



**Hotiì ts'eeda**

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES  
SPOR SUPPORT UNIT

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# EŁÈTS'EH DÈE-KATIMAQATIGIIT-NIHKHAH ŁATR'ILJIL

SUMMARY REPORT



SEPTEMBER 28-29, 2021

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### Pronunciation Guide

Ełèts'ehdèe: (Ayy' klets' eh'day)  
 Katimaqatigiit: (Gaw-ti-maw' kah-ti-geet')  
 Nihkhah Łatr'iljil: (Nee' Kaw' Klah' chril' jeeh)  
 Hotii ts'eeda: (Ho'-tee tse' daah)  
 Ełet'ànìts'əḡah: (Eh'-klet' -a'-neee'-t'say-ah)

### Acronyms

NWT	Northwest Territories
HT	Hotii ts'eeda
SPOR	Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research
SUPPORT Unit	Support for People and Patient-Oriented Research and Trials
CIHR	Canadian Institutes of Health Research
KT	Knowledge Translation

### Governing Council Members



## Mahsi



On behalf of the Governing Council, I would like to say thank you for participating in the online version of Ełèts'ehdèe-Katimaqatigiit-Nihkhah łatr'iljil, each which mean "gathering" in my language of Tlicho, Inuvialuktun, and Gwich'in respectively.

This was the fifth annual gathering for Hotiì ts'eeda, and the second gathering to be held online due to the Covid-19 pandemic. While we wish we could have been gathering in person, I hope that you were still able make meaningful connections and share stories, experiences and lessons learned with each other. While online meetings are not ideal, they are one way to stay connected during this time of physical separation and isolation. Hotiì ts'eeda is committed to finding innovative ways of connecting our community, and are open to suggestions on how to do so safely and effectively.

This year's theme was Implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) This theme represents the importance of UNDRIP to Hotiì ts'eeda and the next phase of its operations, as well as the potential of UNDRIP to act as a tool to support, strengthen and create new policies, programs, and practices to support the health and wellbeing of Northerners in all aspects of life. When we consider these many interconnected laws, policies, programs and practices as a net supporting Indigenous rights, we can see UNDRIP as a k'ala'ghaa, a tool also known as a fish needle used to mend fishnets across the north. By centring this metaphor, Hotiì ts'eeda hopes to help UNDRIP come alive for those engaging in work to support Indigenous rights to health and wellness. This principle will guide Hotiì ts'eeda's work in its next phase, and we hope to continue engaging you in our work exploring, framing and implementing UNDRIP in the coming years.

The Ełèts'ehdèe-Katimaqatigiit-Nihkhah łatr'iljil is more than a gathering—it is also part of Hotiì ts'eeda's governance, where the organization practices accountability to the community by meeting with our partners, going over the last year, and asking the community what health and health research priorities in the NWT should be. This year, we took a slightly different approach by providing a retrospective of Hotiì ts'eeda's priorities derived in part from past gatherings, and presented UNDRIP as the guiding principle for the next phase of the organization. I thank you for engaging in this process and invite you to review the priority-setting section of this report carefully.

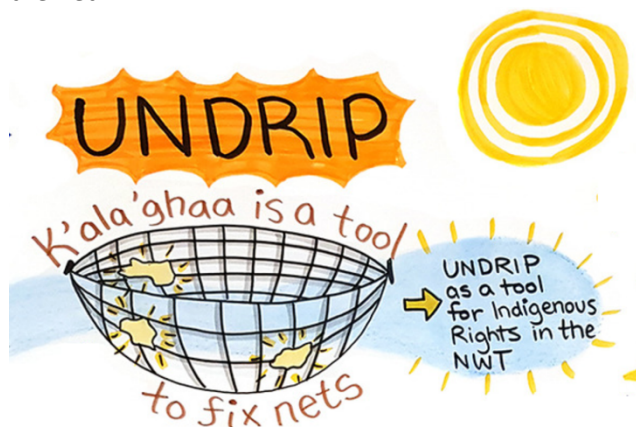
Mahsi,  
John B. Zoe, Chairperson  
Hotiì ts'eeda: NWT SPOR SUPPORT Unit



## Executive Summary

Mahsi, everyone, for participating in the fifth annual Hotii ts'eeda Ełèts'ehdèe-Katimaqatigiit-Nihkhah Łatr'iljil was held virtually on September 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Viewing centres were organized in Inuvik, Deline and Yellowknife, open to invited guests who required Internet support. The decision was made to reduce content and hold the conference over two six-hour days, to reduce Zoom fatigue and encourage authentic engagement. Hotii ts'eeda could not put an event like this on without the support of its partners, its Governing Council Members, and its funder, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR). CIHR consistently supports Hotii ts'eeda to adapt to northern realities in fulfilling its mandate, and its Governing Council members provide support and guidance to do so.

The theme of this year's gathering was the Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). Throughout the gathering, Hotii ts'eeda rooted discussion of UNDRIP in the metaphor of the k'ala'ghaa, or fish tool, that was used across the north to repair fishnets historically. By viewing the many laws, policies, programs, and practices that affect, support and detract from Indigenous health and wellness as a fishnet, viewing UNDRIP as the k'ala'ghaa highlights opportunities to repair gaps in the net.



The first panel featured offered an opportunity for two representatives of Indigenous governments to share their respective government's experiences

with Covid-19 and Indigenous rights to health and wellness generally. The audience heard examples from Fort Liard and Inuvik where Indigenous governments worked to support their members through isolation in the midst of the pandemic, sometimes in innovative ways. Having the lens of UNDRIP and Indigenous rights to health and wellness as a framework for looking at these examples of Indigenous government responses to Covid-19 highlights how Indigenous governments are uniquely placed to provide effective locally-based responses to local issues and should be supported to do so.

The conference consistently had between 50 and 60 online attendees, coming from communities across the NWT as well as the wider health research community in Canada. A public session screening of "The Unforgotten", a film about Indigenous experiences of racism and harm in health settings in Canada, had approximately 50 attendees. Hotii ts'eeda acknowledges that many of the Ełèts'ehdèe-Katimaqatigiit-Nihkhah Łatr'iljil's invited guests are already familiar with the realities of Indigenous health experiences through personal experience, and are not the intended target audience for this educational film. Rather, this film was an opportunity for Hotii ts'eeda to connect to the general public, and the wider network of southern institutions funded under the CIHR Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research. The film screening was intended to raise awareness about the film, and provide learning and engagement opportunities for a broader audience. Masi to Leela Gilday and Dr. Euan Affleck for attending the screening to provide insight and background on the film, its development by the Canadian Medical Association, and the role of Indigenous participants in the film's development and production.

While the NWT is experiencing its first major outbreak of Covid, we can be sure that until more vaccinations take place, more gatherings will be virtual in nature. The ongoing community spread in Yellowknife and Behchoko demonstrates the seriousness of the delta variant of Covid-19, and how critical it is for all community members who can to be vaccinated – both to reduce the spread and to



reduce their chances of severe symptoms and suffering. Hotì ts'eeda hopes all of its partners and community are safe and well, and encourage you to reach out with any feedback on this document, the Ełets'ehdèe-Katimaqatigiit-Nihkhah Łatr'iljil, or health in the NWT in general.

## About Hotì ts'eeda

Hotì ts'eeda is a research support centre for community members, organizations, and researchers involved in Northwest Territories health and health research.

### VISION

Hotì ts'eeda's vision is to support health research and training that is rooted in Dene Nàowo (Dene knowledge), Inuvialuit and Métis knowledge and responds to the needs of patients, communities and governments. The organization exists to revitalize and celebrate culture, improve capacity for individuals and families and support taking an evidence-based approach to policy. It is about moving control and ownership of research back to Indigenous peoples and communities. Hotì ts'eeda acts as a connector: connecting researchers with communities and Indigenous organizations, to support recognition of NWT health research priorities, and develop a health system that is culturally competent and inclusive of Indigenous methodologies and ways of knowing.

### GOVERNING COUNCIL

Hotì ts'eeda is hosted by the Tłı̄chų government and funded by the Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR) under their Strategy for Patient Oriented Research (SPOR). Hotì ts'eeda is guided by an independent Governing Council that includes members from:

- Tłı̄chų Government
- Inuvialuit Regional Corporation
- Délı̄nę Got'ı̄nę Government
- Gwich'in Tribal Council
- Government of the Northwest Territories
- University of Alberta

Hotì ts'eeda staff are embedded within NWT Indigenous Governments and work under the direction of the Scientific Director.

### CIHR AND THE SPOR NETWORK

CIHR is Canada's federal funding agency for health research. Its mission is to create new scientific knowledge and to enable its translation into improved health, more effective health services and products, and a strengthened Canadian health care system.

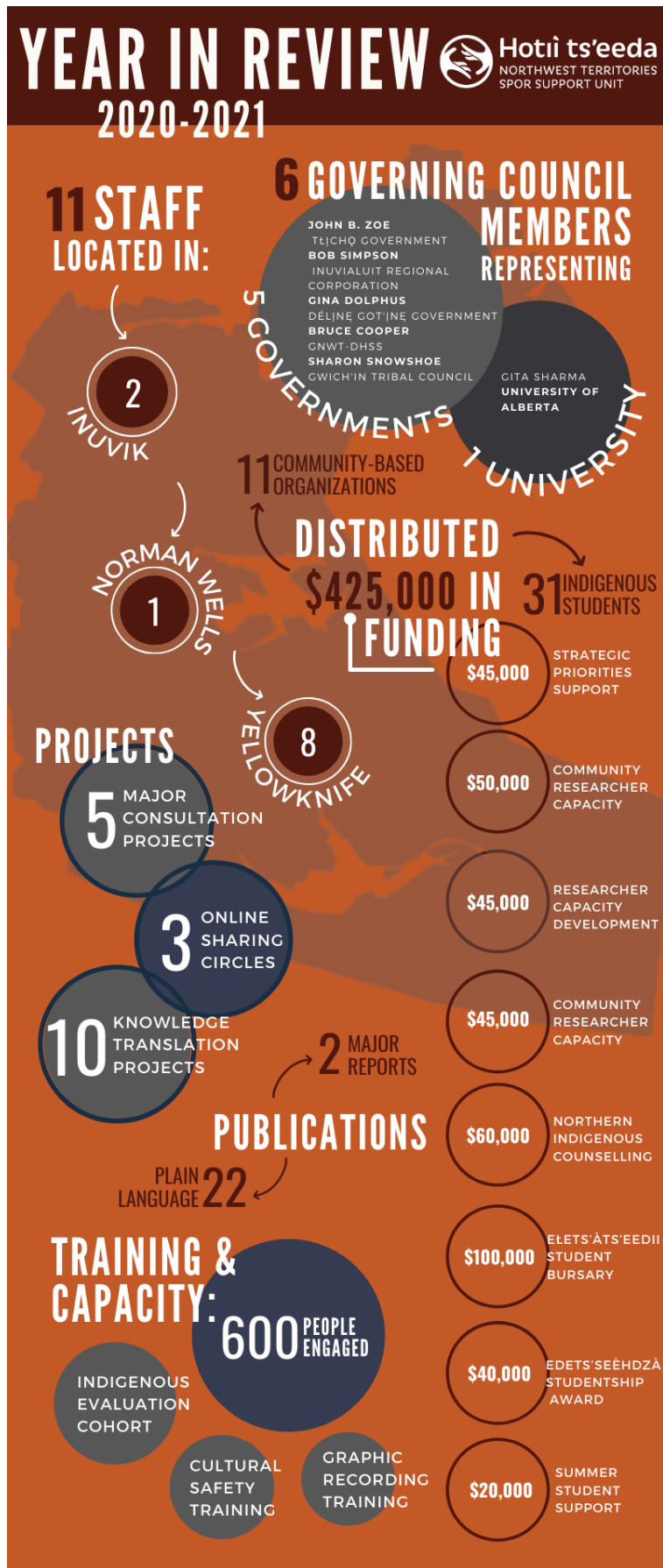
The Strategy for Patient Oriented Research (SPOR) is a coalition of federal, provincial and territorial partners led by CIHR. Support units are located in most Canadian provinces and territories. SPOR Support Units work toward research-based improvements to the health care system in response to local needs identified by community members as key partners, by:

- Engaging patients as partners in research;
- Ensuring that health research is relevant to patient and policy-maker priorities; and,
- Ensuring research results are used to improve health care systems and practices.

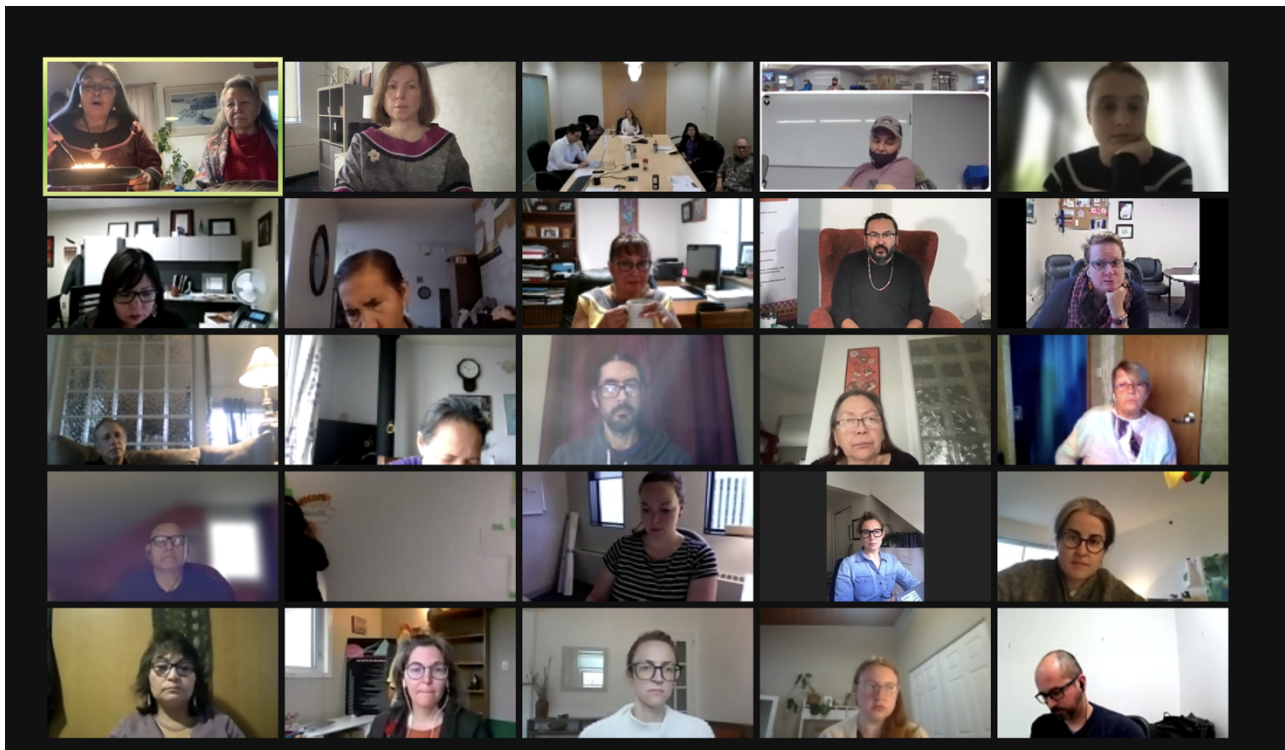
### ACTIVITIES

Hotì ts'eeda is a SPOR SUPPORT unit with a unique focus on Indigenous health and research and regards patient partners as Indigenous communities and community members. It works to:

- Identify research needs with communities and connect communities to researchers and funders.
- Cultivate meaningful partnerships between researchers, individuals and communities.
- Support culturally competent research behaviour.
- Ensure research results are transferred to community partners and health policy decision-makers.
- Support access to NWT health research data



## Ełets'ehdèe-Katimaqatigiit-Nihkhah Łatr'iljil 2021



### APPROACH

This year marked a departure for Hotii ts'eeda's approach to the gathering. Instead of featuring a keynote speaker and several panels over 2-3 full days, content was reduced to reflect a more realistic 6-hour day with breaks to ensure time for virtual connection and discussion.

how Indigenous Government programs and services are implementing UNDRIP. It will result in guidelines for policymakers and researchers to help them implement UNDRIP in their work. There will also be engagements with youth and other interested parties as the project continues.

### DAY 1

#### EŁETS'ANİTS'EAH

The Ełets'anits'eah: *Implementing UNDRIP in Health and Wellness* project, a community engagement project around UNDRIP in the NWT, was introduced and preliminary results shared.

#### Project Overview:

The Ełets'anits'eah project has an advisory committee of participants from across the NWT. It convenes knowledge sharing sessions to provide information about UNDRIP, and share

#### Process:

- Phase 1: Develop resources for education and awareness about UNDRIP.
- Phase 2: Two knowledge sharing sessions were held in July and September 2021, with partners from health and wellness divisions of NWT Indigenous governments.
- Phase 3: Sharing back information in a variety of formats.

#### Resources Developed:

- UNDRIP 101 presentation



- Video interviews featuring former NWT premier Stephen Kakfwi and Indigenous lawyer Jennifer Duncan
- Interactive timeline of UNDRIP in the NWT, Canada and internationally
- Informational web pages
- Preliminary results report

*Next Steps:*

Hotii ts'eeda will be continuing to explore knowledge sharing methods in the coming year, including sponsoring organizations to hold their own knowledge sessions. Results will be shared with policymakers, researchers, and funders, and awareness and education around UNDRIP will continue to be a priority for Hotii ts'eeda.

*Overview of Recommendations:*

These are four areas of guidelines that we are recommending based on what we heard.

- Identifying which UNDRIP articles apply, and how to assess if they are being met.
- Integrating reciprocal accountability for how UNDRIP is being implemented in research, program, and service project proposals, applications, and plans.
- Respecting relationship as a core organizing principle of NWT Indigenous cultures and communities.
- Acknowledging the historical and lived experience of Indigenous peoples in health and wellness. Partners must understand the context and lived experience of specific communities, and acknowledging responsibility for discontinuing such experiences.

**PANEL 1: HOW OUR INDIGENOUS GOVERNMENTS ARE RESPONDING TO COVID-19 AND UNDRIP**

*Panelists:*

Jacqueline Spies, Acho Dene Koe First Nation  
Susan Keats, Gwich'in Tribal Council

In this panel discussion, two Indigenous government health representatives discussed their governments' approaches to and experiences of Covid-19, and relate them to Indigenous rights to health and wellness. The panelists shared stories of challenges and opportunities for their communities throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, and how their governments supported members, often through new and innovative ways. The panel was followed by a Q&A moderated by host Deneze Nakehk'o.



### VIRTUAL TIPI SESSION 1

Tipi sessions are a key part of in-person gatherings. They are where deeper conversations are had, one-on-one connections are made, and people are able to follow up with presenters and colleagues. In hosting virtual tipi sessions, Hotii ts'eeda worked to create an intimate breakout room, rooted in Indigenous cultural knowledge, that allowed for deeper conversation to take place.

Each breakout room was hosted by one or two cultural knowledge holders (below image), who opened each session by sharing stories and knowledge from their cultural experience. Hotii ts'eeda opens tipi sessions in this way to ensure that following research and program discussions are rooted in Indigenous knowledge and to encourage guests to draw connections between policy, program, practice, and the real lived experiences of health, wellness, and culture for Indigenous people in the NWT.

Presenters in the first tipi session were:

- Kyla Kakfwi-Scott, *Developing the Community, Culture and Innovation unit at the Department of Health and Social Services*
- Alyssa Carpenter, *Western Arctic Youth Collective*

- Jessica Dutton, *Breaking Trail: Navigating the Covid-19 Pandemic in the North and Finding the Way Forward Together*
- Erica Abel & Marisa McArthur, *Reflections of the Edets'èhdzà Studentship in the Midst of a Pandemic*
- Jacqueline Spies, *Let's Talk: Investing in the Family*
- Susan Keats, *The Cabin Men's Group*

### PLENARY DISCUSSION

Day 1 of the gathering formally closed with an open plenary discussion where participants shared their reflections on the day.

### PUBLIC SCREENING: THE UNFORGOTTEN

Speakers:

- Dr. Ewan Affleck, Executive Producer/Writer/Director
- Leela Gilday, Music Director

After the meeting formally closed on day 1, participants and the public were invited to a virtual screening of the film "The Unforgotten", a five-part anthology showcasing the health experiences of Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Following the film, Dr. Ewan Affleck and Leela Gilday answered questions from the public.



Karen Wright Fraser



Judi Tutcho



Alfred Taniton



Morris Neyelle



James Pokiak

Not pictured: Blake Rasmussen and Irene Roth

## DAY 2

### PRESENTATION: HOTIÌ TS'EEDA PRIORITIES

The morning of day 2 opened with a presentation from Hotiì ts'eeda on how Hotiì ts'eeda has set its priorities over the past five years, and introducing UNDRIP as the new guiding principle for the organizing. The presentation looked at how previous priorities, identified through annual gatherings and other interactions with partners, align with UNDRIP priorities identified through community engagements.

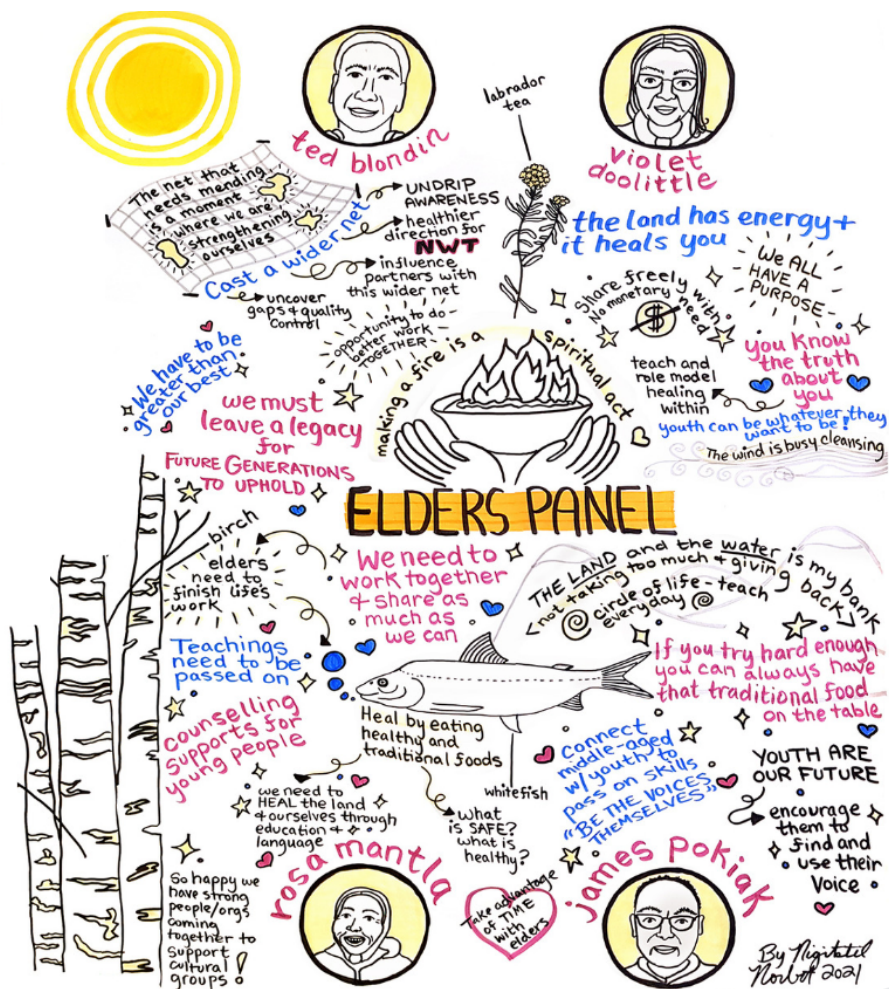
Following the presentation, participants were split up into groups for short breakout sessions to discuss opportunities and challenges in implementing UNDRIP.

See more about the priorities session in the following section.

### VIRTUAL TIPI SESSION 2

Presenters in the second tipi session were:

- Julie Lys, *Culture and Mental Wellness*
- Susan Keats, *The Cabin Men's Group*
- Wilbert Cook and William Greenland, *Arctic Indigenous Wellness Foundation*
- Sara Komarnisky and Julián Idrobo, *Towards New Northern Research Programs: Envisioning spaces, values and goals for knowledge production in the Northwest Territories*
- Katy Pollock, *Evaluating the Integrated Care Teams Initiative*
- Kyla Kakfwi-Scott, *Developing the Community, Culture and Innovation unit at the Department of Health and Social Services*



### PANEL 2: ELDERS' REFLECTIONS

Panelists:  
James Pokiak  
Rosa Mantla  
Ted Blondin  
Violet Doolittle

Hotiì ts'eeda is grateful for the presence and perspectives of Elders in the gathering. Elders provide invaluable perspective and experience to conversations around Indigenous health and wellness. To close the conference, Elders were asked to reflect and share their thoughts on what has been discussed over the last two days.



## Hotii ts'eeda Priorities

The first session on day two focused on Hotii ts'eeda priorities. Hotii ts'eeda took a different approach to the priority setting session this year.

In previous years, participants brainstormed priorities for Hotii ts'eeda to consider and implement in the coming year. This year, recognizing that Hotii ts'eeda has now been operational for five years, and is entering a new phase of operations, the session opened with a retrospective. The session looked back over the priorities of the past years, and provided some examples of priorities that have guided Hotii ts'eeda's projects and organizational activities.

### PAST PRIORITIES

Hotitseeda identified 15 priorities from past Èlèt's'ehdèe reports that have shaped the organization's work:

1. Elder guidance
2. Youth involvement and development
3. Knowledge translation and public health communications
4. Capacity funding for Indigenous scholars
5. Grants or funding to support community research
6. Health data access
7. Community priorities as driver for research
8. Relationship-based activities
9. Sustainability for Hotii ts'eeda and Indigenous Governments
10. Support navigating the NWT research system
11. Sharing circles
12. Trauma and trauma-informed approaches
13. UNDRIP
14. Cultural competency
15. Land-based activities

Hotii ts'eeda staff highlighted some of the priorities, discussing and demonstrating how

they have influenced projects. During this presentation, participants were asked to vote on whether Hotii ts'eeda's interpretation of the priority was appropriate, and whether it had effectively focused on the priority.

Voting was done through Zoom polls and participants were also invited to provide comments in the chat. Per poll responses, most participants agreed with Hotii ts'eeda's interpretations and actions to advance the priorities. As well, many valuable comments and suggestions were provided through the chat. For example, participants recommended reviewing and reframing the 'cultural competency' priority towards 'cultural safety.' There were also suggestions to include additional priorities that reflect Hotii ts'eeda's policy and advocacy work, the development and dissemination of Indigenous health research methods, and health promotion and harm reduction, especially with respect to addictions and mental health.

The session closed with Stephanie Irlbacher-Fox, Scientific Director, who shared how the priorities from the past five years shaped the Èlet'anìts'eah project and the upcoming focus of Hotii ts'eeda on implementing UNDRIP in the coming years.

### PRIORITY BREAKOUT DISCUSSIONS

Following the presentation from Hotii ts'eeda, participants were invited to discuss these priorities in breakout groups made up of about 10 to 15 people, including session facilitators and note takers. The following questions were posed to participants:

1. Does the approach to the UNDRIP project align with Hotii ts'eeda priorities? Are there other ways to draw in more priorities?

2. How could the approach to the UNDRIP project change to support better engagement and participation?
3. Do the draft guidelines make sense to you? Is there anything missing or out of place?
4. What ways should we share and add on to these guidelines? Who else needs to know or comment on them?

The sessions were very short, and most groups only had the chance to speak about the first question. Responses suggested that participants felt the priorities were well reflected in the project design. One group suggested that policies should be considered, and that ways to hold governments to account for UNDRIP implementation need to be part of the discussion.

Almost all groups mentioned the importance of bringing the UNDRIP conversation to all members of communities. It was suggested that plain language material could be created and

shared, and that – when circumstances allow – in-person dialogue in communities are important for continuing this work.

### NEXT STEPS

Feedback from the Priority Session polls, chat box, and breakout group discussions suggest that Hotii ts'eeda is on the right track. It is focusing on the right priorities, and working to incorporate those priorities in a good way. For the coming year, Hotii ts'eeda will examine the language of some of its priorities and take steps to ensure all staff regularly consider and reflect on these priorities when designing projects, going about their daily work, and representing the organization.



## PRIORITIES 2017- 2021



## What You Said: Your Experience of the Ełèts'ehdèe-Katimaqatigiit-Nihkhah Łatr'iljil

During and after the Ełèts'ehdèe-Katimaqatigiit-Nihkhah Łatr'iljil, Hotii ts'eeda gathered feedback from participants through the Zoom chat function, personal outreach, and an online evaluation form. Unfortunately, there were only 12 responses on the online form, so this is not representative of the overall participant experience. However, these comments are very much appreciated and provide Hotii ts'eeda with valuable guidance in improving planning and content of the conference for next year. We've summarized key takeaways from the comments received, which will be reflected in next year's planning.

*"Thank you everyone for all of your words and teachings these past few days. There was so much strength and powerful sentiments shared. I am so grateful to have been your presence."*

- Guest

The Ełèts'ehdèe is more than a conference or annual meeting – it is the forum through which Hotii ts'eeda is accountable to its partners for progress and in which we seek guidance from our partners on strategic direction. Hotii ts'eeda tries to create an experience, to facilitate networking across regions and fields of work, to celebrate and highlight the expertise in our communities, and ensure that all participants have a say in how Hotii ts'eeda works. There is so much amazing work to share from across the NWT that it is a huge challenge to try to include it all, especially in an online format. Thank you for your feedback and please feel free to reach out directly to share your suggestions for improving future events.

*"I really enjoyed how central Elders were to the programming."*

- Guest

### SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

#### General

- Well organized, ran smoothly.
- Very interesting content.
- Centrality of Elders to the conference was very well received and effective.
- Host Dēneze Nakehk'ó was excellent.
- Graphic recorder Nigit'stil Norbert was very effective and interesting to watch.
- Staff were responsive and organized.
- Video content was appreciated.

*"[I am] very hopeful and encouraged to know what is happening right now."*

- Guest

#### Suggestions for future events

- Improve integration of multiple Indigenous languages and cultures.
- Look at more options for participant engagement.
- Consider timing of breakout sessions and of overall event.
- Showcase more about funded projects.
- Share opportunities for donating/supporting/getting involved in some of the projects we highlight.
- More panel discussions next year.
- More time in breakout groups for discussion.

*"I have a great sense of hope for the future as I can see many are helping others to understand more of the world we live in and where it is we need to go in order to exist harmoniously."*

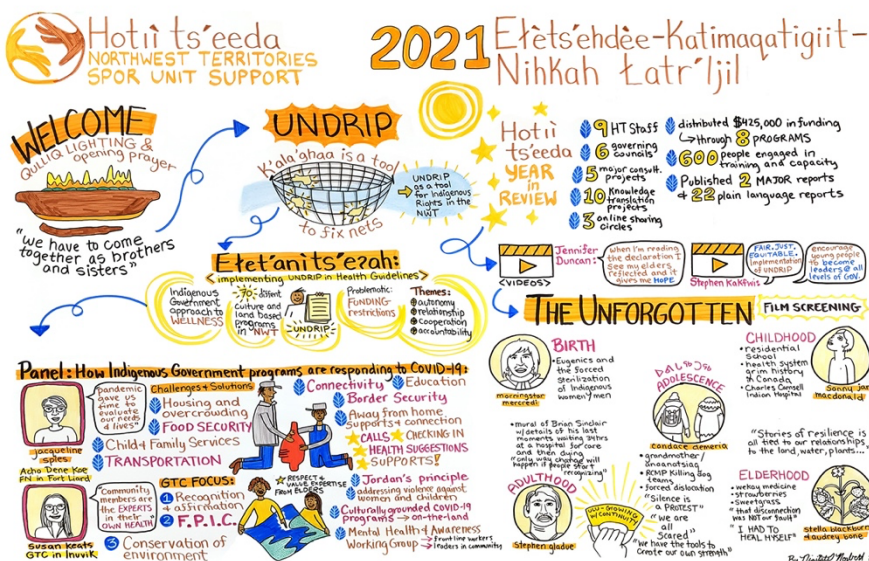
- Guest



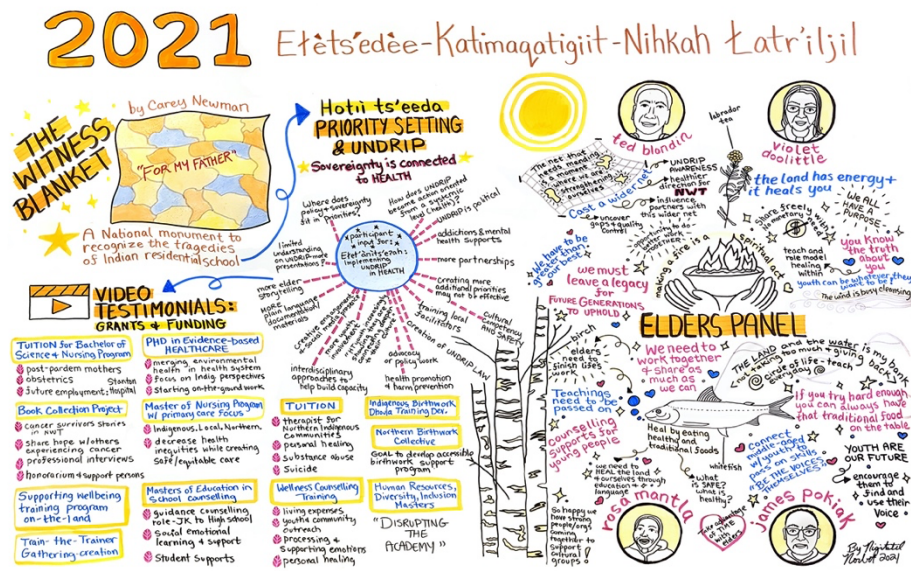
# Capturing the Conversation

Graphic recording is the real-time translation of conversations or presentations into visual information. Graphic recorders do three things simultaneously: listen for key ideas; synthesize ideas; and, document them in visual form. Hotiì ts'eeda provides graphic facilitator training to NWT residents as a way to support local employment and contribute to knowledge translation capabilities in the NWT that can be used not only in communicating health research and results, but also the collaborative development of priorities in the health field and beyond.

Hotiì ts'eeda-trained graphic recorder Nigit'stil Norbert attended the gathering from Inuvik to capture the conversation during the 2021 Elèts'ehdèe-Katimaqatigiit-Nihkakh Łatr'iljil. She shared her recordings with rest of the conference participants throughout the gathering, and images from the posters can be seen on this page and throughout the report.



Hotiì ts'eeda 2021 Elèts'ehdèe-Katimaqatigiit-Nihkakh Łatr'iljil - September 28, 2021



Hotiì ts'eeda 2021 Elèts'ehdèe-Katimaqatigiit-Nihkakh Łatr'iljil - September 29, 2021

*"She captured the essence of the sessions perfectly."*  
- Guest

## Contact Us

For questions, comments or to talk about how Hotì ts'eeda can support health and health research in your community, please contact:

### Hotì ts'eeda Yellowknife Office

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Hotì ts'eeda is a research support unit hosted by the Tłı̄chų Government, and governed primarily by Northwest Territories (NWT) Indigenous Governments. Hotì ts'eeda connects NWT organizations, and communities with researchers and funding to achieve health research and training goals. It is funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

Home

## ABOUT HOTÌ TS'EEDA



## ABOUT

ABOUT HOTÌ TS'EEDA

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GOVERNING COUNCIL

STAFF

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