislation to meet the needs of persons living with a disability. An urge for the government to stick to the plans that are discussed and follow through with implementation;
- **Community Inclusion** – 25.6% of the respondents indicated the need for all community members and the person living with a disability to be included in decision making and the planning of strategies that will affect them.

Question 6 – Potential Recommendations:

- 1) Government to send representatives to meet with persons living with a disability in their community and a space that is accessible and safe;
- 2) Cultural training for service providers working with Indigenous peoples. In order to understand their history and support those with a disability in the most appropriate manner.

“Helping those that are able and willing to do business in their communities would help reduce stigma. When people see someone successful the stigma of what they look like, their background and history seem to diminish. The federal government could promote stories of people who have gone through hard times and are now successful in their community. The government needs to help first with coping skills and then the stigma will go away and the individual can grow and succeed.”

Question 7 - In relation to accessing information about available disability related services and programs, how does your community receive information? What would be the best way for your community to receive information?

- **Social Media** – 40% of the respondents indicated that social media should be used as a platform to inform the community and persons with disabilities of information and events within the community. Examples of social media included Facebook, Twitter and the Internet;
- **Community Organizations** – 16.7% of the respondents indicated that information should be distributed and shared with all organizations within the community. This would be an effective way for members of the organizations to stay informed and receive important updates and information.

Question 7 – Potential Recommendations:

- 1) Information should be shared with the leaders in the community for them to spread the word and share with the appropriate organizations and individuals that could benefit from the information;

- 2) Information should be shared through emails or in a news letter that is sent out in the mail to all persons with disabilities.

“A community health advocate or navigator- The personal touch always works best.”

Question 8 - If you could send ONE message to your community's leadership regarding disability issues / services in your community - what would that be?

BCANDS received a variety of responses in relation to this question; however, a number of dominant themes emerged:

- **Inclusion** – 19.3% of the respondents indicated that they would tell their community leadership that persons with disabilities and their family members must be included in all aspects of the community. Leadership needs to speak directly with the person who has a disability along with their family members, as they know best what supports and services are needed;
- **Advocacy** – 17.9% of the respondents indicated community leadership needs to start bringing more awareness and education to what disability is and how it may look. There needs to be a language switch that starts with leadership;
- **Infrastructure/Housing** – 16.5% of the respondents indicated the need for leadership to make their communities more accessible: Sidewalks, buildings, housing, and pathways. These respondents also indicated that transportation for persons with disability needs to be a priority in order for them to be active members and included in the community.

Question 8 – Potential Recommendations:

- 1) Services need to be made available for all people living with a disability. This may mean providing transportation services to the programs that are already running and effective or providing funds for individuals in remote communities to travel to the city to access the services they require;
- 2) Implement a program similar to Jordan’s Principle for adults. Adults are often faced with barriers when receiving the supplies and funding they need to pay for services. Implementing Jordan’s Principle for adults would allow for supplies needed and funding to seek out the support that is needed.

“Make services accessible to all no matter what color, race, or creed and no matter where they reside.”

Question 9 - Why should OR why shouldn't Indigenous communities in Canada fall under new federal disability legislation?

- **Agree** – 73.8% of the respondents indicated that Indigenous communities in Canada should fall under new federal disability legislation in hopes of equality, funding and a focus on persons with disabilities.

- **Disagree** – 11.3% of the respondents indicated that Indigenous communities in Canada should not fall under new federal disability legislation. These respondents believe this will lead to even more rules and persons with disabilities will get lost in the cracks.
- **Unsure** – 14.9% of the respondents indicated that they are unsure if the Indigenous communities in Canada should or should not fall under new federal disability legislation. A majority of these respondents felt they would first have to review the legislation before making this decision.

Question 9 – Potential Recommendations:

The majority of respondents indicated that they were in favor of Indigenous communities in Canada falling under new federal disability legislation only if there would be definite benefit to their community. That being said, it is too early for recommendations to be made in regards to this accessibility legislation. Some of the respondents felt that the Indigenous communities in Canada should not fall under new federal disability legislation due to the fear of more rules being put in place, which will increase barriers to accessing funding and services in rural communities.

“Indigenous communities should fall under new federal disability legislation because they are often overlooked as compared to the mainstream Canadian population.”

Question 10: Are there any other areas and/or issues that Indigenous persons living with disabilities experience that you feel this survey has omitted and should be included?

- **Programs/Services** – 37.9% of the respondents indicated that more programs and services are needed to address some of the issues that Indigenous persons living with disabilities experience: employment programs, education and transportation services;
- **Federal Government** – 28.1% of the respondents indicated that the federal government needs to increase funding for disability services in order to effectively support persons living with a disability;
- **Non-Insured Health Benefits** – 27% of the respondents indicated that the NIHB needs to have easier application processes and quicker approval times. The NIHB coverage needs to be assessed and prove equality with other health coverage plans that non-Indigenous persons receive.

Question 2 – Potential Recommendations:

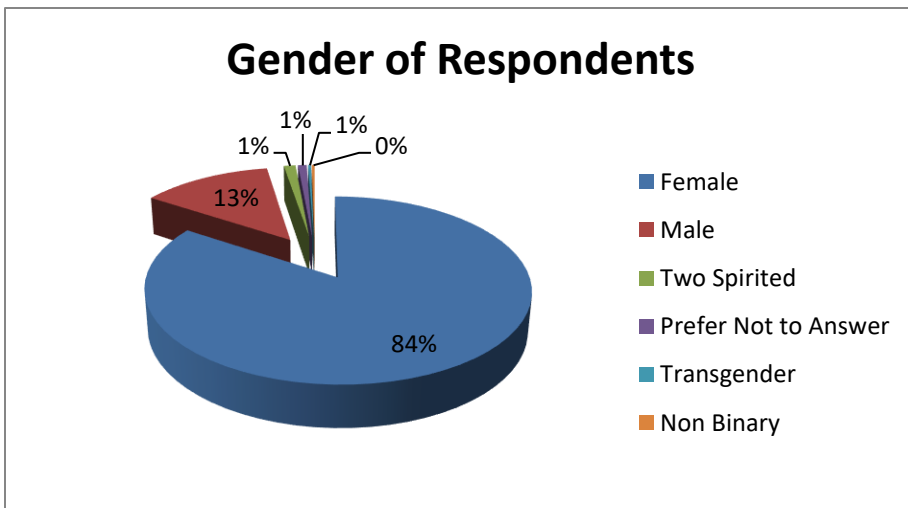
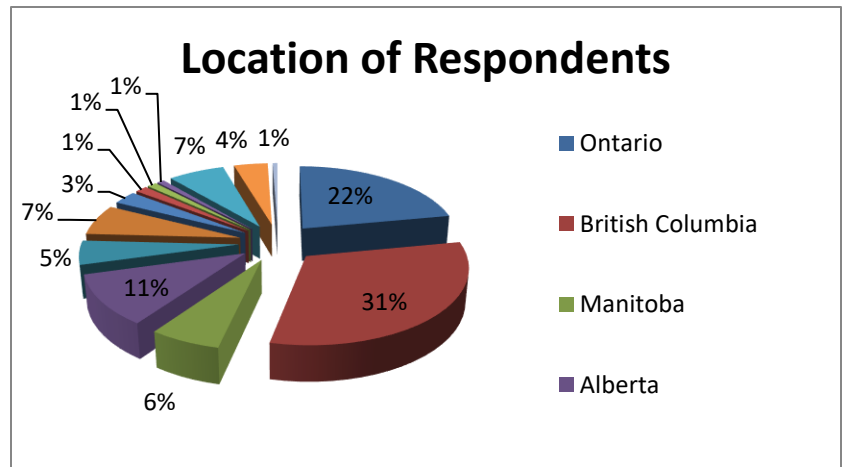
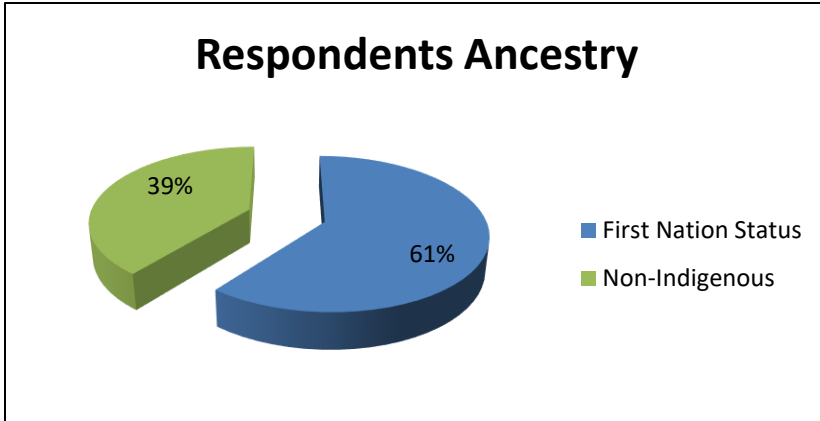
- 1) Transportation services to transport participants to and from their services free of charge and with no disability restrictions for riding.

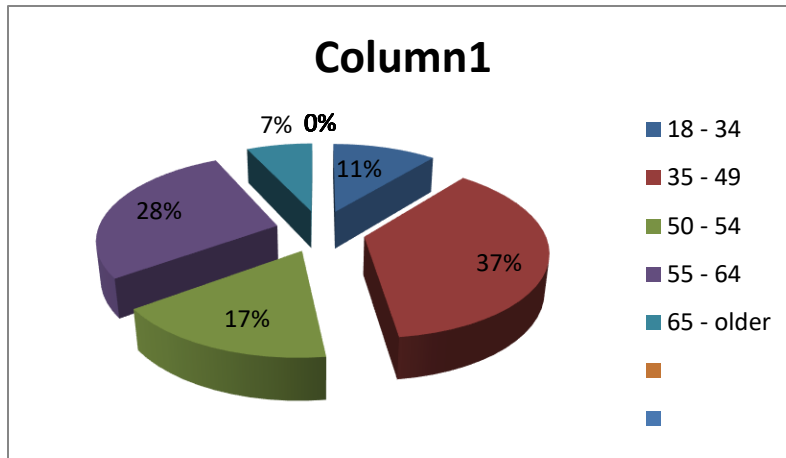
“Children with disabilities: Many band schools are NOT equipped to deal with children living with disabilities partly due to staffing shortages, lack of training and information. I think that stigma and inequality for people with disabilities starts from a young age; would be nice to have strategies to stop stigma during childhood (e.g. education campaigns).”

The BCANDS Indigenous Community Accessibility Survey can be accessed on-line at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BCANDS2>

Indigenous Survey Respondents Overview





4) Closing Observations

The results from the final consultation process have given great insight into the real needs of Indigenous peoples living with disability both on and off reserve. This report will be presented to the Government of Canada for them to start to implement changes and have a better understanding of how the accessibility legislation can reflect and address current and critical needs.

ESDC has extended the contract with BCANDS for the next fiscal year. There will be new surveys and in depth discussions around the accessibility legislation; specifically how Indigenous peoples, communities and Government stakeholders can contribute to the accessibility legislation. Based on the results of this report there is a clear indication that the Indigenous communities have many ideas and suggestion on what can be done to improve and grow accessibility legislation.

Awareness of the accessibility legislation has grown greatly and continues to grow as BCANDS brings awareness and produce surveys to reach Indigenous communities. Over the next year increased participation and the collection of recommendations and knowledge relating to Indigenous disability within the federal jurisdiction will be achieved.

Thank You!

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